

## **Plan of Action to Implement the ASEAN-Australia Strategic Partnership (2020-2024)**

This Plan of Action (POA) guides implementation of the goals and objectives of the ASEAN-Australia Strategic Partnership, including Leaders' commitments from ASEAN-Australia Summits, the Joint ASEAN-Australia Leaders' Statement on the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of ASEAN-Australia Dialogue Relations Towards a Strategic Partnership for Mutual Benefit (2014) and the Joint Statement of the ASEAN-Australia Special Summit: The Sydney Declaration (2018).

This POA builds on the strong history of cooperation and partnership between ASEAN and Australia since 1974 and the elevation to a Strategic Partnership in 2014. It reaffirms that ASEAN and Australia are partners with a vital stake in a dynamic region undergoing major changes. It outlines priority actions to intensify our engagement to shape a peaceful, prosperous and rules-based region with ASEAN at its centre. To enhance the ASEAN-Australia Strategic Partnership, the POA promotes cooperation in support of the ASEAN community-building and integration process, including the ASEAN Community Vision 2025, as well as to address emerging regional and global challenges over the next five years.

ASEAN and Australia hereby endeavour to pursue cooperation in the following priority areas through the corresponding activities, in conformity with their obligations under international law and in accordance with their respective domestic laws, regulations, and policies on the basis of equal benefit and opportunity for all parties.

### **1. Political and Security Cooperation**

#### **1.1. Political Dialogue**

- 1.1.1. Strengthen the existing mechanisms for consultation and cooperation between ASEAN and Australia including convening regular ASEAN-Australia Summits, the ASEAN Post Ministerial Conference with Australia (PMC+1), ASEAN-Australia Forum, and the ASEAN-Australia Joint Cooperation Committee (JCC) Meeting;
- 1.1.2. Deepen dialogue and cooperation through ASEAN-led mechanisms including the East Asia Summit (EAS), ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), and the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM-Plus);
- 1.1.3. Work closely to strengthen the EAS, with ASEAN as the driving force, as the region's premier Leaders-led strategic forum for dialogue and cooperation on strategic issues of common concern with the aim of promoting peace, stability, economic prosperity and integration in the region;
- 1.1.4. Continue regular engagement among EAS Ambassadors in Jakarta on the implementation of Leaders' decisions as well as exchange information on regional development cooperation initiatives and security policies and initiatives;
- 1.1.5. Promote two-way Ministerial visits as well as inter-Parliamentary dialogue and cooperation, including by continuing regular, two-way visits between Australian and ASEAN parliaments and engagement with the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA) to raise the profile of ASEAN-Australia relations and to

enhance political momentum for cooperation;

## **1.2. Security Cooperation**

- 1.2.1. Promote dialogue and strengthen practical defence cooperation to address the challenges facing the region through the ADMM-Plus in the areas of Maritime Security, Military Medicine, Counter Terrorism, Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief, Peacekeeping Operations, Humanitarian Mine Action and Cyber Security;
- 1.2.2. Strengthen cooperation through the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) including in the areas of preventive diplomacy, disaster relief, maritime security, peacekeeping operations, defence dialogue, counter-terrorism and transnational crime, security of and in the use of ICTs as well as non-proliferation and disarmament;
- 1.2.3. Enhance linkages and synergies between relevant ASEAN-led mechanisms, particularly the EAS and ADMM-Plus, including by promoting information exchange;
- 1.2.4. Enhance defence exchanges and cooperation through dialogues at different levels, mutual visits, training, capacity building, the ASEAN-Australia Postgraduate Defence Scholarships, and other practical cooperation through relevant and existing regional security frameworks;
- 1.2.5. Promote cooperation on the Women, Peace and Security agenda, including by convening the ASEAN-Australia Women, Peace and Security Dialogue;
- 1.2.6. Explore cooperation with the ASEAN Institute for Peace and Reconciliation (ASEAN-IPR), in accordance with its Terms of Reference (TOR);

