



## **CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT OF THE 28<sup>TH</sup> AND 29<sup>TH</sup> ASEAN SUMMITS**

**VIENTIANE, 6-7 SEPTEMBER 2016**

### ***TURNING VISION INTO REALITY FOR A DYNAMIC ASEAN COMMUNITY***

We, the Heads of State/Government of ASEAN Member States, gathered for the 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summits, held under the Chairmanship of the Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR) with the theme "*Turning Vision into Reality for a Dynamic ASEAN Community*" in Vientiane on 6-7 September 2016.

2. We had constructive and cordial discussions to craft the future direction for a politically cohesive, economically integrated, socially responsible and a truly rules-based people-oriented, people-centred ASEAN Community, guided by the eight priorities outlined by the Lao PDR under her Chairmanship, namely, the implementation of the ASEAN Community Vision 2025; narrowing of the development gap; trade facilitation; micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) development; tourism development; connectivity; transition to formal economy in ASEAN; and reinforcing cultural heritage cooperation in ASEAN.

3. We signed/adopted the following documents as the outcomes of our Summits:

- ASEAN Declaration on One ASEAN, One Response: ASEAN Responding to Disasters as One in the Region and Outside the Region;
- Vientiane Declaration on the Adoption of the Initiative for ASEAN Integration Work Plan III;
- Vientiane Declaration on the Adoption of the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity 2025;
- Vientiane Declaration on Transition from Informal Employment to Formal Employment towards Decent Work Promotion in ASEAN;
- Vientiane Declaration on Reinforcing Cultural Heritage Cooperation in ASEAN;
- ASEAN Declaration on Strengthening Education for Out-of-School Children and Youth;
- ASEAN Joint Statement on Biodiversity Conservation to the Thirteenth Meeting of the Conference of Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP-13);
- ASEAN Joint Statement on Climate Change to the Twenty-Second Session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC COP-22); and
- ASEAN Declaration of Commitment on HIV and AIDS: Fast Tracking and Sustaining HIV and AIDS Response to End the AIDS Epidemic by 2030.

## **ASEAN COMMUNITY BUILDING**

### ASEAN Community Vision 2025

4. We welcomed the positive progress on the implementation of the ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC), ASEAN Economic Community (AEC), and ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) Blueprints 2025 towards realising the ASEAN Community Vision 2025. We emphasised the importance of the full and effective implementation of this forward-looking roadmap that will continue to guide us in charting our path over the next decade. In this connection, we adopted the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) Work Plan III and the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity (MPAC) 2025 to be an integral part of the *ASEAN 2025: Forging Ahead Together*, which would strengthen our resolve in advancing ASEAN's community building process.

5. We reaffirmed our shared commitment to maintaining and promoting peace, security and stability in the region, as well as to the peaceful resolution of disputes, including full respect for legal and diplomatic processes, without resorting to the threat or use of force, in accordance with the universally recognised principles of international law, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

6. We noted the necessity to make sure that the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development will be implemented in a mutually-reinforcing manner to build an inclusive and people-oriented, people-centred ASEAN Community for the benefit of our peoples. In this connection, we appreciated Thailand's efforts and leadership in coordinating with all parties to promote the complementarities between these two important agendas. To take this matter forward, we tasked the Ministers to explore the development of priority areas and roadmap to promote these complementarities.

### Strengthening the ASEAN Secretariat and Reviewing the ASEAN Organs

7. We noted with satisfaction that all recommendations by the High Level Task Force (HLTF) on Strengthening the ASEAN Secretariat and Reviewing the ASEAN Organs have been addressed. Most of the recommendations are perpetual in nature and will remain relevant as we continue our integration efforts. We reaffirmed our continued support for the full and effective implementation of the HLTF recommendations, which would lead to more streamlined coordination and efficient work processes within ASEAN institutions, including synergising the work among all ASEAN Sectoral Bodies and Organs.

## **ASEAN POLITICAL-SECURITY COMMUNITY**

### Implementation of the APSC Blueprint 2025

8. We were pleased with the progress made in the initial year of the implementation of the APSC Blueprint 2025 to bring about a rules-based, people-

oriented, people-centred ASEAN Community and to sustain peace, security and stability in the region. We further reaffirmed our commitment to the full and effective implementation of the APSC Blueprint 2025 in the years ahead. In this regard, we encouraged the implementation of the APSC Blueprint 2025, including the development of a robust reporting and monitoring system with a greater focus on qualitative analysis and impact assessment at both regional and national levels as well as the alignment of APSC Sectoral Bodies' work plans with the Blueprint. We tasked all relevant ASEAN Organs and Sectoral Bodies to follow-up on necessary actions to implement the APSC Blueprint 2025, taking into account the importance of effective coordination on cross-cutting issues.

### ASEAN in the Evolving Regional Architecture

9. We stressed the importance of maintaining ASEAN Centrality and unity in the evolving regional architecture and in our engagement with external parties. We highlighted the need for ASEAN to play a central role in developing a rules-based regional architecture, building upon ASEAN led-mechanisms by promoting the norms and principles enshrined in the ASEAN Charter as well as in other ASEAN political documents and declarations such as the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC), the Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon Free Zone (SEANWFZ), the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC), and the Declaration on the East Asia Summit on the Principles for Mutually Beneficial Relations (EAS Bali Principles). We looked forward to the continuation of the discussion on the future regional security architecture in the next EAS Workshops.

### Global Movement of Moderation (GMM)

10. We reaffirmed the importance of the values of moderation, tolerance, non-violence and mutual understanding, as well as respect for diversity and inclusiveness towards achieving peace, security, and harmony in the region. We were also encouraged by activities initiated by relevant stakeholders to support the Langkawi Declaration on the Global Movement of Moderates.

### Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC)

11. We recognised the positive contributions of the TAC which has served as the key code of conduct governing inter-state relations in the region to promote peace and stability over the past 40 years. In this regard, we welcomed the adoption of the ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Statement on the Occasion of the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the TAC by the 49<sup>th</sup> AMM in Vientiane, in July 2016 which, among others, reiterates our firm commitment to uphold the purposes and principles of the TAC and explores a legally binding instrument building upon the TAC for the wider region. We also welcomed the accession of Chile, Egypt and Morocco to the TAC on 6 September 2016, Vientiane, Lao PDR and looked forward to Iran's accession to the TAC upon the completion of its internal process. We also welcomed ASEAN Foreign Ministers' decision to consider new applications in accordance with the Revised Guidelines for Accession to the TAC. We emphasised the importance for all High Contracting Parties to continue to fully respect and promote the effective implementation of the

TAC and resolved to further promote the purposes and principles contained in the TAC.

#### ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR)

12. We commended the progress of the work of the AICHR in the promotion and protection of human rights and welcomed the commencement of the second AICHR Five-Year Work Plan 2016-2020, including the endorsement of the AICHR's priority programme/activities for 2017. We acknowledged the ongoing efforts of the AICHR in its dialogue and consultation with relevant ASEAN Organs, other ASEAN Sectoral Bodies and entities associated with ASEAN, including CSOs with consultative relationship with the AICHR, and other stakeholders on the promotion and protection of human rights in the region. We encouraged AICHR as the overarching human rights institution in ASEAN in coordination with other ASEAN human rights bodies to continue its endeavours to promote the mainstreaming of human rights across all three pillars of the ASEAN Community through consultations among relevant ASEAN Sectoral Bodies, and in line with the ASEAN Charter, the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration (AHRD) and the Phnom Penh Statement on the Adoption of AHRD as well as the ASEAN Community Vision 2025.

#### Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ Treaty)

13. We reiterated our commitment to preserve the Southeast Asian region as a Nuclear Weapon Free Zone and free of all other weapons of mass destruction as enshrined in the SEANWFZ Treaty and the ASEAN Charter. We, therefore, stressed the importance of the full and effective implementation of the SEANWFZ Treaty, including through the Plan of Action to Strengthen the Implementation of the SEANWFZ Treaty (2013-2017). We also welcomed the biennial adoption of the 70th Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) resolution on the SEANWFZ Treaty in December 2015 which reiterates the importance of the Treaty in strengthening the security of States in the region and in contributing to international peace and security.

14. We reaffirmed our commitment to continuously engage the Nuclear Weapon States and intensify the ongoing efforts of the States Parties to the SEANWFZ Treaty and Nuclear Weapon States to resolve all outstanding issues, in accordance with the objectives and principles of the SEANWFZ Treaty.

#### ASEAN Network of Regulatory Bodies on Atomic Energy (ASEANTOM)

15. We welcomed the designation of the ASEANTOM as an ASEAN body under the APSC Pillar in Annex 1 of the ASEAN Charter. We welcomed the progress in the work of ASEANTOM in promoting high standards of nuclear safety, security and safeguards in the region, through cooperation, exchanging of information and complementing the work of existing mechanisms at the national, bilateral, regional and international levels, including the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). We noted the following 2 activities convened by ASEANTOM i.e. a Regional Workshop on Nuclear Forensics and Bio-dosimeter in February 2016 in Thailand and a Regional Workshop on the Environment Radiation Monitoring and Measurement in March 2016 in Thailand.

### ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA)

16. We had fruitful interface with Representatives of AIPA and appreciated continued contribution by the AIPA to the ASEAN community building process. We looked forward to the outcomes of the 37<sup>th</sup> AIPA to be held on 29 September – 3 October 2016, in Nay Pyi Taw, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and encouraged AIPA's further contribution to the implementation of the ASEAN Community Vision 2025.

### ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM) and ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus)

17. We were encouraged by the progress of the defence cooperation under the ambit of the ADMM and the ADMM-Plus. We welcomed the successful conclusion of the 10<sup>th</sup> ADMM held in May 2016 in Vientiane, the Lao PDR and commended the notable achievements such as the launching of the ASEAN Center of Military Medicine (ACMM) and the adoption of the Terms of Reference (TOR) of the ASEAN Militaries Ready Group (AMRG) on Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) as well as the TOR of ACMM, that will further strengthen ASEAN civil-military coordination in HADR, thereby contributing to the realisation of the 'One ASEAN One Response' vision. We also welcomed the ongoing implementation of defence initiatives among the ASEAN Member States (AMS), including the establishment of the Direct Communications Link (DCL) or Hotline in the ADMM Process which aims at preventing escalation and promoting quick response cooperation and coordination in emergency situations.

18. We commended the hard work and efforts of the six ADMM-Plus Experts' Working Groups (EWGs) namely, HADR, Maritime Security (MS), Peacekeeping Operations (PKO), Counter Terrorism (CT), Military Medicine (MM) and Humanitarian Mine Action (HMA). We welcomed the successful conduct of the ADMM-Plus Humanitarian Mine Action and Peacekeeping Operations: Exercise Force 18 in Pune, India on 2-8 March 2016, the ADMM-Plus Maritime Security and Counterterrorism Exercise in Brunei Darussalam and Singapore on 2-12 May 2016, and the ADMM-Plus Military Medicine and HADR Joint Exercise (AM-HEX) which is currently taking place in Chonburi Province, Thailand on 1-11 September 2016. We looked forward to the successful convening of the ADMM-Plus Maritime Security Exercise 'Mahi Tangaroa' in Auckland, New Zealand in November 2016. We also welcomed the establishment of the seventh ADMM-Plus EWG on Cyber Security (CT) and reaffirmed our commitment to work with the Plus countries in all seven ADMM-Plus EWGs under the new co-chairmanship for the next three years.

### ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime (AMMTC)

19. We reaffirmed our commitment to respond to the threats posed by transnational crimes and emerging transboundary challenges in an effective and timely manner and looked forward to the adoption of the ASEAN Plan of Action in Combating Transnational Crime by the AMMTC in all 10 priority areas, namely terrorism; illicit drug trafficking; trafficking in persons; arms smuggling; sea piracy;

money laundering; international economic crime; cybercrime; wildlife and timber trafficking.

20. Following the signing of the ASEAN Convention Against Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (ACTIP), we looked forward to the early entry into force and effective implementation of the ACTIP, as well as the effective implementation of the ASEAN Plan of Action Against Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children. We also took note of the ongoing cross-sectoral coordination to implement the ASEAN Plan of Action Against Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (APA).

21. Demonstrating ASEAN's responsiveness in addressing the increasing challenges posed by the irregular movement of persons in the region, we welcomed the adoption of the Terms of Reference of the Trust Fund to Support Emergency Humanitarian and Relief Efforts in the Event of the Irregular Movement of Persons in Southeast Asia. We also encouraged contributions of ASEAN Member States and international community to the Trust Fund.

22. We took note of the ongoing work of the AMMTC in adapting to the growing threat of terrorism, radicalisation and violent extremism to the ASEAN region by effectively implementing the ASEAN Convention on Counter Terrorism (ACCT) through the ASEAN Comprehensive Plan of Action on Counter Terrorism (ACPoA on CT). Given the transboundary nature, we encouraged the AMMTC to enhance cooperation with Dialogue Partners in addressing these threats through the AMMTC Plus One and Plus Three Consultation mechanisms.

23. We appreciated the progress made by the Directors-General of Immigration Departments and Heads of Consular Affairs Divisions of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs (DGICM) on commencing the work to develop the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)/Guideline on Consular Assistance to Nationals of ASEAN Member States in Third Countries. We welcomed the convening of the 1<sup>st</sup> DGICM Working Group Meeting to study Consular Assistance by ASEAN Missions in Third Countries to Nationals of ASEAN Member States and look forward to the early conclusion of the Guideline.

#### ASEAN Law Ministers Meeting (ALAWMM)

24. We noted with satisfaction the progress of implementation of the ALAWMM's cooperation programmes and activities as well as other proposed projects and activities that were being considered and/or developed with a view to enhancing legal cooperation in ASEAN.

25. We commended the participation of ASEAN Member States' judiciaries in the court excellence and judicial cooperation forum to share best practices and exchange views on judicial matters. In this connection, we welcomed the establishment of the Council of ASEAN Chief Justices (CACJ) and looked forward to its inclusion as an entity associated with ASEAN under Annex 2 of the ASEAN Charter. We looked forward to the CACJ's initiatives in contributing to the promotion of awareness of various judicial and legal systems in the region as well as in forging closer collaboration among ASEAN Member States' judiciaries.

### ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Drug Matters (AMMD)

26. We welcomed the designation of the AMMD under Annex 1 of the ASEAN Charter in October 2015. We looked forward to the convening of the next AMMD Meeting in October 2016 in Singapore. This will be the first AMMD Meeting since its institutionalisation.

27. We noted the adoption of the ASEAN Position Statement at the 4<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Drug Matters in Langkawi, Malaysia on 29 October 2015; and the joint ASEAN statements that were delivered at the 59<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs by Singapore in Vienna, Austria, on 14 March 2016 and at the United Nations General Assembly Special Session (UNGASS) by Malaysia in New York, U.S.A on 19 April 2016. The statements reaffirmed ASEAN's joint commitment to a zero-tolerance approach in realising the regional vision of a Drug-Free ASEAN.

