

ASEAN FOREIGN MINISTERS' JOINT STATEMENT ON
THE INTERNATIONAL PROBLEM OF DRUG ABUSE
AND TRAFFICKING
KUALA LUMPUR, 9 JULY 1985

The ASEAN Foreign Ministers reviewed the current situation on the international drug problem and expressed their very grave concern at the continuing spread in drug abuse and illicit trafficking. They stated their conviction that the international drug problem had serious security implications and should not be seen only as a social and humanitarian problem. Apart from the suffering caused to individuals particularly the young, drug abuse and illicit trafficking weaken the social fabric of nations, represent direct and indirect economic costs to governments and entail criminal activities which could threaten the stability of states. The drug menace, furthermore, transcends national boundaries. For all these reasons the Ministers called for urgent international cooperative action to combat the threat that drug abuse and illicit trafficking posed to the international community.

The Foreign Ministers recalled that the ASEAN countries themselves, conscious of the need for combined action at the regional level, had adopted on 26 June, 1976, the ASEAN Declaration of Principles to Combat Abuse of Narcotic Drugs which provided for cooperation in preventive measures amongst themselves. Believing in the need for international action against the increasing dangers of drug abuse and illicit trafficking, the ASEAN countries had also

raised this matter with member countries of the European Economic Community at the Fifth ASEAN - EEC Ministerial Meeting held in Dublin in November 1984 at which meeting there was general agreement on the need for international action to combat the drug menace.

The Foreign Ministers welcomed on-going efforts of the international community in preparing the draft of a new Convention against Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances and Related Activities called for in the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 39/141 of 14 December 1984 and they looked forward to its early completion. The Ministers commended the Social Committee of the United Nations General Assembly, the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs, the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control, the International Narcotics Control Board and the Division of Narcotic Drugs of the United Nations Secretariat for their strenuous efforts in combatting the drug problem. The Ministers also noted with satisfaction the initiatives undertaken against international drug abuse and trafficking as reflected in the Quito Declaration against Traffic in Narcotic Drugs, the New York Declaration against Drug Trafficking and the Illicit Use of Drugs, the First Ladies Conference on Drugs in Washington in April 1985 and the initiative on drugs that emerged from the Bonn Summit of the Industrialised Countries in May, 1985.

Recognising the increasing awareness of the threat posed by the drug problem, the Foreign Ministers stressed that it was timely for the problem to be discussed at a high political level. In this regard, the Ministers warmly welcomed the proposal of the United Nations Secretary-General to convene a World Conference at the Ministerial Level in 1987 on Drug Abuse and Illicit

Trafficking. They believed that such a Conference would provide the added impetus and necessary political mandate for accelerated action in combatting the international drug problem.

The Ministers proposed that the focus of the World Conference should include the following areas:

- (i) Exchange of experiences and methodologies in law enforcement, preventive education, research and development of manpower in relation to the prevention and control of drug abuse;
- (ii) Creation of a heightened worldwide awareness of the pernicious effect of the abuse of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances from the security, social, cultural and humanitarian viewpoints;
- (iii) The harmonization of legislation relating to adequate punishment against drug traffickers, including, consideration of forfeitures of illegally acquired assets of drug traffickers;
- (iv) The eradication of the sources of raw materials for illicit drugs through a comprehensive programme of crop substitution and occupational diversification;
- (v) The control of production and distribution of narcotic and psychotropic substances with a view to limiting their use to medical and scientific purposes;

- (vi) Strengthening the capacity of the drug control entities such as the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control, the International Narcotics Control Board and the Division of Narcotic Drugs of the United Nations Secretariat through an organisational review including the possible amalgamation of their activities, and the co-ordination of such activities through the appointment of a high-level executive co-ordinator;

The Foreign Ministers called on like-minded countries to lend their full support to bring about the convening of the International Conference on Drug Abuse and Drug Trafficking in 1987 which they hope will set in train the necessary remedial measures which are commensurate to the pervasive and critical threat that drug abuse and illicit trafficking represent.

/55(a)