

Joint Press Release

ASEAN and EU Strengthen their Partnership and Cooperation

The 21st meeting of the ASEAN-EU Joint Cooperation Committee (JCC) was held on 24 January 2014 in Jakarta.

The Meeting confirmed the positive momentum of EU-ASEAN Dialogue Relations and looked forward to further strengthening the partnership and cooperation for mutual benefit. Since the adoption in April 2012 of the *Bandar Seri Begawan Plan of Action to strengthen the ASEAN-EU enhanced partnership 2013-2017* and the EU's accession to the *ASEAN Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC)* in July 2012, the relationship has broadened and deepened substantially.

ASEAN and the EU exchanged views on developments in their respective region. The EU welcomed the progress achieved in ASEAN integration and Community-building and reaffirmed its support to the centrality of ASEAN in the evolving regional architecture.

ASEAN and the EU exchanged views on their increasingly close trade and investment relations. They underlined the value of the Consultations between the ASEAN and EU Economic Ministers to further strengthen trade and investments ties.

ASEAN and the EU welcomed the progress achieved in ASEAN-EU cooperation. They were satisfied with the progress made to strengthen cooperation in the area of *science, technology and research* and welcomed the EU-ASEAN Science, Technology and Innovation Cooperation Days, which took place in Bangkok from 21 to 23 January 2014. Both sides were satisfied with the cooperation on *civil aviation* and looked forward to the EU-ASEAN Aviation Summit to take place on 11-12 February 2014 in Singapore. Significant progress has been made in the area of *Information and communications technology (ICT)* and several workshops planned next year. Cooperation on *human rights* was intensifying. Members of the ASEAN Commission on the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC) visited Brussels on 19-22 February 2013 and the EU looked forward to welcoming the second visit of the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) to Brussels later in 2014. ASEAN and the EU discussed their increasing cooperation in the context of the ASEAN Regional Forum and looked forward to the next session of the ARF Inter-Sessional Support Group Meeting on Confidence Building Measures and Preventive Diplomacy in Brussels on 7-9 April 2014.

The Meeting discussed ASEAN-EU cooperation on the implementation of the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity and the possibility of establishing effective mechanisms to enhance cooperation on Connectivity. ASEAN and the EU looked forward to the first ASEAN-EU Dialogue on Connectivity in Brussels on 24 – 28 February 2014. The Dialogue will be a good opportunity to exchange experiences and best practices as well as explore public and private financing for connectivity. An outcome document will be presented to the next ASEAN-EU Ministerial Meeting (AEMM).

ASEAN and the EU welcomed the successful ASEAN-EU High Level Dialogue (HLD) on Maritime Cooperation, held on 18-19 November 2013 in Jakarta. The Dialogue allowed for an in-depth exchange on different aspects of maritime security and the

identification of different follow-up actions. An outcome document will be presented to the next ASEAN-EU Ministerial Meeting (AEMM).

ASEAN and the EU discussed and welcomed the progress in the implementation of the ongoing ASEAN-EU cooperation programmes in support of ASEAN. They also looked into proposals to simplify the procedures as urged by the 19th ASEAN-EU Ministerial Meeting in 2012.

Both parties discussed the programming of the 2014-2020 cycle of financial support for ASEAN under the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI) and the EU expressed its intention to substantially increase its financing for projects and programmes with ASEAN. Cooperation under this Instrument would focus on (i) connectivity: sustainable and inclusive economic integration and trade; (ii) climate change and disaster management; and (iii) a comprehensive dialogue facility. This agreement would be reflected in a document, which will be presented to the next ASEAN-EU Ministerial Meeting (AEMM). ASEAN and EU also discussed other financing possibilities for regional integration, such as the Asia Investment Facility, Erasmus Mundus and the Instrument for Stability.

In their closing remarks, ASEAN and the EU underlined the importance of the partnership between both regional organisations. The ASEAN-EU partnership has lived up to the promise of the *Bandar Seri Begawan Plan of Action* as political relations intensify, impressive progress is registered in many fields, and new areas of cooperation are being developed.

The 21st Meeting of the ASEAN-EU JCC was co-chaired by His Excellency Mr. Vu Dang Dzung, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam to ASEAN, Country Coordinator for the ASEAN-EU Dialogue Relations, and by Mr. Ranieri Sabatucci, Head of the South-East Asia Division of the European External Action Service, together with Mr. Jean-Claude Boidin, Head of Unit of the European Commission Directorate General for Development Cooperation. The Meeting was opened by His Excellency Mr. Vu Dang Dzung, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam to ASEAN and His Excellency Mr. Olof Skoog, Ambassador of the EU to ASEAN and attended by members of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to ASEAN, officials from the ASEAN Secretariat and EU, as well as representatives of EU Member States.