28. We also welcomed the progress made by the ASEAN Narcotics Cooperation Centre (ASEAN-NARCO) in Bangkok to strengthen ASEAN cooperation, especially on information sharing and intelligence exchange among drug control and law enforcement agencies in the region.

### ASEAN Institute for Peace and Reconciliation (AIPR)

29. We noted the ongoing work of AIPR in promoting reconciliation, conflict management, conflict resolution and peace-building to enhance peace and stability in the region. We noted the convening of the AIPR Workshop on the Plight of Women and Children in Conflict Situations in Tagaytay, the Philippines in December 2015. We expressed appreciation to Indonesia for its contribution to the initial operationalisation of the AIPR and underscored the importance of support from ASEAN Member States to ensure the full operationalization of the Institute in accordance with the TOR of AIPR.

### ASEAN Regional Mine Action Centre (ARMAC)

30. We welcomed the Inaugural Ceremony of ARMAC Headquarter in Phnom Penh on 25 May 2016 and looked forward to the convening of the Inaugural Meeting of the Steering Committee of ARMAC in Cambodia in September 2016. In this regard, we looked forward to the early operationalisation of ARMAC, which serves as a regional centre of excellence in addressing the humanitarian aspects of the explosive remnants of wars (ERW) for interested ASEAN Member States.

### ASEAN Maritime Forum (AMF)

31. We welcomed cooperation and constructive dialogues on maritime issues of common interests and concerns including search and rescue, maritime capacity-building, crimes at sea, maritime scientific research, maritime security and safety, conservation of marine living resources and combating piracy and Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing. We encouraged the strengthening of linkages

between the AMF and the Expanded AMF with other relevant ASEAN Sectoral Bodies in view of coordinating ASEAN maritime-related cooperation.

32. We noted that challenges of IUU Fishing remain and have become even more complex in the region. We are therefore committed to expand regional cooperation to address this issue, including through supporting the effective implementation of the relevant international law and instruments. We noted that there are initiatives taken by ASEAN-led mechanisms to discuss and address the challenges of IUU Fishing.

33. We looked forward to the convening of the 7<sup>th</sup> AMF and 5<sup>th</sup> EAMF in Brunei Darussalam in 2016.

### Cybersecurity

34. We welcomed the convening of the inaugural ASEAN Ministerial Conference on Cybersecurity in Singapore on 11 October 2016 to facilitate greater cybersecurity cooperation among ASEAN Member States, which will complement existing ASEAN efforts to strengthen cybersecurity in the region.

### **ASEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY**

35. We noted that ASEAN's combined GDP stood at USD2.43 trillion in 2015, firming up the region's position as a global growth centre. We were pleased that ASEAN's real GDP grew at a robust rate of 4.7% in 2015 amidst increasingly challenging global conditions. While external headwinds are expected to weigh on growth prospect, regional economic outlook is projected to remain resilient at 4.5% in 2016, underpinned by strong public and private consumption, robust infrastructure spending and accommodative fiscal policy, before accelerating to 4.8% in 2017.

36. We were pleased with ASEAN's merchandise trade performance, which reached USD2.28 trillion in 2015, with intra-regional trade accounting for the largest share at 24% or USD 545 billion. We noted that the total foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows to the region remained resilient at USD120 billion in 2015, with the services sector as the largest contributor at 62.5%. At 18.5% of total FDI inflows or USD22.1 billion, we also noted that intra-ASEAN FDI inflows also accounted for the largest share of FDI inflows to the region.

37. With demonstrated contribution of regional economic integration to economic growth and resilience, we reaffirmed our commitments to effectively implement the AEC Blueprint 2025 by putting in place the requisite implementation mechanisms and monitoring frameworks.

38. We were pleased to note that in 2016, the inaugural year of the AEC, efforts have been focused on completing the remaining AEC 2015 measures as well as initiating the implementation of new measures under the AEC Blueprint 2025.

39. We applauded the Lao PDR for the successful delivery of the AEC priorities in its Chairmanship year. In particular, we welcomed the adoption of the following priority deliverables at the 48<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Economic Ministers' (AEM) Meeting, namely: (i) the ASEAN Trade Facilitation Framework; (ii) the ASEAN Food Safety Regulatory



Framework (AFSRF); (iii) the ASEAN Institutional Framework on Access to Finance for MSME; (iv) the Report and Work Programme on Starting a Business in ASEAN; and (v) the ASEAN Guidelines for Special Economic Zones Development & Collaboration. We noted that the AFSRF has also been endorsed by the ASEAN Ministers on Agriculture and Forestry and the ASEAN Health Ministers. We also welcomed the launch of the ASEAN Tariff Finder website, which is a no-cost online-based tariff search facility (<http://tariff-finder.asean.org/>).

40. We were pleased with the adoption of the Pakse Declaration on ASEAN Roadmap for Strategic Development of Ecotourism Clusters and Corridors by ASEAN Tourism Ministers, which aims at achieving a balanced sustainable development of ecotourism in ASEAN. We noted the good progress made in the work on the ASEAN Sustainable Tourism Award. We also noted that the 8<sup>th</sup> CLMV Economic Ministers' Meeting has endorsed the recommended work plan for the formulation of the Framework for CLMV Development.

41. We welcomed the initiatives that have been put in place this year as a foundation to effectively implement the AEC Blueprint 2025. These include the adoption of sectoral work plans under the various AEC Sectoral Ministerial Bodies to operationalise the strategic measures outlined in the Blueprint, including the work plan for the new and cross-cutting focus area of global value chains. We noted that the work plans on e-Commerce and good regulatory practice are currently being finalised. We tasked the Sectoral Bodies to ensure effective implementation of these work plans.

42. We welcomed the endorsement of the AEC 2025 Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Framework, which is comprised of compliance-monitoring, outcomes-monitoring, and impact evaluation to help ensure the timely and effective implementation of the AEC Blueprint 2025. We noted that this framework will serve as a key reference for institutionalising and implementing monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in the AEC. In this regard, we also recognised the important supporting role of the ASEAN Community Statistical System (ACSS) in the enhanced monitoring framework.

43. We noted the progress on the development of the AEC 2025 Consolidated Strategic Action Plan (SAP), as envisioned in the AEC Blueprint 2025. The AEC 2025 Consolidated SAP will serve as a single reference of key action lines drawn from the AEC sectoral work plans, and will be periodically reviewed to ensure its relevance.

44. We noted with satisfaction that regional trade liberalisation and facilitation has contributed significantly to the freer movement of goods in ASEAN. With tariff elimination now down to the few remaining tariff lines, we reaffirmed our commitments to address non-tariff barriers to trade and accord high priority to trade facilitation initiatives towards a transparent, predictable and rule-based business environment in ASEAN.

45. We welcomed the operationalisation of the ASEAN Solutions for Investments, Services and Trade (ASSIST), which is aimed at delivering practical solutions to help

businesses address their concerns and difficulties while doing business in the region (<http://assist.asean.org>).

46. We also welcomed the establishment of National Trade Repository (NTRs) by all ASEAN Member States and noted the on-going process of linking information under the respective NTRs to the ASEAN Trade Repository (ATR). Once fully operationalised, the ATR will provide a one-stop online database containing all ASEAN trade and customs related information for the private sector in the region.

