



**THIRTY SIXTH MEETING OF
THE ASEAN MINISTERS ON AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY
(36th AMAF)
23 September 2014, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar**

JOINT PRESS STATEMENT

1. The ASEAN Ministers of Agriculture and Forestry (AMAF) held our 36th Meeting on 23 September 2014 in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar, under the Chairmanship of H.E U Myint Hlaing, Union Minister, Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation of Myanmar.
2. H.E. U Thein Sein, the President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar preceded the Opening Ceremony and officiated the meeting. In his Opening Remarks, the President emphasised the need to take concerted efforts in addressing food security and nutrition to meet the United Nation's Millennium Development Goals (UN-MDGs). Acknowledging the adverse impacts of climate change that has affected the region, he urged ASEAN to work together in ensuring sustainable agriculture. Double efforts need to be undertaken to conserve natural resources, including water and forest resources, and to protect ecological system as well as to develop smallholder farmers and family farming system. In realizing the ASEAN Community, ASEAN should enhance cooperation and strengthened partnerships with dialogue partners, and international development partners.

Moving Towards 2015 and Beyond

3. We noted with satisfaction the on-going progress and achievements made in ASEAN cooperation in food, agriculture and forestry to move towards the realization of the ASEAN Community 2015. In order to ensure the realisation of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) deliverables in the Food, Agriculture and Forestry sectors by 2015, we requested all related ASEAN Sectoral Working Groups (ASWG) to timely implement the key deliverables and develop the Key Performance Indicator (KPI) for their respective sectors to facilitate the monitoring and implementation of the initiatives.
4. We acknowledged the importance to review and streamline the existing structure and mechanism under AMAF to support the next stage of ASEAN's integration efforts beyond 2015. We agreed that the reviewing and streamlining of the AMAF structure and mechanism should enhance the efficiency and effectiveness in achieving ASEAN integration in Food, Agriculture and Forestry Sectors.

5. We noted that the ASEAN Ad Hoc Task Force on Development of Vision, Objectives and Goals for ASEAN Cooperation in Food, Agriculture and Forestry (FAF) towards 2025 has undertaken a thorough study to review and assess the achievements and progress of ASEAN agriculture integration, identify opportunities and new strategies for ASEAN Cooperation on Food, Agriculture and Forestry beyond 2015. We tasked the Senior Officials to develop a Strategic Plan of Action for ASEAN Cooperation on Food, Agriculture and Forestry 2016-2025 to realise the vision of *“A competitive, inclusive, resilient and sustainable food, agriculture and forestry sector integrated with the global economy, based on a single market and production base contributing to food and nutrition security and prosperity in the ASEAN Community”*, and submit it for our adoption at our next meeting in 2015 .

Food Security Arrangements

6. We endorsed the revised ASEAN Integrated Food Security (AIFS) Framework and the new Strategic Plan of Action on Food Security (SPA-FS) 2015-2020, which incorporates a new component on nutrition, to enable ASEAN to address new developments and challenges in the realisation of the common goal of long-term food security and nutrition. In this connection, we appreciated the contribution and support provided by the Development Partners, especially the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in the development of the AIFS Framework and SPA – FS 2015-2020.

7. We acknowledged the progress made in the implementation of the ASEAN Multi-Sectoral Framework on Climate Change: Agriculture and Forestry towards Food Security (AFCC) and appreciated the contribution and support extended to ASEAN Member States by the International and Dialogue Partners. We also noted the continue support from the ASEAN-German Programme on Climate Change: Agriculture, Forestry and related Sectors (GAP-CC) through newly proposal “Forestry and Climate Change (FOR-CC)”, and the ASEAN-Swiss Partnership Programme on Social Forestry and Climate Change (ASFCC)

Cooperation on Sectoral and Priority Issues

8. We reviewed the cooperation in the individual areas of food, agriculture and forestry, and commended our subsidiary bodies for their efforts and achievements made in their respective areas. As a result, we endorsed, amongst other, the list of 73 Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs) for pesticides; ASEAN Guidelines on the Regulation, Use and Trade of Biological Control Agents (BCA); ASEAN Standard on Organic Agriculture and the Strategic Plan of Action (SPA) for Cooperation in Organic Agriculture (2014-2017); ASEAN Guidelines on Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) for Animal Vaccines; ASEAN Good Animal Husbandry Practices (GAHP) Strategic Plan; ASEAN Guidelines for Good Aquaculture Practices (ASEAN GAqP) on Food Fish; and ASEAN Standards for some commodities such as Cocoa beans, Oyster mushroom, Peanut, Sugar apple, Sweet potato, Sweet tamarind, and Tea.

