

**FIRST MEETING OF ASEAN-RUSSIAN FEDERATION
TOURISM MINISTERS**

19 January 2022

JOINT MEDIA STATEMENT

- 1.** The First Meeting of ASEAN and Russian Federation Tourism Ministers was held on 19 January 2022 through video conferencing, in conjunction with the 25th Meeting of ASEAN Tourism Ministers (M-ATM), in Cambodia. The Meeting was co-chaired by the Kingdom of Cambodia and the Russian Federation.
- 2.** The Meeting was pleased to welcome the elevation of the ASEAN-Russian Federation Tourism Cooperation to the Ministerial level, recognising the importance of this milestone as 2021 marks the 30th Anniversary of ASEAN-Russia Relations.
- 3.** Despite the challenges brought by the pandemic, the Meeting was pleased to note that Southeast Asian countries are among the preferred destinations by the Russian tourists as reflected by the growing total visits prior to the pandemic. In addition, Russian arrivals have always been within the top 10 source markets outside ASEAN for 3 consecutive years, while Russia is moving up in the selection for ASEAN tourists. The Meeting noted that in the third semester of 2021, Russia received a total of 123,582 visitors from the ASEAN member countries. Tourism receipts had seen a decline by 37% compared to the same period in 2020 due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on international travel to Russia.
- 4.** The Meeting expressed appreciation for the Comprehensive Programme of Action to Promote Cooperation between ASEAN and the Russian Federation 2005-2015, Comprehensive Plan of Action to Promote Cooperation between ASEAN and the Russian Federation 2016-2020 and Comprehensive Plan of Action to Implement ASEAN-Russia Strategic Partnership 2021-2025 that laid the foundation for the organization of regular - ASEAN-Russia consultations on tourism. Thus far, 12 Russia-ASEAN consultations have been held. The main area of work is project activities, including the "Russian Language Course for ASEAN Tour Operators", which was completed in November 2019. In 2022, Russia is planning to implement the fifth stage of the programme with a view to expand business contacts between Russia and ASEAN tourism enterprises through Russian language training and experience exchange.
- 5.** The Meeting believed that there was a need for ASEAN and Russian Federation to work closely together to face the challenges arising from the pandemic and to consider joint efforts in building up confidence and promoting ASEAN and Russian Federation as safe and preferred tourism destinations as well as preparing the manpower in the tourism sector through upskilling/reskilling as a continuity to the ASEAN and Russia joint cooperation on Russian Language Training and experience exchange. In this regard, the Meeting endorsed the ASEAN-Russia Federation Tourism Work Plan 2022-2024, which focuses on strengthening the ASEAN-Russia tourism cooperation in the next 2 years and prioritises ASEAN-Russia tourism recovery.

6. The Meeting further expressed their shared commitment to accelerate tourism recovery in ASEAN and Russia, recognising that cooperation is fundamental for a resilient, inclusive and sustainable tourism recovery from COVID-19. The Meeting welcomed the implementation of the Post COVID-19 Recovery Plan for ASEAN Tourism as well as the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework (ACRF) as the collective and long-term socio-economic recovery strategy in addressing the COVID-19 crisis in the ASEAN region.

7. In this context, the Meeting agreed to further enhance ASEAN-Russian Federation cooperation in tourism under the framework of the ASEAN – Russian Federation Tourism Cooperation Work Plan 2022 – 2024 to revitalise tourism activities post COVID-19, in the following key areas:

- a. Support continued consultations between ASEAN and Russian Federation to promote tourism cooperation;
- b. Collaboration on professional training and advancement in the field of tourism;
- c. Best practices in ensuring tourists' safety;
- d. Encourage people-to-people movement between ASEAN and Russia; and
- e. Encourage collaboration for sustainable and inclusive tourism in ASEAN and Russia, while aligning efforts with the Pakse Declaration, Phnom Penh Declaration, the ASEAN Gender and Development Framework in Tourism, as well as the Tourism Development Strategy of the Russian Federation for the period up to 2035.

8. Building on the decision of the 16th East Asia Summit (EAS) on 27 October 2021 the Meeting supported an early initiation of regular dialogue on tourism among relevant agencies of the EAS participating countries.
