

Co-Chairs' Statement of the 19th ASEAN-EU Ministerial Meeting
26-27 April 2012
Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam

1. Celebrating the unique partnership which ASEAN and the EU have achieved over the past 35 years, Foreign Ministers, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, and the Secretary-General of ASEAN met in Bandar Seri Begawan on 26-27 April 2012. The Ministers reviewed current relations and how they could best work together to secure a more prosperous future for the people of both regions. His Royal Highness Prince Mohamed Bolkiah, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Brunei Darussalam, as Country Coordinator of ASEAN-EU Dialogue Relations, and Her Excellency Catherine Ashton, High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice President of the European Commission co-chaired the meeting.
2. The Ministers took stock of developments in both regions since their last meeting in Madrid, Spain, in May 2010. The EU welcomed the outcome of the 20th ASEAN Summit in Phnom Penh on 3-4 April 2012 particularly the adoption of the Phnom Penh Declaration on ASEAN: One Community, One Destiny; the Phnom Penh Agenda on ASEAN Community Building, the ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on Drug Free ASEAN 2015 and also on the promotion of Global Movement of Moderates. ASEAN welcomed EU measures to consolidate public budgets, reduce public borrowing and put in place an effective framework to underpin economic growth and financial stability in the EU and in turn, to support the international economy and world trade. ASEAN congratulated the EU on its expanded membership, with the accession of Croatia on 1 July 2013.
3. The Ministers looked forward to the EU's early accession to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC), once the Third Protocol Amending the TAC has entered into force and all necessary arrangements have been made. The Ministers emphasised the importance of the TAC as a key instrument in governing inter-state relations and contributing to peace, security, stability and prosperity in the region.
4. The Ministers exchanged views on regional and international issues including events in the Middle East and North Africa, Iran, Afghanistan, the Korean Peninsula and efforts in particular by the G20, to address the global economic and financial situation. Furthermore, they discussed climate change concerns, including mitigating measures across borders, and a wide range of security-related issues. The Ministers exchanged views on maritime security and stressed the importance of promoting cooperation in this area in accordance with international law and UNCLOS 1982. As the world's two most integrated and dynamic regions, the Ministers agreed that ASEAN and the EU should work together more closely to address international issues of mutual concern and advance their shared interests in international fora. The Ministers also discussed the various ASEAN-led processes such as the East Asia Summit (EAS), the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and the ASEAN Defence Ministerial Meeting Plus (ADMM Plus) in promoting greater cooperation in East Asia.
5. The Ministers welcomed the positive developments in Myanmar, including the successful holding of the by-elections on 1 April 2012, as a significant step towards democratisation. ASEAN welcomed the step just taken by the EU to suspend restrictive measures, and to open a new chapter in Myanmar-EU relations while strengthening the overall ASEAN-EU partnership.

6. The Ministers expressed satisfaction with the implementation of the Plan of Action to implement the Nuremberg Declaration of an ASEAN-EU Enhanced Partnership (2007-2012), the Phnom Penh Agenda for the Implementation of the ASEAN-EU Plan of Action (2009-2010) and the Indicative List of Activities for 2011-2012 and concluded that ASEAN-EU relations have matured and diversified.
7. The Ministers were also pleased with progress in bilateral cooperation between the EU and ASEAN Member States in negotiating Partnership and Cooperation Agreements (PCA) as well as Free Trade Agreements (FTA) that would contribute to the enhancement of cooperation at regional level. In this regard, the Ministers welcomed the launching of PCA negotiations between Brunei Darussalam and the EU.
8. The Ministers adopted the Bandar Seri Begawan Plan of Action to Strengthen the ASEAN-EU Enhanced Partnership (2013-2017) which aims to give a more strategic focus to cooperation and dialogue. The Ministers urged both sides to work for its effective and comprehensive implementation.
9. The Ministers stressed the need to enhance cooperation in political and security areas. This includes stepping up efforts to work together in the ARF and increasing ASEAN's institutional capacity and capability in conflict management and resolution, complementing its decision to establish the ASEAN Institute of Peace and Reconciliation.
10. The Ministers welcomed the EU's offer to contribute towards enhancing capacity of ASEAN Member States on crisis response and in this regard, tasked the senior officials to explore this further.
11. The EU reaffirmed its commitment to intensify cooperation with ASEAN in building disaster resilient societies; enhancing maritime cooperation; combating sea piracy and armed robbery against ships in accordance with international law; combating terrorism and transnational crime; promoting cooperation in combating illicit drug production, trafficking and use; mitigating chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear risks.
12. The Ministers agreed to strengthen mutual cooperation in promoting and protecting human rights, in particular by supporting the work of the ASEAN Inter-Governmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) with emphasis on capacity building. In this regard, they recalled the fruitful visit of the AICHR to Europe in 2011.
13. The Ministers agreed on the need to strengthen the international non-proliferation and disarmament regime by, among others, contributing to the entry into force of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.
14. The Ministers looked forward to intensifying cooperation in the social and cultural field. They were encouraged by growing collaboration in science and technology, and expressed support for the "ASEAN-EU Year of Science, Technology and Innovation in 2012". This demonstrated the potential for cooperation in the framework of the EU's Framework Programme 7 and its successor Horizon 2020 as well as the Krabi Initiative. The Ministers underlined their interest in higher education cooperation through expanding possibilities for joint degrees and mobility of students and academics under Erasmus Mundus and also through closer links between ASEAN University Network and European University Association.