9. We noted that significant achievements have been made in enhancing the competitiveness of agricultural commodities through the development and implementation of ASEAN best practices, namely Good Agricultural Practices (GAP), Good Aquaculture Practices (GAqP), and Good Animal Husbandry Practices (GAHP). We noted the initiative to establish an ASEAN certification and accreditation mechanism to support the implementation of these best practices and encouraged development and dialogue partners to involve in the process.

10. We acknowledged the progress of activities in the areas of agricultural research and development (R&D), including the ASEAN Agricultural Research and Development Information System (ASEAN-ARDIS). We encouraged Member States to enhance investment in R&D with focus on technologies that are greener, more adaptable, more affordable and more suitable for smallholders, and innovations that help producers to adapt on the challenges of climate change and dwindling natural resources.

11. We commended the continuous works under the ASEAN Cooperation on Forestry, which include the successful conclusion of the cooperation activities on Sustainable Forest Management, Forest Law Enforcement and Governance (FLEG), legality timber and timber certification, forest and climate change, Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species (CITES) and Wildlife Enforcement, forest product development, herbal and medicinal plants, international forest policy processes, cooperation on CITES, and Social Forestry. In this regard, we appreciated the Monitoring, Assessment and Reporting (MAR) online system for Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) that would be re-launched to facilitate reporting progress on SFM. We also acknowledged the significant progress and achievement that have been reached and further enhanced in several areas, including ASEAN cooperation and common position in international forest policy processes and negotiations.

12. We recognised that mangrove forests are unique intertidal ecosystems that occur primarily in tropical regions of the world and they support genetically diverse communities of terrestrial and aquatic fauna and flora that are of direct and indirect environmental, economic and social value to human societies throughout the world. Sustainable development of mangrove ecosystems implies the maintenance and rational use of the natural resources to ensure ecological resilience and economic opportunities for present and future generations. We agreed to foster cooperation in managing mangrove ecosystems for sustainable purposes through the establishment of procedures and methodologies for assessing the status of mangrove ecosystems and for managing them, and implementing national legal provisions and strengthening institutional setup for the protection and conservation of mangrove ecosystems.

13. We noted the progress of the various cooperative programmes and significant activities in fisheries, including the projects to support the implementation of ASEAN Integrated Food Security Framework (AIFS) and AFCC, the implementation of the Strategic Plan of Action (SPA) on ASEAN Cooperation in Fisheries (2011-2015) and

its Prioritized Activities for ASEAN Cooperation in Fisheries for the period of 2013-2015.

14. We noted and supported various activities related to Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) carried out by the various existing ASEAN mechanisms, including the working groups under AMAF, the ASEAN Committee on SPS (AC-SPS) under AEM, and the Sub-Committees on SPS (SC-SPS) under various ASEAN Dialogue Partners Free Trade Agreements (ASEAN-DP FTAs).

15. We reiterated our commitment to enhancing the competitiveness of ASEAN agricultural and forestry products through the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding on ASEAN Cooperation and Joint Approaches in Agriculture and Forest Products Promotion Scheme (2015-2019) to lay down the foundation for greater cooperation in upgrading the quality and safety of the products.

16. We noted the achievements in the significant reduction of the reported number of the Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) incidences since its peak in 2004. We also noted the continuation of threat not only from the HPAI H5N1 but also emergences of other animal and zoonotic influenza viruses, such as influenza A H1N1, H7N9, and more recently H5N6. In this regard, we supported the initiative to mobilise the existing network, whereby broadening the scope of the HPAI Taskforce to address all concerns on important animal influenza viruses.

17. We commended the substantial progress made in the establishment of the ASEAN Coordination Centre for Animal Health and Zoonoses (ACCAHZ) to coordinate, harmonize and unify approaches in animal health and zoonoses measures. We noted and acknowledged that ACCHAZ will not only positively influence the control of HPAI, but will also lay a foundation for a more effective approach to address concerns for other animal diseases and zoonoses in the region. We appreciated the contributions and support given by Development Partners especially the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) through the European Union-Highly Pathogenic Emerging Diseases (EU-HPED) Program FAO Component in the development of ACCAHZ. We tasked our Senior Officials to expedite the process of the ACCAHZ establishment by 2015.

