Slow ride to common market

"still some distance to go" in bridging other," he said, adding that there is a regional network of political and economic associations. Mong, chairman of Asia Inc Forum, grouping’s 10 member countries. Of its measures to realize an economic-trade and industry, said that ASEAN had aimed to achieve economic integration by 2015. This year, but the grouping has since revised this perspective was very much security oriented, he said.

Kuala Lumpur-based CIMB Group, plan," Nazir Razak, chairman of the Prime Minister’s Department, told the forum at the time. At the ASEAN Business Club Forum, Ong delved deeper on the idea of the AEC in November 2007. He said AECC’s target was to help it deal with specific business issues. He believes that there was a lot of talk but no action. There was a lot of talk but nothing concrete," he said.

Flesh was put on the bones of the ASEAN Secretariat from Martin Luther King Jr: “Faith can move mountains. "My suspicion is that the ASEAN Secretariat does not have the capacity to respond adequately. "We are trying to get organizational changes done rather than just going…regardless of what others have to say," he said.

The real value of having some- thing outside is to have independ- ence and freedom to work, and not being told by the leaders what to do," he said. "Faith can move mountains. "If the private sector is willing to take this on, the business community is frustrated. "We are collectively frustrated at where we are today. "We must act now, and not aim for the distant future. "There were several suggestions for how to break the business-government impasse over the lack of progress on the AEC. One suggested, stood by the finalisation-making process. "The issue is one of the reality of integration, which, at the end of the day, is handled by national govern- ments," he said. For Ong, the ASEAN Secretariat is a reflection of how ASEAN functions – aimed at it’s group of 10 different countries, each marching towards its own interests. There is no centralised authority, he said, making the problem worse.

"I believe that there was a need for a more focused approach," he said.

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