OVERVIEW OF
ASEAN-PACIFIC ALLIANCE RELATIONS

BACKGROUND

- The Pacific Alliance is a regional integration initiative comprised of Chile, Colombia, Mexico and Peru, established in April 2011 through the signing of the Lima Declaration. The Alliance’s main goal is to increase competitiveness by integrating economies and allow for the free flow of capital, goods, people and services among members, in addition to seeking expanded trade with Asia-Pacific countries.

- Indonesia, Singapore, Thailand and the Philippines are observer countries of the Pacific Alliance. Singapore is a candidate of the associate member of the Pacific Alliance. Associate member status would give Singapore the right to negotiate high-standard economic trade agreements with the Pacific Alliance as a bloc.

- As a bloc, the Pacific Alliance is the eighth economic power and the eight export force worldwide. In Latin America and the Caribbean, the Pacific Alliance represents 38% of the GDP, 50% of the total trade and attracts 45% of the Foreign Direct Investment.

- The ASEAN Secretariat database recorded that the total two-way trade between ASEAN and the Pacific Alliance reached US$ 21.23 billion in 2017. Preliminary data shows that inflow of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) from the Pacific Alliance to ASEAN in 2018 accounted for US$ 35.99 million.

ASEAN-PACIFIC ALLIANCE RELATIONS

Pacific Alliance’s Request for Formal Engagement with ASEAN

- The Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Colombia, on behalf of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Pacific Alliance, wrote a letter on 19 May 2011 to the ASEAN Foreign Ministers, proposing to convene an ASEAN-Pacific Alliance Foreign Ministers’ Meeting at the side-lines of the 66th Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in September 2011 to explore possible cooperation between ASEAN and the Pacific Alliance.

- On 24 May 2011, a delegation led by H.E. Mrs. Patti Londono, Vice-Minister for Multilateral Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Colombia, paid a working visit to the ASEAN Secretariat to express the desire of the Foreign Ministers of the Pacific Alliance to meet and discuss how to forge ASEAN-Pacific Alliance relations.

---

1 https://alianzapacifico.net/en/what-is-the-pacific-alliance/
2 ASEAN Secretariat Trade Database as of 30 November 2018.
3 ASEAN Secretariat FDI Database as of 30 June 2019.
• At a bilateral meeting with H.E. Le Luong Minh, then Secretary-General of ASEAN, at the sidelines of the 6th FEALAC Foreign Ministers’ Meeting in Bali in June 2013, the Vice Foreign Minister of Peru, H.E. Fernando Rojas Samanez, sought ASEAN’s response to the Pacific Alliance’s request to forge relations with ASEAN.

• During the AMM Retreat in Hua Hin on 13-14 August 2013, Thailand informed the Meeting that the Pacific Alliance had proposed to convene an Informal Foreign Ministers’ Meeting between ASEAN Troika and the Pacific Alliance at the sidelines of the 68th Session of the UNGA in New York in September 2013. However, ASEAN did not receive any official request from the Pacific Alliance on this matter.

• On 15 July 2014, four Ambassadors of the member countries of the Pacific Alliance, namely Mexico, Chile, Colombia, and Peru, paid a courtesy call on then Secretary-General Le Luong Minh to brief on recent developments of the Pacific Alliance and proposed for ASEAN-Pacific Alliance cooperation in areas such as trade and investment, connectivity, education, scholarship and people-to-people exchanges, among others. The Ambassadors also stressed that it was time for the two organisations to embark on steps to formalise this potential relationship. The four Ambassadors of the Pacific Alliance member countries in Jakarta also had a meeting with the Committee of Permanent Representatives to ASEAN (CPR) on 18 August 2014 in Jakarta to present the above-mentioned proposals.

ASEAN-Pacific Alliance Ministerial Meetings

• The Ministers of ASEAN and the Pacific Alliance met for the first time on 25 September 2014 at the sidelines of the 69th Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in New York, during which both sides agreed to explore cooperation in areas of mutual interest. Since then, ASEAN and Pacific Alliance Ministers have met regularly at the sidelines of the UNGA. Six ASEAN-Pacific Alliance Ministerial Meetings have been convened so far. The 6th ASEAN-Pacific Alliance Ministerial Meeting was held on 28 September 2019 in New York.

• One notable outcome of the ASEAN-Pacific Alliance Ministerial Meetings was the adoption of the ASEAN-Pacific Alliance Framework for Cooperation at the 3rd ASEAN-Pacific Alliance Ministerial Meeting held on 24 September 2016. This Framework for Cooperation laid foundation for cooperation between the two sides in four priority areas, namely: (i) Economic Cooperation; (ii) Education and People-to-people Contacts; (iii) Science, Technology and Innovation; and (iv) Sustainable Development.

The Meeting between the Committee of Permanent Representatives to ASEAN (CPR) and the Group of External Relations of the Pacific Alliance (GER)

• The ASEAN-Pacific Alliance Framework for Cooperation stipulates that the CPR and GER of the Pacific Alliance, supported by the Ambassadors of the Pacific Alliance member countries to ASEAN, shall engage with each other at least once a year in Jakarta, unless otherwise mutually agreed, to assess the progress implementation of
the Framework for Cooperation as well as identify possible new areas for future engagement.

- To date, five meetings between the CPR and the GER of the Pacific Alliance have been held with four meetings were held in Jakarta and one meeting was held in Bangkok.

- The third Meeting between the CPR and the GER of the Pacific Alliance on 3 May 2017 adopted the ASEAN-Pacific Alliance Work Plan for 2017-2018. This Work Plan was noted by the 4th ASEAN-Pacific Alliance Ministerial Meeting on 22 September 2017. It lists down the activities to implement the ASEAN-Pacific Alliance Framework for Cooperation.

- The timeline of the ASEAN-Pacific Alliance Work Plan for 2017-2018 was extended to December 2019 by the 4th CPR-GER Meeting on 7 August 2018. It was further extended to December 2020 by the 5th CPR-GER Meeting held on 16 August 2019.

**Coordinatorship**

- The coordinatorship of ASEAN-Pacific Alliance relations is rotated alphabetically among ASEAN Member States on a one-year basis. Indonesia is the country coordinator for ASEAN-Pacific Alliance relations for 2020. On the other hand, Chile is the current President Pro-tempore of the Pacific Alliance until the end of July 2020.

* * * * *