Country initiatives for programmes/ projects on food, agriculture and forestry

18. We supported with appreciation the programmes and projects initiated by ASEAN Member States to further enhance cooperation in food, agriculture and forestry, among others, including: (i) ASEAN Genetically Modified Food Testing Network (ASEAN GMF Net), (ii) ASEAN Food Safety Network (AFSN) (iii) ASEAN Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (ARASFF) and ASEAN Mangrove Network.

19. We supported the initiative on Public Private Partnership Cooperation for Establishing Food Value Chain between ASEAN and Japan and noted that some activities have been conducted such as the establishment of Joint Working Group consisted of representatives from food-related private companies and organisations, academia, local and central organisations and “the Strategy for Global Food Value Chain”.

Moving Together with Partners towards 2015

20. We highly appreciated the assistance and support rendered by various Dialogue Partners and International Organisations, including Australia, China, the European Commission, Germany, India, Japan, the Republic of Korea, the United States of America, the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations, the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), and the Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC) in advancing cooperation on food, agriculture and forestry in ASEAN region.

21. We supported the UN’s “Zero Hunger Challenge” initiative adopted in December 2013, and agreed to closely collaborate with FAO on its implementation at the regional level to support the attainment of the MDG Goal 1 (one) as well as to achieve ‘zero hunger’ for the remaining 12% of population in the Asia-Pacific.

22. We noted the outcomes of the Consultation Meeting between ASEAN and the Russia Federation Senior Officials on Agriculture (ARSOMA) and welcomed the support from Russia Federation on Agriculture Cooperation in the region. We welcomed the establishment of the ARSOMA as a body to promote and intensify cooperation in the agriculture and food security sector between ASEAN and Russia. We considered and endorsed the *TOR of the ASEAN and Russian Federation Senior Officials’ Meetings on Agriculture (ARSOMA)*.

23. We welcomed and supported the partnerships with the World Economic Forum (WEF) and the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) towards economic integration and ensuring the food is secure and prosperous ASEAN Community. The WEF’s initiative on Grow Asia will serve as a multi-stakeholder partnership platform to catalyse actions that contribute to food security and sustainable, inclusive agricultural development in support of national and regional priorities in ASEAN. The IRRI’s initiative on Global Rice Science Partnership: Securing a Stable Rice Supply by Building a New Generation of ASEAN Rice Scientists will provide the opportunities for the creation of a new generation of ASEAN rice scientists and extension professionals.

The 37th AMAF Meeting

24. We agreed to convene the 37th ASEAN Ministers on Agriculture and Forestry Meeting in the Philippines in 2015.

25. We expressed our sincere appreciation and gratitude to the Government and People of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar for hosting the 36th AMAF Meeting and for their warm hospitality and excellent arrangements made for the Meeting.

The Meeting was attended by:

- i. H.E. Pehin Dato Yahya, Minister of Industry and Primary Resources, Brunei Darussalam
- ii. H.E. Ouk Rabun PhD,
Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Cambodia
- iii. H.E. Dr. Suswono, Minister of Agriculture, Indonesia
- iv. H.E. Dr. Ty Phommasack, Vice Minister of Agriculture and Forestry, Lao PDR
- v. H.E. Dato' Sri Ismail Sabri bin Yaakob, Minister of Agriculture and Agro-Based Industry, Malaysia
- vi. H.E. U Myint Hlaing, Union Minister for Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation, The Republic of the Union of Myanmar
- vii. H.E. Segfredo R. Serrano, Undersecretary of the Department of Agriculture, Philippines
- viii. H.E. Dr. Mohamad Maliki bin Osman, Minister of State for National Development and Defence, Singapore
- ix. H.E. Petipong Pungbun Na Ayudhya, Minister of Agriculture and Cooperatives, Thailand
- x. H.E. Dr. Le Quoc Doanh, Vice Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Viet Nam
- xi. H.E. Dr. AKP Mochtan, Deputy Secretary General, Community and Corporate Affairs, ASEAN Secretariat