



**THE 2ND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON ASEAN MUTUAL RECOGNITION
ARRANGEMENT ON TOURISM PROFESSIONALS (ASEAN MRA-TP)
20-21 June 2018 / Phnom Penh, Cambodia**

MEDIA STATEMENT

1. The 2nd International Conference on the ASEAN Mutual Recognition Arrangement on Tourism Professionals (ASEAN MRA-TP) was hosted by the Ministry of Tourism of the Kingdom of Cambodia and co-organised with the ASEAN Secretariat on 20-21 June 2018 in Phnom Penh, Cambodia.
2. The Conference expressed their gratitude to CLMV Heads of States/Governments for supporting the Kingdom of Cambodia to host this International Conference as highlighted in the Joint Statement of the Ninth Cambodia – Lao PDR – Myanmar – Viet Nam Cooperation Summit in Bangkok, 16 June 2018.
3. The Conference was officially commenced by H.E. Dr. Thong Khon, Minister of Tourism and Chairman of the National Committee for Tourism Professionals of the Kingdom of Cambodia. In his opening remarks, he expressed his warm welcome to the ASEAN Secretariat and senior leader representatives of ASEAN Member States, ASEAN Centres, international tourism organisations, as well as participants of the Conference. Minister Thong Khon highlighted the significance of tourism contribution to the global economy. In 2017, the world received 1,323 million international arrivals with a 7% increase compared to 2016. This was equal to 10% of the world's GDP, and approximately 1 in every 10 jobs. The income from world travel and tourism is about 30% of service exports and 7% of total exports ranking 3rd in global exports, while oil ranked 1st and chemistry ranked 2nd. International tourist arrivals are expected to increase globally with a forecast of 1,400 million international tourists by 2020 and 1,800 million by 2030.
4. The Conference was highly successful in bringing together high-level government officials leading Tourism, Labour, Education and Vocational Training, international tourism organisations, UN agencies, hotels, tourism associations, industries, educational/training institutions and the media from throughout the ASEAN region, with an aim to increase awareness among the various stakeholders of the ASEAN MRA-TP. International speakers and moderators shared their success stories and challenges in delivering quality in a competitive world, job and economic growth through tourism, policy framework on the implementation of ASEAN MRA-TP, and recognition of qualifications in various sectors including the government, tourism and related industries, education/training institutions, certification boards, international organisations and development agencies.
5. The Conference addressed a wide range of topics on the ASEAN MRA-TP, which includes the following key areas:
 - a) Support the sustainable development of human resources through partnerships between relevant stakeholders;
 - b) Encourage public-private partnerships in tourism, spurring market competitiveness,

- creating employment and income generating opportunities — particularly for disadvantaged groups, enhancing socio-economic development, and accelerating the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals at destination levels and beyond;
- c) Encourage the adoption of the ASEAN Common Competency Standards for Tourism Professionals (ACCSTP) and Common ASEAN Tourism Curriculum (CATC) and associated assessment tools by institutions of higher learning to achieve standardised quality; and
 - d) Facilitate the mobility of qualified tourism professionals throughout the region, in accordance with relevant domestic laws, rules, regulations, national policies, and directives of each ASEAN Member State.

ASEAN MRA-TP dialogue

6. The ASEAN MRA-TP dialogue, held in conjunction with the Conference, was attended by Heads of Delegates of ASEAN Member States to exchange views and discuss the challenges faced in the implementation of the ASEAN MRA-TP in each AMS.
7. The Dialogue acknowledged the progress made by the ASEAN Member States in promoting the ASEAN MRA-TP in the respective Member States. Recognition of common qualifications by Certified Tourism Professionals under the MRA-TP would support Member States in developing ASEAN into a Quality Tourism Destination as indicated in the ASEAN Tourism Strategic Plan 2016-2025. The Dialogue noted the efforts of the Member States to sustain the significant growth of tourism development in the region.
8. The ASEAN Heads of Delegation who were present at the Dialogue, launched the Guidelines for ASEAN MRA-TP Trainers and Assessors and the Handbook of ASEAN MRA-TP.
9. The Dialogue recognised the importance of collaboration amongst stakeholders, training and educational institutions, industry, and development partners to further strengthen the implementation of the MRA-TP.
10. The Dialogue acknowledged the contribution made by the Government of Australia, to support the ASEAN MRA-TP through the ASEAN-Australia Development Cooperation Programme II.
11. The Dialogue noted the usefulness of the Conference. For the future, these conferences could also continue to exhibit training, education and tourism institutions.
12. Minister Thong Khon represented the ASEAN Tourism Ministers concluded the Dialogue and presented the Plaques of Appreciation to Tourism Training and Education Centres implementing the ASEAN MRA-TP Framework.
13. The Conference expressed their sincere appreciation and gratitude to the Ministry of Tourism, the Royal Government of the Kingdom of Cambodia for their warm hospitality and excellent arrangement of the Conference which ended with very fruitful outcomes.
14. The Conference highly expressed their sincere gratitude to **Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo HUN SEN**, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia for his strong support of ASEAN MRA-TP and for his valuable time to preside over the closing ceremony of the 2nd International Conference on ASEAN MRA-TP.
