

ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Statement on ASEAN Cooperation on Sustainable Development

1. A Special Session of the ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting Focusing on Sustainable Development was convened at the United Nations Headquarters in New York on 24 September 2016 to discuss and develop ways in which ASEAN could contribute to regional and global efforts in promoting sustainable development. In this connection, the ASEAN Foreign Ministers recalled the importance of individual and collective efforts to achieve the twin goals of implementing the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and attaining the SDGs, and of realising the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and its Blueprints, to help ensure that no one is left behind.

2. Recognising that complementarities exist between the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the ASEAN Community Vision 2025, the Ministers exchanged views on how such complementarities could be enhanced to promote further progress in pursuing sustainable development and community-building in tandem. The Ministers agreed that it would be useful for ASEAN to play a value-added role in contributing to sustainable development efforts at the national and global levels, while bearing in mind resource constraints and the need to avoid duplication of effort.

3. The Ministers agreed that in order to enable ASEAN's effective contributing role in the sustainable development efforts, a holistic approach needs to be adopted in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, emphasising the balance of the three pillars of sustainable development. The Ministers further agreed that it would be important to identify priority areas whereby complementarities could be enhanced, particularly in the areas such as reducing poverty and hunger, tackling inequalities and promoting women empowerment, fostering sustainable economic growth and equitable social development, protecting the environment, ensuring peoples' access to clean water and clean air, minimising adverse impact of climate change, and building effective institutions to achieve sustainable and inclusive development.

4. The Ministers also believed that it would be useful to develop a Roadmap to help guide efforts to enhance such complementarities. The Roadmap should contain a clear timeline on the identification of priority areas, implementation of activities to enhance complementarities, as well as monitoring and evaluation of implementation.

5. The Ministers recognised that in ensuring the attainment of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and all its related goals, global partnership is necessary, particularly in mobilising the means of implementation. In this regard, the Ministers agreed to enhance regional cooperation in science and technology development as well as capacity building, including but not limited to, strengthening statistical capacity.

6. The Ministers agreed that it is important to identify best practices of Agenda 2030 Implementation in every country that could be replicated in other countries so as to ensure the attainment of the 2030 Agenda throughout the region and in turn accelerate the achievement of the global agenda.

7. The Ministers recalled the decision of the ASEAN Coordinating Council (ACC) on 6 September 2016 tasking the ASEAN Secretariat to coordinate with ASEAN Sectoral Bodies to examine how complementarities between the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development could be developed in the fields pertinent to those Sectoral Bodies.

8. The Ministers recognised the importance of dialogue and cooperation between ASEAN and the UN in taking forward the work on enhancing complementarities between the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the ASEAN Community Vision 2025, as reflected in the ASEAN-UN Plan of Action 2016-2020. The Ministers looked forward to further developing concrete activities with the UN, including UNESCAP and other relevant UN agencies, on this matter on the basis of mutual benefit.

9. The Ministers underscored the importance of sharing home-grown experiences and best practices of the ASEAN Community and noted with appreciation the readiness of UNESCAP to work with ASEAN and ASEAN Member States, and international community, in the area of sustainable development and community-building, including through fora such as the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development.

10. The Ministers appreciated the efforts of Thailand as the ASEAN Coordinator on the issue of ASEAN-UN cooperation on sustainable development, and requested Thailand to continue its efforts, with the support of the ASEAN Secretariat, to develop further the priority areas and roadmap for the enhancing of complementarities between the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the ASEAN Community Vision 2025, for further consideration.