15. The Ministers also agreed on the need to promote gender equality, women's empowerment and improving the lives of girls and women.
16. The Ministers reaffirmed the importance of the economic and trade relationship between the EU and ASEAN. The Ministers welcomed further engagement to enhance this relationship through the ASEAN Economic Ministers and the EU Trade Commissioner Consultations and the ASEAN-EU Business Summit. The Ministers looked forward to further implementation of the Trade and Investment Work Programme endorsed by Economic Ministers in May 2011, to complement ASEAN's efforts to realise the ASEAN Economic Community by 2015. Recognising that a region-to-region FTA would deepen the trade and investment links between the two regions and strengthen their respective economies, the Ministers reiterated the importance of the bilateral FTAs between individual ASEAN Member States and the EU as 'building blocks' for a region-to-region FTA.
17. The Ministers also welcomed the EU's commitment, through the new Plan of Action and its Multi-Annual Indicative Programme (2011-2013), to support the implementation of the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity. In this regard, ASEAN looked forward to learn from the EU's experience in advancing physical infrastructures, communication systems and sophisticated technologies. ASEAN also encouraged the EU to meet with the ASEAN Connectivity Coordinating Committee (ACCC) and explore ways to promote cooperation in this area. In this broad context, the Ministers agreed that it would be worthwhile to explore cooperation on, and exchange of experience in water management such as between the Mekong and the Danube region.
18. The Ministers also welcomed further technical cooperation and peer support under the Plan of Action in urgent areas, such as food security and energy security. The Ministers further agreed to enhance economic cooperation, notably in the fields of energy efficiency and conservation, clean and renewable energy and food and agriculture research and development. The Ministers also welcomed institutional and private sector initiatives to promote business links and encourage industrial cooperation and synergies in the production sector.
19. In line with their efforts to promote equitable economic development, the Ministers looked forward to intensifying cooperation to promote technical support and capacity building, including sharing of best practices and experience in Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) development, through the conduct of various activities such as workshops, seminars, courses as well as business portals.
20. ASEAN welcomed the commitment by the EU, including its individual Member States, to continue providing support to further strengthen the capacity of the ASEAN Secretariat.
21. The Ministers agreed that the 20th ASEAN-EU Ministerial Meeting would be held in the EU in 2014.

Annex to the Co-Chair's Statement at the 19th ASEAN-EU Ministerial Meeting

27 April 2012, Bandar Seri Begawan

With regard to the Paragraph 10 of the Co-Chair's Statement of the 19th ASEAN-EU Ministerial Meeting, noting the complexity and evolving nature of this field, ASEAN and the EU will explore potential areas of relevance in disaster management and emergency response within ASEAN.

Enhanced ASEAN-EU cooperation in strengthening capacity in disaster management and emergency response will benefit both sides and add-value to existing ASEAN's and regional disaster management cooperation frameworks.

In this regard, ASEAN and the EU will forge closer cooperation and coordination on disaster risk reduction and management at the global and regional levels; enhance dialogue and cooperation in crisis management, notably, in the form of knowledge transfer and exchange of best practices; establish a regional network of information sharing and early warning systems for emergency situations.

In particular, ASEAN and the EU will work together to realize the following activities:

1. Strengthening the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for humanitarian assistance and disaster management (AHA Centre) through close cooperation in implementing the AADMER 5-Year Work Programme (2010-2015) in the following areas: (i) Risk Assessment, Early Warning and Monitoring; (ii) Preparedness and Response; (iii) Prevention and Mitigation; and (iv) Recovery. In particular this can be conducted through the following capacity-building activities:
 - Sharing of knowledge between relevant authorities by organizing visits in each other's installations and agencies, and by developing a plan for a longer term arrangement for knowledge sharing;
 - Building the capacity of the AHA Centre through in-house training of staff, implementing an executive programme for senior officials, building capacity in areas identified in dedicated studies, provide technical assistance in the areas identified in the AHA Centre Strategic Work Plan and developing a set of protocols and standard operating procedures;
 - Enhancing the interaction and inter-operability of the AHA Centre with national centres in ASEAN Member States;
 - Enhancing cooperation in post-disaster relief recovery and rehabilitation and improve the effectiveness of coordination of such efforts;
 - Sharing experiences on civil protection;
 - Tapping the EU's expertise on hazard-mapping especially in landslide-prone areas;
 - Enhancing cooperation through the sharing of best practices in management of water resources with a view to alleviating floods.

2. Capacity-building in national disaster management mechanisms, upon request, by ASEAN Member States through:
 - Sharing of experiences in setting up appropriate national mechanisms;
 - Strengthening the capacity of existing national mechanisms through staff-training, networking, resource mobilisation and assistance in information and communication technology (ICT);
 - Supporting collection and analysis of data.
3. Promoting exchanges of experience and knowledge in civilian-military cooperation on disaster risk reduction and emergency response.

ASEAN and the EU will explore cooperation in the above-mentioned areas, in accordance with domestic law and regulations. In recognition of the non-exhaustive nature of the elements listed above, ASEAN and the EU will further consider other future activities, in line with their priorities when appropriate, with the view to strengthening collaboration between both regions.