## **1.3. Non-Traditional Security and Counter-Terrorism**

- 1.3.1. Continue to convene regular ASEAN Plus Australia Senior Officials' Meeting on Transnational Crime (SOMTC + Australia) Consultation and develop and implement the annual work programme on Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime;
- 1.3.2. Enhance cooperation to prevent and combat transnational crimes including but not limited to illicit drug trafficking, trafficking in persons, people-smuggling, money laundering, arms smuggling, sea piracy, terrorism, cybercrime, international economic crime and illicit trafficking of wildlife and timber by utilising existing regional and international institutions and agreements;
- 1.3.3. Support the implementation of the ASEAN Declaration and Leaders' Joint Statement on Enhancing Cooperation against Trafficking in Persons in Southeast Asia, ASEAN Convention Against Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (ACTIP), the Bohol Trafficking in Persons Work Plan and future cross-sectoral work to combat trafficking in persons through the ASEAN-Australia Counter-Trafficking program (AACT 2018-2028) and the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime;

- 1.3.4. Continue to work together to strengthen public outreach, preventive measures, and protection and reintegration of victims of trafficking, including through the participation of media, the private sector and other relevant stakeholders in society;
- 1.3.5. Work together to counter terrorism and violent extremism, and prevent the flow of foreign terrorist fighters in line with the ASEAN-Australia Joint Declaration for Cooperation to Combat International Terrorism (2016) and in accordance with the ASEAN-Australia MOU on Cooperation to Counter International Terrorism (2018) including support for the development and implementation of appropriate and effective counter-terrorism legal and regulatory frameworks consistent with international standards and best practice; regional dialogues and forums with ASEAN and Australian law enforcement and financial intelligence partners; training and education on technology-enabled crime to detect and disrupt terrorist activity; the use of electronic evidence in terrorism prosecutions; and enhancing the capacity of ASEAN border security officials;
- 1.3.6. Encourage training centres in ASEAN and Australia to enhance the development of human, institutional, and forensic capacities of law enforcement, investigation and financial intelligence agencies through technology transfer, training programmes, and exchange of best practices;
- 1.3.7. Enhance border management cooperation through regular consultations between ASEAN Directors-General of Immigration Departments and Heads of Consular Affairs Divisions of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs (DGICM) and Australian Department of Home Affairs and implementation of the annual DGICM-Australia work programme;
- 1.3.8. Promote cooperation to address humanitarian aspects of landmines and other explosive remnants of war issues in the region in accordance with applicable treaties, conventions and instruments and respective domestic laws and policies, recognising the work of the ASEAN Regional Mine Action Centre on these matters;

#### **1.4. Maritime Cooperation**

- 1.4.1. Promote maritime security and safety, freedom of navigation and overflight, unimpeded commerce, the exercise of self-restraint, the non-use of force or the threat to use force, and the resolution of disputes by peaceful means, in accordance with universally recognised principles of international law, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) the relevant standards and recommended practices of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), and instruments and conventions of the International Maritime Organization (IMO). Emphasise the importance of non-militarisation and the need to enhance mutual trust and confidence, exercise self-restraint in the conduct of activities and avoid actions that may complicate the situation;
- 1.4.2. Strengthen cooperation in maritime safety and search and rescue (SAR), and the implementation of the ASEAN Declaration on Cooperation in Search and Rescue of Persons and Vessels in Distress at Sea and oil spill preparedness,

including through technical cooperation, training exercises and exchange of visits of relevant ASEAN and Australian officials;

- 1.4.3. Support the implementation of the ASEAN-Australia Maritime Cooperation package of initiatives announced at the ASEAN-Australia Special Summit and promote maritime cooperation, through appropriate ASEAN mechanisms, including the Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum (EAMF), and where appropriate, promote technical cooperation, capacity building, exchange of experience and sharing of knowledge and expertise;