47. We further welcomed the exchange of live data of the electronic ATIGA Form D by Indonesia, Singapore and Thailand in the ASEAN Single Window (ASW) production environment. Once fully operationalised, the ASW will provide a regional facility to enable a seamless, standardised and harmonised routing and communication of trade and customs related data among the National Single Windows (NSWs) to expedite customs clearance and release. We encouraged other exchange-ready AMS to join as soon as possible.

48. We acknowledged the piloting of the ASEAN Customs Transit System (ACTS) in three participating ASEAN Member States, namely, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand, which could pave the way for the rolling-out of the ACTS system to other ASEAN Member States to further enhance trade by facilitating the movement of transit goods across the borders in ASEAN.

49. We reaffirmed our commitment to work towards the harmonisation of standards and technical requirements, mutual recognition arrangements and harmonisation of regulatory regimes. To this end, we welcomed the completion of the MRA on Bio-Equivalence (BE) Study Report on Generic Medicinal Products, which will facilitate the movement of generic medicinal products within ASEAN.

50. We welcomed the completion of the signing of the Protocol to Implement the Ninth Package of Commitments under the ASEAN Framework Agreement on Services (AFAS) on 27 November 2015 in Makati City, the Philippines. We took note of the progress of the Tenth Package of the AFAS and looked forward to its conclusion by next year.

51. We welcomed the entry into force of the ASEAN Agreement on Movement of Natural Persons (MNP), which shall facilitate the movement of ASEAN people engaging in trade in goods, trade in services and investment in the region. We were pleased with the endorsement of the ASEAN Qualification Reference Framework (AQRF) Governance and Structure document, a cross-sectoral and cross-pillar initiative, by the ASEAN Labour Ministers, ASEAN Education Ministers, and ASEAN Economic Ministers, marking a milestone in the facilitation of skilled labour mobility in the region, which will be implemented on a voluntary basis. To this end, we tasked our Ministers to expedite its implementation.

52. We reaffirmed our commitment to continue improving our business environment, particularly in terms of facilitating investment, increasing transparency and achieving further liberalisation in the region. In line with this, we welcomed the finalisation of the Second Protocol to Amend ASEAN Comprehensive Investment

Agreement (ACIA) to further improve policy-making in ASEAN through putting into effect the decisions on the built-in-agenda of the ACIA.

53. We were pleased to note that nine ASEAN Member States have enacted competition laws, and that the newer competition regimes are in the process of establishing competition agencies to implement their competition laws. We encouraged the on-going efforts to build and strengthen the necessary capacities for effective enforcement of competition law in ASEAN through the timely implementation of the ASEAN Competition Action Plan 2025.

54. Given that consumer protection is a vital element in the development of a competitive ASEAN, we encouraged the development of the initiatives under the ASEAN Strategic Action Plan on Consumer Protection 2025 towards a common ASEAN consumer protection framework that builds strong and modern legislation as well as provides for efficient redress mechanisms for ASEAN consumers. In this context, we urged that consumer knowledge and advocacy be further enhanced to support this work.

55. We looked forward to the implementation of the ASEAN Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) Action Plan 2016-2025 to encourage innovation and creativity, accelerate technology transfer and enable the region to move higher up in the technology ladder. We noted that new measures to build IP infrastructures, expand the IP ecosystem and promote asset creation are already underway. We looked forward to the reinforced role of the ASEAN Member States' IP Offices as drivers of innovation through enhanced engagement with the science and technology sector and cross-cutting initiatives that strengthen the policy environment for technology diffusion.

56. Consistent with the AEC Blueprint 2025, we welcomed the greater involvement of the private sector in the AEC's work and the various feedback and recommendations from regional business councils.

57. We thanked the ASEAN Business Advisory Council (ASEAN-BAC) for its annual report and the recommendations therein, and continued support to ASEAN initiatives and programmes. To this end, we welcomed the 2016 work programme of the ASEAN-BAC focusing on the four priority sectors of agri-food, retail, logistics and healthcare, and on the horizontal issues of trade facilitation, e-Commerce and the development of MSMEs, young entrepreneurs and women entrepreneurs. We recognised that private sector input is critical to the success of the AEC. We welcomed the role that ASEAN-BAC is playing as the apex and coordinating business organisation. We called on ministers and officials to ensure meaningful involvement of the private sector in the regional economic integration process to achieve optimal outcomes for the AEC. We congratulated ASEAN-BAC on the successful organisation of the 2016 ASEAN Business and Investment Summit (ABIS 2016) and commended the inclusion of the AEC Symposium in the ABIS 2016 programme.

58. We noted that these proposals from the private sectors augurs well with the action plan incorporated in the ASEAN Strategic Action Plan for SME Development 2016-2025 (SAPSMED 2025) overseen by the ASEAN Coordinating Committee on

Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (ACCMSME), which coordinates collaboration among ASEAN fora to create synergy and drive SME development in ASEAN. We also welcomed the launch of the ASEAN SME Service Centre Web Portal [www.aseansme.org](http://www.aseansme.org) as an information hub for MSMEs operating in the region; and the ASEAN SME Academy ([www.asean-sme-academy.org](http://www.asean-sme-academy.org)), a self-help and self-paced online learning tool for SMEs, comprising practical best practices.

59. We welcomed the implementation of the ASEAN Community Statistical System (ACSS) Strategic Plan 2016-2025 to further strengthen regional statistical cooperation among ASEAN Member States. We commended the considerable progress in the harmonisation of the three key statistical areas, namely, international merchandise trade, international trade in services and foreign direct investment, which are critical to AEC integration monitoring, as well as the efforts made in improving dissemination and communication of ASEAN statistics and in responding to ASEAN sectoral bodies' requests. We further welcomed the development of statistical infrastructure to address the emerging statistical needs in support of the overall monitoring efforts of ASEAN integration.

### Finance

60. We welcomed the Strategic Action Plans for ASEAN Financial Integration 2025, which is aimed at promoting financial integration, financial inclusion and financial stability in the region in support of ASEAN macroeconomic stability and growth, and the ASEAN Capital Markets Forum Action Plan 2016-2020, which would support the ACMF Vision 2025 of being an inter-connected, inclusive and resilient ASEAN capital market. We welcomed the progress of work under the ASEAN Infrastructure Fund (AIF) and reiterated AIF's important role in strengthening the regional physical connectivity. We welcomed the establishment of the ASEAN Insurance Forum, the Working Committee on ASEAN Banking Integration Framework and the Working Committee on Financial Inclusion.

61. We supported the progress made by various ASEAN Member States on the realisation of the ASEAN Banking Integration Framework (ABIF) through the signing of the first bilateral agreement for the operation of Qualified ASEAN Banks between Indonesia and Malaysia, and the signing of the bilateral Heads of Agreement for ABIF between: (a) Philippines and Malaysia; and (b) Thailand and Malaysia. We welcomed the signing of the Protocol to Implement the 7<sup>th</sup> Package of Commitments on Financial Services under the AFAS, and looked forward to its ratification. We welcomed the regularisation of AIMO as ASEAN Integration Monitoring Directorate (AIMD) of the ASEAN Secretariat. We also welcomed the transformation of the ASEAN+3 Macroeconomic Research Office (AMRO) as an international organisation, and encouraged AMRO to continue strengthening its surveillance and operational capabilities towards ensuring macroeconomic and financial stability in the ASEAN Plus Three region.

