

Joint Statement between ASEAN and China on Further Deepening the Cooperation on Infrastructure Connectivity

13 November 2017, Manila, Philippines

We, the Heads of State/Government of the Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the People's Republic of China, gathered on the 50th Anniversary of ASEAN and the 20th ASEAN-China Summit in Manila, Republic of the Philippines:

REITERATING the commitment to further deepen and expand mutually-beneficial economic cooperation, as well as support for ASEAN's Centrality and further integration process in the evolving regional architecture, as stated in the Chairman's Statement of the 19th ASEAN-China Summit to Commemorate the 25th Anniversary of ASEAN-China Dialogue Relations in Vientiane, Lao PDR on 7 September 2016;

RECALLING the commitment to explore ways to improve connectivity between both sides by synergising common priorities identified in the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity 2025 (MPAC 2025) and China's "Belt and Road" initiative as stated in the Joint Statement of the 19th ASEAN-China Summit to Commemorate the 25th Anniversary of ASEAN-China Dialogue Relations;

NOTING the five strategic objectives of MPAC 2025 ,namely: Sustainable Infrastructure, Digital Innovation, Seamless Logistics, Regulatory Excellence and People Mobility, and the five major cooperation priorities of the Belt and Road Initiative, namely: Policy Coordination, Connectivity of Infrastructure, Unimpeded Trade, Financial Integration and Closer People-to-People Ties;

ACKNOWLEDGING the issuance of strategic guiding documents such as ASEAN Vision 2025, (MPAC 2025) and Vision and Actions of Jointly Building Silk Road Economic Belt and 21st Century Maritime Silk Road;

ACKNOWLEDGING the rapid, comprehensive, and significant progress achieved in mutually-beneficial ASEAN-China economic and trade relations as indicated by 2016 trade which stood at USD 368 billion, placing China as ASEAN's largest trading partner, and ASEAN as the third largest trading partner of China and on investments with ASEAN as China's third largest source of FDI inflows, while China as ASEAN's fourth largest external source of FDI flows;

RECOGNISING that ASEAN and China enjoy complementary comparative advantages, there is great potential for further deepening the cooperation on infrastructure connectivity which would significantly facilitate the development of economic and trade relations, crucial support for realising the sustainable development goal, as well as new boost into global and regional economic development; and

RECOGNISING that AEM-MOFCOM Consultations and the meetings between ASEAN Connectivity Coordinating Committee (ACCC) and the Chinese Working Committee of the China-ASEAN Connectivity Cooperation Committee (CWC-CACCC) could continue to enhance their roles in coordination, to further promote the exchange and synergy of national and regional development strategies; focus on infrastructure construction cooperation by bringing advantages in full play; jointly strengthen related capacity building cooperation; explore the depth and breadth of connectivity and resolve bottlenecks; give impetus to a more dynamic, inclusive and sustainable global development and regional economic integration;

For the long-term cooperation and common prosperity of ASEAN and China, on the basis of equality, mutual benefit, and in accordance with domestic laws and regulations, we agreed to endeavour to strengthen and promote the development of comprehensive infrastructure connectivity cooperation through the following:

I. Improve the linkages of infrastructure development strategies between each other. Encourage information exchange, and sharing of best practices through information and experience exchanges.

II. Discuss potential projects, including development plans, with a view to consolidate a list of priority projects for infrastructure connectivity under ASEAN-China Connectivity cooperation.

III. Take necessary measures to encourage and promote connectivity cooperation in areas such as railways, highways, port and harbours, airports, power and communication, for building better business and investment environment.

IV. Take necessary measures to promote business practices that will encourage respective domestic production as well as ensure mutually beneficial implementation of infrastructure connectivity cooperation.

V. Enhance connectivity in the region through continued support on the implementation of MPAC 2025 including infrastructure construction and human resource development as well as training cooperation.

VI. Encourage financial institutions from both sides to provide, in accordance with their existing laws and regulations and –on the basis of technical evaluation and business operation, more convenient, effective and diversified financial services to the infrastructure projects developed by both sides. Fully utilize the Silk Road Fund and special loans for infrastructure cooperation between ASEAN and China, and encourage the participation of multilateral financial institutions such as Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, the Asian Development Bank, the World Bank Group, etc in the development and construction of relevant infrastructure projects.

VII. Encourage the active role of research institutions, including think-tanks and other knowledge partners, to promote further mutual understanding and closer cooperation on infrastructure connectivity among industry associations, research institutions and enterprises.

VIII. Encourage the cooperation between private sectors from both sides on the investment, construction and operation of infrastructure projects. Such cooperation could cover but not limited to development planning, project designing, investment and financing, design consulting, construction, installation and debugging, operation and maintenance, as well as manufacturing, processing and supplying of equipment and building materials with special attention to encourage utilisation of locally available supplies.

IX. Urge the enterprises to, when implementing infrastructure cooperation projects, comply with domestic laws and its implementing rules and regulations, practice concepts of green, environment and sustainable development, and attain harmoniously, mutually beneficial and win-win relationship with the local community.