

## **Bandar Seri Begawan Declaration on Youth Entrepreneurship and Employment**

**WE**, the Heads of State/Government of the Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (hereinafter referred to as ASEAN), namely Brunei Darussalam, the Kingdom of Cambodia, the Republic of Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, the Republic of the Philippines, the Republic of Singapore, the Kingdom of Thailand and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam:

**HAVING** gathered in Bandar Seri Begawan on 9 October, 2013, for the Twenty-Third ASEAN Summit;

**RECALLING** the call for action by the International Labor Conference in Geneva in 2012, which recognised that the unprecedented global youth unemployment crisis could leave long-lasting "scarring" with persistent youth unemployment and underemployment carrying very high social and economic costs threatening the fabric of societies;

**RECOGNISING** the concern of the International Labor Organisation that the youth unemployment rate of about 13 percent in Southeast Asia and the Pacific is considerably higher than in East or South Asia and is projected to rise over the next five years, reversing a decline since the onset of the global financial crisis in 2008;

**FURTHER RECOGNISING** recent ILO estimates that ASEAN and neighbouring Pacific economies have the highest regional youth to adult unemployment rate in the world with young people in the region being five times more likely to be out of work than adults;

**ACKNOWLEDGING** that informal work, casual day labor and household production activities are common forms of non-standard employment in the region and highlight the need for more formal work with fixed contracts along with regular pay and benefits;

**FURTHER ACKNOWLEDGING** that youth labor force participation rates in the region are among the highest in the world at more than 50 percent and that the ASEAN population of 15 to 24-year-olds alone is approaching 108 million; and

**RESPONDING** to the Resolution on "Nurturing and Enhancing the Role of Young People to Meet the Future Challenges of ASEAN" adopted by the Committee of Social Matters at the Thirty-Fourth General Assembly of the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA) in Bandar Seri Begawan on 22 September 2013;

**DO HEREBY DECLARE THAT WE:**

**WELCOME** the First ASEAN Young Entrepreneurs Seminar and Expo (AYESE) hosted by Brunei Darussalam in May and encourage the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Youth to work with [labor and education sectoral bodies as well as] ministerial bodies under the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) and the ASEAN Business Advisory Council (ABAC) to ensure that the ASEAN Young Entrepreneurs Network (AYEN) moves forward with regular activities including the ASEAN-China Youth Forum held back to back with the annual ASEAN Business and Investment Summit;

**FURTHER WELCOME** the initiative of Brunei Darussalam to establish an ASEAN Young Professionals Volunteer Corps done in partnership with Mercy Relief, a Singapore Non-Government Organisation supported by the Singapore-ASEAN Youth Fund to embark on initial pilot projects in Cambodia, Indonesia and the Philippines as well as Malaysia's initiative to establish and develop the ASEAN Youth Volunteer Programme as mentioned in the resolution of AMMY VIII in Brunei Darussalam;

**SUPPORT** the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Youth (AMMY) in calling on young professionals to offer volunteer services while supporting other vulnerable groups and fostering entrepreneurial skills;

**ENCOURAGE** other ministerial bodies under the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) umbrella to help mobilise young professionals for such volunteer activities, notably the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Rural Development and Poverty Eradication (AMRDPE), the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Relief (AMMDM), the ASEAN Health Ministers Meeting (AHMM), the ASEAN Education Ministers Meeting (ASED) and the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on the Environment (AMME);

**WELCOME** the statement of the ASEAN Labour Ministers delivered by Brunei Darussalam at the G20 Labour and Employment Ministers Meeting in Moscow in July and the recommendations of the ASEAN Youth Employment Forum hosted by Indonesia in May which aim to draw on strong and specific regional cooperation to complement individual national programs through various approaches such as job-matching systems for new graduates, workforce migration and appropriate access to social protection; and

**AGREE** that all stakeholders including both ASCC and AEC ministerial bodies, the private sector and non-governmental organisations should intensify efforts to strengthen the entrepreneurial skills and volunteerism mindset of young people through different platforms and people-to-people-exchanges while accelerating the development of a regional training network across ASEAN that includes out-of-school youth and other vulnerable groups.

**ADOPTED** in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam, this Ninth Day of October in the year Two Thousand and Thirteen in a single original copy in the English language.