### Transport

62. We commended the progress made in the establishment of the ASEAN Single Shipping Market in principle as well as the ASEAN Single Aviation Market with the realisation of open skies; the latter particularly through the full ratification of the

ASEAN open skies agreements in April 2016. We noted that ASEAN will continue to engage Dialogue Partners and other partners to conclude more liberal and mutually beneficial air transport agreements, including the third, fourth and fifth freedom traffic rights. We also took note of the progress made in the negotiation of the ASEAN Framework Agreement on the Facilitation of Cross Border Transport of Passengers by Road Vehicles (CBTP) and the implementation of the ACTS Pilot with the completion of the Operating Guidelines for Goods Vehicle Cross-Border Permit as well as the ACTS Manuals for Transport Officials and for Principals and Transporters.

### Science and Technology

63. We noted with appreciation the increasing efforts to strengthen cooperation with dialogue and other partners in science, technology and innovation (STI). We welcomed the launching of the inaugural Exchange Programme for Young ASEAN Officials under the Sakura Science Plan; the Japan-ASEAN Science, Technology and Innovation Platform (JASTIP) and the Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative (YSEALI). We recognised that the efforts towards nurturing the gifted students in science and their mentors continue to be sustained with the successful conduct of the 7<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Plus Three Teacher Workshop and Student Camp, and the 5<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Plus Three Junior Science Odyssey. We looked forward to the adoption by the Science and Technology Ministers of the work plan to operationalise the ASEAN Plan of Action on Science, Technology and Innovation (APASTI) 2016-2025.

### Telecommunications and Information Technology

64. We welcomed the ASEAN ICT Masterplan 2020 (AIM 2020) that will propel ASEAN's towards a digitally-enabled economy that is secure, sustainable, and transformative. This will also enable an innovative, inclusive and integrated ASEAN Community. We noted the critical role played by ICT in supporting regional integration and connectivity. We further welcomed the development of an ASEAN Framework on Personal Data Protection aimed at establishing a regional approach on personal data protection.

### Food, Agriculture, and Forestry

65. We noted with satisfaction the achievements made this year in ASEAN cooperation on food, agriculture and forestry, particularly the development of the Key Performance Indicators for the Strategic Plan for ASEAN Cooperation in Food, Agriculture and Forestry (2016-2025) and the formulation of the Strategic Plan of Action for the ASEAN Cooperation on Crops (2016-2020), the Strategic Plan of Action for the ASEAN Cooperation in Livestock (2016-2020), the Strategic Plan of Action on ASEAN Cooperation in Fisheries (2016-2020), and the Strategic Plan of Action for ASEAN Cooperation on Forestry (2016-2025), all of which aim to further promote cooperation in ensuring the quality and quantity of agricultural products as well as to enhance trade facilitation, economic integration and market access.

66. Given the interrelationship between food, agriculture, forestry and the environment, we emphasised the use of green technologies and investment of related infrastructure in agriculture to increase productivity while conserving the eco-

system. We underscored the importance of assisting small producers and SMEs with technology and Research and Development (R&D) to improve productivity and quality to meet global market standards; building capacities to manage natural resources in order to ensure food security and ecological sustainability; facilitating enterprises, farmers, fishermen and SMEs in policy discussions; and fostering Public Private Partnership (PPP) in order to advance work in these areas.

67. We welcomed the achievements made in our effort to strengthen the fight against IUU Fishing in the region, in particular through the Joint ASEAN-Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC) Declaration on Regional Cooperation for Combating IUU Fishing and Enhancing the Competitiveness of ASEAN Fish and Fishery Products which was issued at the High-Level Consultation on Regional Cooperation in Sustainable Fisheries Development toward the ASEAN Economic Community: Combating IUU Fishing and Enhancing Competitiveness of ASEAN Fish and Fishery Products on 3 August 2016 in Bangkok, Thailand.

68. We welcomed Thailand granting the ASEAN Plus Three Emergency Rice Reserve (APTEER) Secretariat legal personality and privileges to support its role in enhancing food security.

### Energy

69. We noted the good progress in implementing the ASEAN Plan of Action on Energy Cooperation (APAEC) 2016-2025 Phase 1: 2016-2020. We looked forward to the launching of the 1<sup>st</sup> ASEAN Renewable Energy Outlook with the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) at the upcoming 34<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Ministers on Energy Meeting (AMEM) in September 2016 and looked forward to closer collaboration in the field of renewable energy development and deployment. We welcomed the adoption of the Minimum Energy Performance Standards for Air Conditioning. We noted that the Lao PDR, Thailand and Malaysia plan to sign a Memorandum of Understanding to pursue the initial phase of the Lao-Thailand-Malaysia-Singapore (LTMS) Power Integration Project.

### Tourism

70. We were pleased to note that in 2015, ASEAN received 108.9 million international visitors, an increase of 7.3% from 2014. We welcomed the ASEAN Tourism Strategic Plan (ATSP) 2016-2025 with a vision for ASEAN as a quality tourism destination by 2025, offering a unique, diverse ASEAN experience, and committed to responsible, sustainable, inclusive and balanced tourism development, so as to contribute significantly to the socio-economic well-being of ASEAN people. In celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ASEAN in 2017, we supported the ASEAN tourism campaign "Visit ASEAN@50: Golden Celebration" to be carried out by ASEAN Member States in a concerted manner to drive visitorship to the region through promoting and highlighting the best of ASEAN tourism products.

71. We noted the signing of the Agreement on the Establishment of the Regional Secretariat for the Implementation of the Mutual Recognition Arrangement on Tourism Professionals (MRA-TP) to be stationed in Jakarta and the further

development of key MRA-TP infrastructures, including the ASEAN Tourism Professional Registration System ([www.atprs.org](http://www.atprs.org)) to support its implementation.

### Regional Growth Area

72. We recognised the important role of sub-regional growth areas in contributing towards the ASEAN Community and narrowing the development gap. We were pleased to note the continued cooperation between the ASEAN Secretariat and the various subregional cooperation mechanisms in the region in the effort to improve coordination and strengthen regional integration.

### External Economic Relations

73. We welcomed the outcomes of improving our ASEAN Plus One Free Trade Agreements (FTAs), including the entry into force of the Third Protocol to Amend the ASEAN-Korea Trade in Goods Agreement, and the Protocol to Amend the Framework Agreement on Comprehensive Economic Co-operation and Certain Agreements Thereunder between ASEAN and China. We were pleased with the conclusion of services and investment negotiations under the ASEAN-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership, and noted the importance of the planned review of the ASEAN-India Trade in Goods Agreement, the commencement of the negotiations for further liberalisation under ASEAN-Korea Trade in Goods Agreement, the endorsement of the Terms of Reference for General Review of the ASEAN-Australia-New Zealand FTA, and the progress of the negotiations for ASEAN-Hong Kong, China FTA. We also welcomed the endorsement of the renewed ASEAN-Japan 10-Year Strategic Economic Partnership Roadmap, the ASEAN-U.S. Cooperation in Fostering Transparency and Good Regulatory Practices, and the ASEAN-U.S. Cooperation in Fostering International Investment.

74. We noted the intensification of the Regional Economic Comprehensive Partnership (RCEP) negotiations, and reiterated commitments towards the achievement of a modern, comprehensive, high-quality and mutually beneficial economic partnership agreement. We called for the ministers and negotiators to redouble efforts towards its early conclusion.

## **ASEAN SOCIO-CULTURAL COMMUNITY**

### Implementation of the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Blueprint 2025

75. We recognised the instrumental role of the ASCC in building ASEAN Community and in enhancing the ability of the peoples of ASEAN to come closer together, to embrace one another's cultures, to grow more inclusive, sustainable, resilient and dynamic, and to forge closely together a people-oriented, people-centred ASEAN.

