

## OVERVIEW

### ASEAN-NORWAY SECTORAL DIALOGUE RELATIONS

1. Norway was conferred the status of Sectoral Dialogue Partner of ASEAN at the 48<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting (AMM) on 4 August 2015 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. This was a significant development in ASEAN's external relations as it was the first time that ASEAN had granted the status to formal partnership to an external party in over two decades. Long before the conferment of this formal partnership, ASEAN and Norway had forged relationship through a number of cooperative activities.

2. The ASEAN-Norway Sectoral Dialogue Relations was institutionalised through the convening of the First ASEAN-Norway Joint Sectoral Cooperation Committee (AN-JSCC) Meeting on 11 December 2015 at the ASEAN Secretariat, Jakarta, which signified the launch of ASEAN-Norway formal cooperation mechanism. The Meeting agreed that this partnership will be guided by the framework of the Joint Statement on ASEAN-Norway Partnership, which was adopted at the 47<sup>th</sup> AMM in August 2014 in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar, and the ASEAN Community Vision 2025: Forging Ahead Together.

3. To complement its existing efforts in the region, Norway established the Norwegian-ASEAN Regional Integration Programme (NARIP) for funding and implementing ASEAN-Norway cooperation programmes, projects and activities.

#### **A. Political-Security Cooperation**

4. Norway has accredited its Ambassador to ASEAN since 2009.

5. Norway acceded to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC) on 1 July 2013 at the sidelines of the 46<sup>th</sup> AMM in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam. Norway's accession to the TAC underscored the importance of the TAC as a code of conduct governing inter-state relations in the region, as well as Norway's strong commitment to promoting regional peace and security.

6. In response to the invitation of the Government of Norway, the Committee of Permanent Representatives to ASEAN (CPR) made an official visit to Norway in November 2014, which provided an opportunity for ASEAN Member States to obtain direct experience and information of Norway's expertise and interest in potential areas of cooperation to promote ASEAN-Norway partnership. This visit also enabled both the CPR and relevant Norwegian officials to identify areas of common interests and explore

concrete activities for future cooperation to implement the Joint Statement on ASEAN-Norway Partnership.

7. Norway supported the ASEAN Workshop on Strengthening Women's Participation in Peace Processes held on 18-19 March 2015 in Cebu City, Philippines. Norway, together with Switzerland, also supported the convening of the ASEAN Institute for Peace and Reconciliation (AIPR) Symposium on the Plight of Women and Children in Conflict Situations held on 8-9 December 2015 in Tagaytay, Philippines as well as the AIPR Symposium on Principles, Mechanisms and Practices of Peace and Reconciliation Processes on 4-5 November 2016 in Yangon, Myanmar.

8. The Informal Meeting among H.E. Saleumxay Kommasith, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Lao PDR, H.E. Le Luong Minh, Secretary-General of ASEAN and H.E. Børge Brende, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Norway, was convened on 24 July 2016 at the sidelines of the 49<sup>th</sup> AMM in Vientiane, Lao PDR. The Informal Meeting exchanged views on ways and means to broaden and strengthen the ASEAN-Norway Sectoral Dialogue Relations.

## **B. Economic Cooperation**

9. ASEAN and Norway enjoyed good trade and investment relations. The total two-way trade between ASEAN and Norway increased by 14% from US\$3.54 billion in 2015 to US\$4.02 billion in 2016. ASEAN's export to Norway doubled from US\$913 million in 2015 to US\$1.96 billion in 2016, while imports from Norway decreased by 22% from US\$2.64 billion in 2015 to US\$2.06 billion in 2016. Meanwhile, foreign direct investment (FDI) flows from Norway to ASEAN slightly grew by 0.9% from US\$21.6 million in 2014 to US\$21.8 million in 2015.<sup>1</sup>

## **C. Socio-Cultural Cooperation**

10. Norway has been contributing to the implementation of the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER). Currently, there are two ASEAN-Norway projects in the area of disaster management, namely: One ASEAN, One Voice – Building a Culture of Disaster Resilience and Enhancing ASEAN's Collective Response to Disasters through Effective Communication Strategy; and Strengthening Disaster Resilience Leadership in ASEAN Member States. These projects helped enhance leadership skills and qualities of ASEAN Member States in disaster resilience and support the implementation of the AADMER.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: ASEAN Statistics Database.

11. Significant contribution to humanitarian assistance to ASEAN was made by Norway in the aftermath of Cyclone Nargis and Typhoon Haiyan in 2008 and 2013, respectively.

12. Norway also provided funding support to the ASEAN Judiciaries Portal under NARIP, as part of the initiatives of the Council of ASEAN Chief Justices (CACJ) to profile legal systems of ASEAN Member States. This Project aims to promote awareness and understanding of the different judicial and legal systems in ASEAN and to forge closer collaboration among ASEAN judiciaries.

