

**Joint Press Statement**  
**The Sixth ASEAN Heads of Statistical Offices Meeting (AHSOM6)**  
**16-17 August 2005, Manila, Philippines**

**Introduction**

1. We, the ASEAN Heads of Statistical Offices, convened our sixth meeting in Manila, Philippines to exchange views on recent global and regional developments in statistics, review statistical developments and progress of our cooperation in support of the Vientiane Action Programme (VAP) and other regional initiatives as embodied in the ASEAN Framework Of Cooperation In Statistics, including harmonization of statistics, adoption of international standards and good practices, capacity building and human resource development.

2. Mrs. Carmelita N. Ericta, Administrator of Philippine National Statistics Office chaired our meeting. Deputy Director General Nestor R. Mijares IV of the National Economic Development Authority delivered the Opening Message on behalf of the Secretary of Socioeconomic Planning and NEDA Director General Augusto B. Santos.

**Progress of ASEAN Cooperation in Statistics**

**Support for ASEAN Initiatives, Planning and Policy Making**

3. We reiterated our commitment to support ASEAN initiatives as reflected in the Vientiane Action Programme (VAP) and look forward to stronger government support and commitment in our endeavor.

4. To enhance our support to ASEAN initiatives, we agreed to review the current ASEAN Statistical Indicators (ASI) framework to include other relevant indicators needed in support of the VAP and the integration of the eleven priority sectors. This ASI framework may include a revised list of indicators and work program serving as our reference in promoting statistical cooperation and development in the region in the medium term.

5. In particular, we agreed to focus our cooperation on improving the quality of international merchandise trade (IMT), international trade in services (ITS), foreign direct investment (FDI), health, education, information and communication technology (ICT) and non-observed economy (NOE) statistics as well as others that will later be included as a result of the ASI review.

6. In that connection, we welcome the ASEAN Secretariat's initiative to develop an ASEAN Benchmark Report through which a list of indicators is being developed to measure the base-line situation as well as monitor the progress of implementation of the VAP.

7. We are pleased to note that the ASEAN Statistical Yearbook that has been prepared by the ASEAN Secretariat has now reached its fourth issue and reiterate our support to further improve the coverage and quality of the regional statistics in this annual publication.

8. One of the important indicators in the Yearbook is population estimates which are used in many key indicators. We agreed to improve the availability and consistency of our population statistics, including population estimates and projections.

### **Harmonization of Statistics**

9. We are also pleased to acknowledge the efforts and progress made by the ASEAN Task Force on Statistical Classifications in promoting greater harmonization of statistical classification and responding to global initiatives on revision of International Standard for Industrial Classification (ISIC Rev.4), including the on-going preparation of an ASEAN Guide for Common ISIC Revision .

10. We welcome the progress made in the harmonization of industrial and commercial statistics through the ASEAN-METI Economic and Industrial Cooperation Committee (AMEICC) Working Group. In this connection, we acknowledge with appreciation the technical assistance that the Ministry of Economy Trade and Industry (METI), Japan, has been providing to support the cooperation activities of the Working Group.

### **Adoption of International Standard and Good Practices**

11. We shared our experiences in and discussed issues arising from the implementation of the System of National Accounts (SNA) 1993 and the ISIC.

12. To further promote adoption of international good practices, we agreed to regularly provide an update on country experiences, beginning with good practices on communication of statistics at our next meeting.

### **Capacity Building and Human Resource Development**

13. We acknowledge with appreciation the technical assistance provided by the ASEAN Australia Development Cooperation Program (AADCP) to assist our efforts to further harmonize the international merchandise trade and international trade in services statistics. Similarly, we also appreciate the European Commission for their technical assistance and support to further develop the above as well as the FDI, health, education and NOE statistics.

14. We also welcome the UNSD's initiative to provide statistical training to ASEAN Member Countries in support of the 2010 Population and Housing Census.

15. We noted with appreciation the updates from the representatives from ADB, UNESCAP, UNSIAP and PARIS21 on their related initiatives, programs and activities.

16. We are pleased to note that a number of programs and activities have been organized to provide capacity building to Member Countries as part of the ASEAN-help-ASEAN program and agreed to further strengthen our cooperation in this area.

17. We resolve to further enhance our cooperation and foster closer collaboration to advance the development of statistical systems in the region as well as to provide necessary statistical support to facilitate regional cooperation activities and initiatives.

### **Hosting of the ASEAN Heads of Statistical Offices Meeting (AHSOM)**

18. We expressed our thanks and appreciation to the Government of the Philippines, in particular the National Statistics Office and other cooperating agencies, for the excellent arrangements made for the meeting and for the warm hospitality accorded to us during AHSOM6.

19. We agreed to meet in Brunei Darussalam in 2006.