

**Welcome Remarks
Dato Lim Jock Hoi, ASEAN Secretary-General**

**Inauguration of New ASEC Building
8 August 2019, Jakarta, Indonesia**

Your Excellency President Joko Widodo,
Foreign Ministers of ASEAN Member States,
Cabinet Members of the Republic Indonesia,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen

Good morning to all of you.

As we stand here today at the inauguration of the new ASEAN Secretariat building, there is no doubt in my mind that ASEAN has come a long way.

As an institution that has played a central role throughout the growth and evolution of ASEAN, the ASEAN Secretariat has become a trusted partner in the region, bringing all countries together to navigate through the successes and challenges of promoting regional stability and development.

This is not possible without Jakarta providing us home to pursue our mandate over these years. Here at the secretariat, we have witnessed how visions were created and how community aspirations were realized.

And how, by working together, we can have *the* ASEAN that we are all proud today.

Thus, this building is the most tangible symbol of what ASEAN has achieved over the years. Although the region continues to face many challenges, what we have achieved cannot be taken for granted. Having this building is the closest thing that comes to our identity as a region. It validates what we have worked for, and gives each one of us a sense of ownership of what ASEAN is for, and all about.

But it also reminds us of what to expect in the future. As we look forward to the next 50 years of ASEAN integration, this building will provide a sound foundation to deepen our community building efforts, by creating more opportunities for physical meetings and face-to-face interactions that will further deepen our political, economic and social ties. This means strengthening our engagements with various stakeholders not only here in Jakarta but outside the region as well. And for the secretariat, this means a greater responsibility to carry out our mandate.

In closing, let me take this opportunity to personally thank President Widodo and the people of Indonesia, and to many of those who have worked tirelessly, for making this new ASEAN Secretariat building a reality. Indeed, it is a beautiful and soon-to-be an important landmark for the city of Jakarta.

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As today is the 52nd founding anniversary of ASEAN, I would like to invite you to also join us in the celebration later this morning.

Happy ASEAN Day to all of us!

And welcome again to our new home in Jakarta, to the house of ASEAN!

Thank you very much.

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