76. We reiterated our strong commitment to work towards a full and effective implementation of the ASCC Blueprint 2025 which built upon and benefited from the experiences and lessons learned, cross-sectoral and cross-pillar collaboration and coordination and strengthened monitoring and evaluation capacity.

### ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Social Welfare and Development (AMMSWD)

77. We called on the AMMSWD to continue the implementation of the ASEAN Declaration on Strengthening Social Protection and the Kuala Lumpur Declaration on Ageing: Empowering Older Persons in ASEAN in collaboration with other relevant ASEAN Sectoral Bodies.

78. We were encouraged to note the establishment of the Network of Experts on Inclusive Entrepreneurship in ASEAN by the AMMSWD. The Network would contribute to the promotion of inclusive entrepreneurship as a strategy to support economic participation of persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups in the ASEAN Community.

79. We commended the adoption of the ASEAN Gender Sensitive Guideline on Handling Women Victims of Trafficking in Persons, the ASEAN Early Childhood Care, Development and Education (ECCDE) Quality Standards, and the ASEAN Guideline for a Non-Violent Approach to Nurturing, Care and Development of Children in all Settings.

80. We tasked the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC) to continue its efforts in implementing the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on Elimination of Violence against Women (RPA-EVAW) and ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on Elimination of Violence against Children (RPA-EVAC), in collaboration with relevant ASEAN Sectoral Bodies and stakeholders.

81. Recognizing the growing trend of ageing populations in the region, we underscored the need to address ageing-related challenges in a holistic manner and promote active ageing in national policy. We reaffirmed our commitment to cooperation in global and regional frameworks, including the Kuala Lumpur Declaration on Aging: Empowering Older Persons, adopted at the 27th ASEAN Summit in Kuala Lumpur in 2015, and to promote quality of life and well-being of peoples. We welcomed the ASEAN Plus Three Statement on Active Ageing that promotes a holistic approach and fosters partnership with all relevant stakeholders in response to the ageing issue which will be adopted at the 19<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Plus Three Summit.

### ASEAN Labour Ministers Meeting (ALMM)

82. We reaffirmed our commitment to promote inclusive and sustainable growth, employment and decent work and in this regard adopted the Vientiane Declaration on Transition from Informal Employment to Formal Employment towards Decent Work Promotion in ASEAN.

83. We noted the decision of the 24<sup>th</sup> ALMM on 15 May 2016 in Vientiane to finalise the draft ASEAN instrument on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers. The ASEAN Senior Labour Officials' Special Meeting held at the ASEAN Secretariat on 1-3 September 2016 further reviewed the pending Articles in the draft instrument and agreed that prior to the ASEAN Summit in 2017, the ASEAN Committee on the Implementation of the ASEAN Declaration on the Protection and



Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers (ACMW), and a Retreat will be convened to continue the process of finalising the draft instrument.

84. We noted the adoption of the ALMM's Work Programme 2016-2020 and the adoption of the ASEAN Guiding Principles for Quality Assurance and Recognition of Competency Certification Systems, the ASEAN Guidelines for Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), and the ASEAN Guidelines on Essential Workplace Action for Enterprises on the Prevention and Management of HIV and AIDS.

85. We welcomed the conduct of the First ASEAN Occupational, Safety and Health Network (OSHNET) Award on 27 April 2016 in Da Nang, Viet Nam, and the First ASEAN Red Ribbon Outstanding Workplace (ARROW) Award on 14 September 2016 in Bogor, Indonesia, as recognition of the important role of private companies in promoting decent work and opportunities for closer private-public partnerships in building a people-oriented, people-centered ASEAN Community.

#### ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Environment (AMME)

86. We adopted the ASEAN Joint Statement on Climate Change to the 22<sup>nd</sup> Session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC COP-22) and looked forward to fruitful outcomes of UNFCCC COP-22 in Marrakesh, Morocco in November 2016 in ensuring the successful implementation of Paris Agreement according to the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, in light of different national circumstances and in support of sustainable development.

87. We adopted the ASEAN Joint Statement to the Thirteenth Meeting of the Conference of Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP 13) which will be held on 4-17 December 2016 in Cancun, Mexico to articulate our commitments to the *ASEAN 2025: Forging Ahead Together*, the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the conservation and sustainable management of biodiversity and natural resources.

88. We noted that transboundary haze pollution arising from land and forest fires remains a major concern in the region. We reiterated our commitment to greater regional cooperation to address this concern, including through full and effective implementation of the ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution (AATHP). We looked forward to the establishment and full operationalisation of the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Transboundary Haze Pollution Control under the AATHP, which provide a strategic framework for the implementation of collaborative actions to address transboundary haze pollution in the ASEAN region. We took note of the Media Release of the 18<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Sub-Regional Ministerial Steering Committee (MSC) on Transboundary Haze Pollution issued by Ministers of Brunei Darussalam, Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore and Thailand. We noted the adoption of the Roadmap on ASEAN Cooperation towards Transboundary Haze Pollution Control with Means of Implementation at the 12<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution in the ASEAN Region. We looked forward to the full and effective implementation of the Roadmap. We remain steadfast for our sectoral bodies to explore means of further enhancing

regional cooperation efforts for delivering demonstrable improvements in achieving the vision of the Roadmap.

89. We encouraged ASEAN Member States to ratify and implement the Multilateral Environmental Agreements at the regional and international levels, which would help to ensure our people's equitable access to a clean and green ASEAN.

#### ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Management (AMMDM)

90. We reaffirmed our commitment to ensure ASEAN's collective response to disasters, and in this regard signed the ASEAN Declaration on One ASEAN One Response: ASEAN Responding to Disasters as One in the Region and Outside the Region. We reiterated our full support towards the enhancement of the role of the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on disaster management (AHA Centre) including the effective implementation of the ASEAN Emergency Rapid Assessment team (ERAT) and the Disaster Emergency Logistic System for ASEAN (DELSA). As the operational engine of ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER), AHA Center plays a primary role to realise the vision of One ASEAN one Response.

91. We emphasised the importance of the ASEAN Vision 2025 on Disaster Management which will guide ASEAN's cooperation in the next ten years in disaster management and emergency response. We welcomed the endorsement of the AADMER Work Programme 2016-2020 which is a comprehensive programme to reduce disaster losses and promote collective actions in responding to disasters and building the resilience of ASEAN Community. We looked forward to the implementation of the AADMER Work Programme 2016-2020.

92. In this regard, We welcomed the issuance of the ASEAN Joint Statement for the World Humanitarian Summit to showcase ASEAN's leadership by actively contributing to strategic policy discussions at the global level and the launch of the ASEAN-UN Joint Strategic Plan of Action on Disaster Management 2016-2020 (JSPADM III) at the sidelines of the World Humanitarian Summit which was held on 24 May 2016 in Istanbul, Turkey, as an example best practice in cooperation on disaster management between the United Nations and Regional Organisations.

93. We looked forward to the conduct of the ASEAN Regional Disaster Emergency Response Simulation Exercise (ARDEX) in October 2016 in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam.

#### ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Youth (AMMY)

94. We welcomed the convening of Interface with Representatives of ASEAN Youth and highlighted the important role of the youth in the ASEAN Community building. We also noted the endorsement in principle of the ASEAN Work Plan on Youth 2016-2020 at the Eight ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Youth (SOMY VIII) held on 25 August 2016 in Siem Reap, Cambodia.

