

**Joint Press Statement**  
**The Fourth ASEAN Heads of Statistical Offices Meeting**  
**(AHSOM 4)**

9-10 December 2002, Yangon, Union of Myanmar

**I. Introduction**

1. We, the ASEAN Heads of Statistical Offices, convened our fourth meeting in Yangon, Myanmar, to exchange views on recent developments in official statistics, discuss progress of our regional cooperation, and explore ways to further promote harmonization and development of statistics, as well as to facilitate statistical capacity building.

2. Dr. Sein Tin, Director General of Central Statistical Organization of the Union of Myanmar, presided over our meeting.

**II. Progress of ASEAN Cooperation in Statistics**

**ASEAN Framework of Cooperation in Statistics**

3. We have reached an important milestone by signing an ASEAN Framework of Cooperation in Statistics that sets the direction of our cooperation in promoting greater harmonization, strengthened capacities, and higher quality of statistics. Towards that end we agreed to harmonize the definition, classification, concept and measurement of high priority statistics to promote the production of comparable statistical indicators, particularly those that are needed for ASEAN initiatives, planning and policy making, adopt international good practices and promote capacity building.

**ASEAN Statistical Indicators**

4. In support of ASEAN Initiatives, we have identified a number of core statistical indicators constituting the ASEAN Statistical Indicators, which reflect the following high priority areas of statistics:

- a. Trade and Manufacturing Industry
- b. General Business and Real Sector Development
- c. Tourism and International Trade in Services
- d. Poverty, social development and social protection
- e. Environment and sustainable development
- f. Energy, access and inputs to development

**Harmonization of Statistics**

5. A sound foundation for further promoting the quality, reliability, and comparability of statistics have been in place by agreeing on the means and measures to promote harmonization and quality of statistics which include the establishment of the following three task forces:

- a. Task Force on Harmonization of Statistical Classifications
- b. Task Force on Harmonization of Poverty statistics
- c. Task Force on Harmonization of International Trade in Services Statistics

6. We have further agreed to commence the Task Force on Harmonization of Statistical Classifications in early 2003.

**Statistical Capacity Building**

7. We acknowledged the importance of statistical capacity building where more advanced countries transfer knowledge and good practices to less advanced countries. We also are aware of the existing modalities and resources available in the region, including the training facilities, expertise and experiences in member countries

as well as the resources and the ongoing capacity building activities in international organizations, and shall take this into account in promoting capacity building in the region.

#### Adoption of International Good Practices

8. We agreed to promote greater transparency and public awareness and appreciation of official statistics. We further agreed to work towards greater adherence to the United Nations Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics.

#### III. Expression of Appreciation to the Government of the Union of Myanmar

9. We thanked the Government of the Union of Myanmar, especially the Central Statistical Organization, for the excellent arrangements made for the meeting and for the warm hospitality accorded to us during the AHSOM 4.

#### IV. The Fifth ASEAN Heads of Statistical Offices Meeting (AHSOM 5)

10. We thanked the Head of the National Statistical Center of Lao PDR for the proposal to host the fifth meeting.