Oh! Hi! I just happen to be walking past this video (inaudible) - and I realize I’m supposed to make a short video about Southeast Asian Press Alliance, and my memories of the founding of that organisation were almost exactly 20 years ago. Anyway, my name is Lin Neumann, I was at the time, Asia’s director of the Committee to Protect Journalists. In that role, I was present to help organize the founding of SEAPA and I was fortunate to be present at a conversation that took place a year earlier, Nov 1997, around a breakfast table at APAC. We were a bunch of NGOs type hanging around, changing the world. Kawi was there and I am pretty sure Melinda Quintos de Jesus from Center of Media Freedom and Responsibility. Sheila Cornell who of course have gone on to become the world’s famous investigative journalist and editor, was there representing the Philippines Center of Investigative Journalism, Lukas Luwarso, I don’t think was there but he was around, from the Alliance of Independent Journalists. My dear friend, Andreas Harsono from what was then called ISAI - the Institute of study for free expression in Jakarta was there, and I think Chavarong was not there but not of these could have happened without Chavarong and a lot of other people behind the scenes who helped out. But anyway, at that breakfast table, this was the idea, somebody said, “What Southeast Asia need, what Asia needs is a committee to protect journalists of its own. Why are these issues only taken by CPJ in New York or Reporters Sans Frontieres in Paris? Why not by the homegrown organisation?”

That sparked off an idea and a bunch of us got to talking and by the middle of that year - we plan to have the organising conference to what came to be known as the Southeast Asian Press Alliance - SEAPA. It was decided that SEAPA would bring together press freedom organisations from the three countries of that time, in Southeast Asia, you can be identified of having a free press; Thailand, the Philippines and Indonesia, which has gone through overthrow (inaudible) ousted of President Suharto, and that released the most press restrictions. So, you have three press freedom countries and a number of press freedom organisations, and so it seems to be a confluence of advance - perfect for bringing SEAPA into being. And that’s what happened in 1998, our good friend (inaudible) was there, may he rest in peace, he sadly died far too young a couple of years ago. And a number of other people from folks came out from New York, there were people from Philippines, from Thailand, and I think some of our friends who went on to be part of Malaysia Kini who have been there. I think, Malaysia Kini was always kind of sister close sibblings of SEAPA. It was really a press freedom activists community, I was, myself, representing CPJ - I am honoured and privilege to have been part of the founding in SEAPA, in whatever role. However, I maybe remember, it was certainly one of the highlights of my journalistic career, period. I do, really, am sorry that I wasn't able to be in Bangkok for this event, other things intervene, stuff that I need to do with my daughter and my job. I know run the AMCHAM, American Chambers of Commerce in Indonesia. So, I am no longer a journalist. Although it was a good run. I really enjoyed that part of my career as well but anyway, I hope everybody is having a great time. Those of you who remember you grey haired friend, Lin, I am still here, still going strong and still wishing all of you the very best. Peace and power.