95. We commended Malaysia's effort to promote meaningful youth involvement towards One Caring and Sharing Community through the successful conduct of the

fourth year of the ASEAN Youth Volunteerism Programme (AYVP) focusing on Disaster Risk Reduction held in the Philippines from 1 to 26 August 2016.

96. We noted the progress made on the development of the ASEAN Youth Development Index (YDI) to keep track on the evaluation of the outcomes and the effectiveness of youth initiatives, and provide the right environment for young people to participate in and benefit from ASEAN Community building.

#### ASEAN Ministers Meeting on Rural Development and Poverty Eradication (AMRDPE)

97. We were encouraged by the achievements of ASEAN Member States in poverty reduction and industrialisation and called on the AMRDPE to continue its efforts to enable the poor and vulnerable groups to fully participate in the socio-economic opportunities and to widely access social protection.

98. In this regard, we noted the adoption of the ASEAN Framework Action Plan on Rural Development and Poverty Eradication 2016-2020 and efforts to promote its coherence with national development programmes of ASEAN Member States.

#### ASEAN Health Ministers Meeting (AHMM)

99. We acknowledged that the endorsed ASEAN Post 2015 Health Development Agenda for 2016 to 2020 by the AHMM would pave the way to a Healthy, Caring and Sustainable ASEAN Community, where the people achieve maximal health potential through healthy lifestyle; have universal access to quality health care; have safe food and healthy diet, live in a healthy environment with sustainable inclusive development where health is incorporated in all policies as we move forward in implementing the ASCC Blueprint 2025. Promoting a Healthy ASEAN where health is incorporated in all policies would include the implementation of 20 Health Priorities which would be further operationalised through a five-year work programme. We acknowledged the importance of enhancing coordination and collaboration in cross-cutting issues which include among others, prevention and control of non-communicable diseases, addressing the threat of communicable and emerging infectious disease including pandemics and disaster health management. We further acknowledged the promotion of sustainable health financing systems for social protection particularly universal health coverage and sharing of experience in increasing technical capacity to develop affordable systems of health services.

100. We reaffirmed our commitment to the United Nations General Assembly Political Declaration on HIV and AIDS: On the Fast-Track to Accelerate the Fight against HIV and to End the AIDS Epidemic by 2030. In this regard, we adopted ASEAN Declaration of Commitment on HIV and AIDS: Fast Tracking and Sustaining HIV and AIDS Response to End the AIDS Epidemic by 2030.

#### ASEAN Ministers Responsible for Culture & Arts (AMCA)

101. We noted the adoption of the ASEAN Strategic Plan for Culture and Arts 2016-2025 and the Bandar Seri Begawan Declaration on Culture and Arts to

Promote ASEAN's Identity Towards a Dynamic and Harmonious ASEAN Community.

102. We encouraged AMCA to realise policy directions to facilitate cultural cooperation and promote partnership among ASEAN.

103. We looked forward to culture and arts events and activities to celebrate ASEAN's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2017.

#### ASEAN Ministers Responsible for Information (AMRI)

104. We noted the adoption of the ASEAN Strategic Plan for Information and Media 2016-2025. We encouraged AMRI to collaborate with all stakeholders to enhance understanding of ASEAN at the regional and global community and to continuously promote a sense of belonging among ASEAN citizens.

105. We noted AMRI's impactful initiatives to highlight the commemoration of ASEAN's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary through the information sector.

#### ASEAN Education Ministers Meeting (ASED)

106. We adopted the ASEAN Declaration on Strengthening Education for Out-of-School Children and Youth and welcomed the adoption of the ASEAN Work Plan on Education 2016-2020 which focused on eight areas including ASEAN awareness through strengthening Southeast Asian history and indigenous knowledge, quality and access to basic education, Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and lifelong learning. Education for Sustainable Development, higher education development and quality assurance mechanisms, university-industry partnership, and capacity building for teachers and the education community, pledging that no one will be left behind. These important documents acknowledged equitable opportunities to quality education and deepened education partnership among ASEAN Member States.

#### ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Women (AMMW)

107. We noted the adoption of the 2016-2020 Work Plan of the ASEAN Committee on Women and supported the initiative of the AMMW as agreed at their Second Meeting on 23 October 2015 in Manila, to develop a strategy for gender mainstreaming mechanisms in the three pillars of ASEAN. We encouraged all ASEAN Sectoral Bodies to promote gender responsiveness of their respective initiatives.

#### ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Sports (AMMS)

108. We welcomed the establishment of the ASEAN Plus Japan Ministerial Meeting on Sports (AMMS+Japan) Framework which was in support of the Vision Statement on ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation, and was aligned with the ASEAN Work Plan on Sports 2016-2020.

## ASEAN Cooperation on Civil Service Matter (ACCSM)

109. We noted the finalisation of the ACCSM Work Plan 2016-2020. We acknowledged the pivotal role of ACCSM in building responsive, open and adaptive ASEAN civil services that meet the needs of the people through innovative approaches and collaboration.

### **INITIATIVE FOR ASEAN INTEGRATION**

110. We noted with satisfaction the progress made by Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Viet Nam (CLMV) since the launch of the IAI in 2000, which aimed at assisting ASEAN's newer Member States to meet the region-wide targets and commitments. We reaffirmed our commitment to narrow the development gap that still exist within and among ASEAN Member States so that our peoples can benefit fully from the ASEAN Community.

111. In this regard, we were pleased to adopt the IAI Work Plan III, which comprises of five prioritised strategic areas, namely food and agriculture, trade facilitation, MSMEs, education as well as health and well-being. We resolved to realise the Work Plan in an effective manner, through partnership with ASEAN's Dialogue Partners and external parties, including international organisations and the private sector. Recognising that the Work Plan is closely aligned with the ASEAN Community Blueprints, we tasked relevant ASEAN Sectoral Bodies to support the implementation of the Work Plan in the areas under their respective purview.

### **ASEAN CONNECTIVITY**

112. We recognised that enhancing ASEAN Connectivity would continue to benefit all ASEAN Member States, through improved physical, institutional and people-to-people linkages. We commended the efforts of the ASEAN Connectivity Coordinating Committee (ACCC), together with relevant ASEAN Sectoral Bodies, in developing the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity 2025 (MPAC 2025) with the vision of achieving a seamlessly and comprehensively connected and integrated ASEAN that will promote competitiveness, inclusiveness, and a greater sense of Community. To ensure the effective implementation of the MPAC 2025, we tasked relevant ASEAN Ministers, the Secretary-General of ASEAN, the ACCC, other relevant ASEAN Sectoral Bodies and Organs, as well as National Coordinators and Focal Points, to coordinate closely with relevant stakeholders and mobilise adequate resources to the MPAC 2025.

113. We appreciated the support and interest expressed by our Dialogue Partners and external parties in enhancing ASEAN Connectivity. We looked forward to closer cooperation with our Dialogue Partners and external parties in implementing the MPAC 2025. We also looked forward to the convening of the Seventh ASEAN Connectivity Symposium, which will socialise and discuss ideas to implement the MPAC 2025.

## **ASEAN FOUNDATION**

114. We appreciated the initiatives made by the ASEAN Foundation in contributing to our community building process, which were reflected in the Foundation's efforts to convene consultations with various stakeholders such as farmer organisations, spiritual communities, faith-based organisations and social enterprises. We also noted with appreciation the ASEAN Foundation's internship initiative which aims to engage students in the region in ASEAN work processes. We recognised that the ASEAN Foundation is intensifying the use of its social media platforms to raise ASEAN awareness and increase outreach programmes that instills the sense of "Think, Feel and Be ASEAN" among ASEAN peoples.

