

## OVERVIEW ASEAN-EUROPEAN UNION DIALOGUE RELATIONS

1. The European Union (EU) became ASEAN's Dialogue Partner in 1977 and it was formally institutionalised following the signing of the ASEAN-EEC Cooperation Agreement on 7 March 1980. The adoption of the Nuremberg Declaration on an EU-ASEAN Enhanced Partnership in 2007 was an important milestone in the dialogue relations. The dialogue relation has since grown with the adoption of the Bandar Seri Begawan Plan of Action to Strengthen the ASEAN-EU Enhanced Partnership (2013-2017) in 2012. The aim of the Plan of Action is to give a more strategic focus to cooperation at regional cooperation in a wide range of areas – political/ security, economic/ trade and sociocultural.
2. The ASEAN-EU Plan of Action (2018-2022) was adopted in 2017 at the Post Ministerial Conferences (PMC+1) session with the EU on 6 August 2017 in Manila, in which the Meeting also adopted the “Joint Statement on the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Establishment of ASEAN-EU Dialogue Relations” and the “ASEAN-EU Statement on the Paris Agreement Reaffirming Commitment to Cooperation to Address the Shared Challenge of Climate Change”. The ASEAN-EU 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Commemorative Summit to mark the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the dialogue relations was held on 14 November 2017 in Manila.

### Political-Security Cooperation

3. The EU continues to engage with ASEAN in the political-security pillar through their participation in the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), the Post Ministerial Conferences, and through ASEAN-EU mechanism such as the ASEAN-EU Ministerial Meeting (AEMM) and the ASEAN-EU Senior Officials' Meeting. The EU also participates in the Senior Officials' Meeting on Transnational Crime (SOMTC) Plus EU Consultation. So far, six SOMTC+EU Consultation have been held. ASEAN and the EU also regularly exchange best practices as part of the ASEAN-EU High Level Dialogue on Maritime Security Cooperation (HLD-MS).
4. At the 21<sup>st</sup> ASEAN-EU Ministerial Meeting held on 14 October 2016 in Bangkok, the Ministers' adopted the “*Bangkok Declaration on Promoting an ASEAN-EU Global Partnership for Shared Strategic Goals*” and *Matrix on Status of Implementation of the Bandar Seri Begawan Plan of Action to Strengthen the ASEAN-EU Enhanced Partnership (2013-2017)*. The Meeting also noted two documents, namely *the Overview of ASEAN-EU Cooperation Programmes and*

*Progress Report by the Co-Chairs of the 3<sup>rd</sup> ASEAN-EU High Level Dialogue on Maritime Security Cooperation on Areas for Future Cooperation.*

5. The EU acceded to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC) on 12 July 2012 in Phnom Penh during the sidelines of the 45<sup>th</sup> AMM/PMC/19<sup>th</sup> ARF, and it is the first regional organisation to TAC. The accession demonstrated the EU's commitment towards ASEAN and reflected as an important milestone in ASEAN-EU relations to promote peace, security and stability in the region.

6. The appointment of its first dedicated Ambassador to ASEAN as well as the establishment of the Mission of EU to ASEAN in 2016 demonstrated the EU's commitment to deepen its engagement with ASEAN. Currently, there are 26 Ambassadors from the EU Member States that have been accredited to ASEAN.

### **Economic Cooperation**

7. The EU remains an important trading partner of ASEAN. Preliminary data shows that the ASEAN-EU total two-way trade in 2017 reached US\$ 257.4 billion making it the second largest trading partner of ASEAN among the Dialogue Partners.<sup>1</sup> The EU is the largest source of foreign direct investment (FDI) among Dialogue Partners in 2017 with a total inflow amounting to US\$ 25.4 billion (preliminary data).<sup>2</sup>

8. ASEAN and the EU continue to convene regular consultations between ASEAN Economic Ministers (AEM) and the EU Trade Commissioner as well as regular meetings of the ASEAN-EU Senior Economic Officials (SEOM-EU). Bilateral Free Trade Agreement (FTA) negotiations and discussions between individual ASEAN Member States and the EU are ongoing. The 16<sup>th</sup> AEM-EU Trade Commissioner Consultations in March 2018 further agreed on the need to exert stronger political will and commitment to pursue a future FTA and towards building closer understanding on the level of ambition under a future FTA.

9. Recognising the potential for comprehensive aviation cooperation on a region-to-region basis, the negotiation of an ASEAN-EU Comprehensive Air Transport Agreement (CATA) are currently ongoing and is targeted to be concluded by the end of 2018. So far, six rounds of CATA negotiations have been conducted.

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<sup>1</sup> ASEAN Trade Database as of April 2018

<sup>2</sup> ASEAN FDI Database as of 25 May 2018

## **Socio-Cultural Cooperation**

10. The Regional EU-ASEAN Dialogue Instrument (READI) facility, operationalised from September 2011 to Sept 2017, has provided support in various sectors, such as education, science and technology, environment and disaster management.

11. The inaugural High-Level ASEAN-EU Dialogue on Sustainable Development: Towards Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals was convened on 17 November 2017 in Bangkok. The High-Level ASEAN-EU Dialogue on Sustainable Development is a platform to promote cooperation on the effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the 2015 Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

## **Development Cooperation**

12. The EU supported ASEAN in the regional integration process, strengthening the capacity of the ASEAN Secretariat and enhancing ASEAN connectivity through various development cooperation programmes across the three pillars of ASEAN. ASEAN and the EU have recently concluded three Financing Agreements (FAs) namely the Sustainable Use of Peat Lands and Haze Mitigation in ASEAN (SUPA), Biodiversity Conservation and Management of Protected Areas in ASEAN (BCAMP), and the ASEAN Regional Integration Support from the EU (ARISE) Plus. The Enhanced Regional EU-ASEAN Dialogue Instrument (E-READI) for 2016-2020 builds on the success of the ASEAN-EU READI Facility, which aims to further ASEAN integration in all three pillars. The launch ceremony of the ARISE Plus and Enhanced Regional EU-ASEAN Dialogue Instrument (E-READI) programmes was held on 17 April 2018 at the ASEAN Secretariat.

13. Other ongoing programmes include: Institutional Capacity Building for ASEAN Monitoring and Statistics (COMPASS), EU Support to Higher Education in ASEAN Region (EU SHARE), EU-ASEAN Migration and Border Management Programme II (EA-MBMP II), and the ASEAN-EU Emergency Management Programme (AEEMP).

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