## **TIMOR-LESTE'S APPLICATION FOR ASEAN MEMBERSHIP**

115. We noted the completion of the three independent studies on the implications of Timor-Leste's application for ASEAN Membership and impact on the APSC, AEC, and ASCC. We were pleased to note that a number of ASEAN sectoral bodies have started exploring the possibility of Timor-Leste's participation in their respective activities for capacity building purposes. We looked forward to the continued discussion of the ASEAN Coordinating Council Working Group, taking into consideration the results of the studies.

## **ASEAN EXTERNAL RELATIONS**

116. We noted with satisfaction the progress of ASEAN's relations with Dialogue Partners, Sectoral Dialogue Partners and external partners which continued to be strengthened and deepened. We noted the adoption of the new five-year Plans of Action (2016-2020) with Russia and the United Nations (UN) this year and encouraged the effective implementation of all Plans of Actions and Frameworks with Dialogue Partners and external parties to advance cooperation.

117. We were satisfied with the outcomes of the ASEAN-U.S. Special Leaders' Summit in Sunnylands, California, the United States, in February and the ASEAN-Russia Commemorative Summit in Sochi, Russia, in May this year, and looked forward to the forthcoming 19<sup>th</sup> ASEAN-China Summit to Commemorate the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of ASEAN-China Dialogue Relations, 1<sup>st</sup> ASEAN-Australia Biennial Summit, India, Japan, Republic of Korea, United States of America and the UN, as well as ASEAN Plus Three Summit and East Asia Summit.

118. We recognised the external parties' growing interests to establish formal partnerships with ASEAN, in accordance with the Guidelines for ASEAN's External Relations, including on the basis of mutual interest and benefit to support ASEAN Community-building processes. Taking into account the importance of a holistic perspective based on geostrategic considerations, we welcomed the Foreign Ministers' decision to confer the formal status of Sectoral Dialogue Partner to Switzerland and the formal status of Development Partner to Germany.

119. We reiterated the importance of maintaining ASEAN Centrality in shaping the evolving regional architecture built upon ASEAN-led processes, and reaffirmed our commitment to further strengthen our partnerships through various ASEAN-led

mechanisms, including the ASEAN Plus One, ASEAN Plus Three, East Asia Summit, ASEAN Regional Forum, and the ADMM Plus.

120. We noted the active role of the ASEAN Committees in Third Countries and International Organisations (ACTCs) in promoting ASEAN interests and coordinating ASEAN matters in their respective host countries. We welcomed the work of the CPR in further engaging the non-ASEAN Ambassadors Accredited to ASEAN, including the establishment of regular engagement between the CPR and Ambassadors of non-ASEAN EAS participating countries in Jakarta.

## **REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ISSUES**

### South China Sea

121. We remain seriously concerned over recent and ongoing developments and took note of the concerns expressed by some Leaders on the land reclamations and escalation of activities in the area, which have eroded trust and confidence, increased tensions and may undermine peace, security and stability in the region.

122. We reaffirmed the importance of maintaining and promoting peace, security, stability, safety and freedom of navigation in and over - flight above the South China Sea.

123. We further reaffirmed the need to enhance mutual trust and confidence, exercise self-restraint in the conduct of activities and avoid actions that may further complicate the situation, and pursue peaceful resolution of disputes in accordance with international law, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

124. We emphasised the importance of non-militarisation and self-restraint in the conduct of all activities, including land reclamation that could further complicate the situation and escalate tensions in the South China Sea.

125. We underscored the importance of the full and effective implementation of the DOC in its entirety, and while noting the momentum and new phase of consultations, urged all parties to work expeditiously for the early adoption of an effective Code of Conduct (COC), including through increasing the frequency of ASEAN-China Senior Officials' Meetings and Joint Working Group Meetings on the Implementation of the DOC.

126. We highlighted the urgency to intensify efforts to achieve further substantive progress in the implementation of the DOC in its entirety as well as substantive negotiations for the early conclusion of the COC including the outline and timeline of the COC.

127. Pursuant to the full and effective implementation of the DOC in its entirety, and pending the early adoption of an effective COC, we stressed the importance of undertaking confidence building and preventive measures to enhance, among others, trust and confidence amongst parties.

128. We welcomed the adoption of the Joint Statement of the Foreign Ministers of ASEAN Member States and China on the Full and Effective Implementation of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea and also welcomed the Joint Statement on the Application of the Code for Unplanned Encounters at Sea (CUES) in the South China Sea and the Guidelines for Hotline Communications among Senior Officials of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of ASEAN Member States and China in Response to Maritime Emergencies in the Implementation of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea which will be adopted by the 19<sup>th</sup> ASEAN-China Summit to Commemorate the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of ASEAN-China Dialogue Relations.

#### Developments on Korean Peninsula

129. We shared serious concern over the recent developments in the Korean Peninsula, including the nuclear tests on 6 January 2016, rocket launch on 7 February 2016, subsequent ballistic missile launches and submarine ballistic missile on 23 August 2016 by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) which are in violation of the UNSC resolutions. We reaffirmed the importance of peace and security in this region and reiterated ASEAN's support for the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula in a peaceful manner. We also urged the DPRK to comply with all relevant UNSC resolutions, including the UNSC Resolution 2270 and acknowledged the importance to exercise self-restraint and called on all parties to exert collective efforts to maintain peace and security in the said region and create an environment conducive to the early resumption of the Six-Party Talks.

#### Countering Extremism and Terrorism

130. We expressed our deepest concerns over the recent terrorist attacks in the region and beyond. In this regard, we extended our heartfelt condolences and sympathies to the families of the victims of the attacks. We strongly condemned extremism and terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and reaffirmed our commitment to strengthen coordination and cooperation in countering terrorism through, among others, the implementation of the ASEAN Convention on Counter Terrorism and the ASEAN Comprehensive Plan of Action on Counter Terrorism, and addressing the root causes of and conditions conducive for terrorism including violent extremism, including through the promotion of the Global Movement of Moderates.

#### Middle East

131. We reaffirmed ASEAN's support for the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including the right to self-determination, for an independent and viable state of Palestine based on a Two-State solution and reiterated the need for a comprehensive, just and sustainable Two-State Solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that will usher in an environment where Israel and Palestine live alongside each other in peace. We also urged both parties to actively take positive steps to allow for resumption of a credible peace process in order to reach a final, just and comprehensive settlement to the conflict.



132. We acknowledged the international efforts in the Israel-Palestinian peace process and render our support to ensure the successful convening of the international peace conference before the end of this year.

Group of Twenty (G20)

133. We noted the conclusion of the G20 Leaders' Summit held on 4-5 September 2016 in Hangzhou, Zhejiang, China and appreciated the continued opportunity provided for ASEAN to share ASEAN's views and perspectives concerning the global economy through regular participation of the ASEAN Chair at the G20 meetings.

Group of Seven (G7)

134. We welcomed the first engagement between ASEAN and G7 through the participation of the ASEAN Chair in the Outreach Meeting of the 43<sup>rd</sup> G7 Summit and looked forward to further engagement in the future.

**50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Establishment of ASEAN**

135. We looked forward to the celebration of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of ASEAN in 2017, commemorating five decades of cooperation and community-building in ASEAN and support the initiatives of the Philippines, as Chair of ASEAN in 2017, other ASEAN Member States, Dialogue Partners and the ASEAN Secretariat in commemorating this momentous occasion.

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