## **1.5. Good Governance and Human Rights**

- 1.5.1. Support the implementation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration (AHRD) and other relevant international human rights instruments to which ASEAN Member States are parties;
- 1.5.2. Promote cooperation and information sharing between Australia and the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR), the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC), the ASEAN Committee on the Implementation of the Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers (ACMW), including by continuing consultations between Australia and AICHR;
- 1.5.3. Support the promotion and protection of human rights in ASEAN in accordance with the work plans of ASEAN related to human rights through regional dialogues, seminars and workshops, education and awareness raising activities, exchange of best practices and other capacity building initiatives aimed at enhancing the promotion and protection of human rights;
- 1.5.4. Support the promotion of good governance principles and innovation in public service management towards resilient, citizen-centric, accountable and future-ready government institutions through cooperation with ASEAN Cooperation on Civil Service Matters (ACCSM);
- 1.5.5. Promote dialogue, consultations, and partnership among governments, private sector and other relevant stakeholders in society to foster and enable new ideas, concepts and methods with a view to enhancing transparent, accountable, participatory and effective governance;
- 1.5.6. Promote the universalisation and implementation of the United Nations Convention Against Corruption;
- 1.5.7. Exchange best practices in promoting democracy and democratic institutions including lessons learned from mechanisms such as the Bali Democracy Forum;

## **2. Economic Cooperation**

- 2.1. **Agreement Establishing the ASEAN-Australia-New Zealand Free Trade Area (AANZFTA) and Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP)**

- 2.1.1. Implement fully the Agreement Establishing the ASEAN-Australia-New Zealand Free Trade Area (AANZFTA) to enhance trade and investment;
- 2.1.2. Work to upgrade the AANZFTA by amending the Agreement through a second protocol, considering the different levels of development between ASEAN Member States, Australia and New Zealand, and ensure the Agreement remains modern, relevant and add greater commercial value to businesses and takes into account developments in other fora including the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), and AANZFTA's existing built-in agenda items;
- 2.1.3. Support business utilisation and engagement under the AANZFTA, especially for MSMEs;
- 2.1.4. Contribute to economic integration and trade facilitation in the AANZFTA region, including through economic cooperation and capacity building and development by means of sharing expertise, knowledge and best practices;
- 2.1.5. Support, sustain, promote, enhance and increase the flow and opportunity of trade and investment with and amongst ASEAN pursuant to the provisions and obligations provided for under the AANZFTA and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) once concluded;
- 2.1.6. Utilise the AANZFTA Economic Cooperation Support Programme (AECSP), and its successor programme to enhance the capacity of ASEAN to implement the AANZFTA as well as to support ASEAN's regional economic integration efforts;
- 2.1.7. Support cooperation that builds the institutional capacity of ASEAN to implement AANZFTA and contributes to sustainable development outcomes in the strategic areas as agreed by all Parties. Similarly, pursue cooperation on capacity building to support ASEAN's implementation of RCEP once concluded;
- 2.1.8. Promote and raise awareness of the business opportunities created by AANZFTA and other trade agreements in the region via concrete implementation of the AANZFTA Business Engagement Strategy (2018-2023), and the AANZFTA Guiding Principles and Enabling Framework for Engagement with Stakeholders, as endorsed by the Ministers at the 23<sup>rd</sup> ASEAN Economic Ministers-Closer Economic Relations (AEM-CER) Consultations;
- 2.1.9. Support the conclusion of a modern, comprehensive, high-quality and mutually beneficial RCEP Agreement and work on its implementation once it comes into force;

## **2.2. Regional Economic Integration**

- 2.2.1. Continue to build on the engagement between ASEAN Economic Ministers and Australian Trade Ministers including at the AEM-CER Consultations, and the EAS Economic Ministers Meeting to support regional economic integration;

- 2.2.2. Continue cooperation to enhance regional development and prosperity by promoting an inclusive, transparent and rules-based multilateral trading system, in view of the unabating tide of protectionism;
- 2.2.3. Continue to support ASEAN economic integration and capacity building initiatives on financial integration as well as the implementation of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) Blueprint 2025 through the ASEAN-Australia Development Cooperation Program Phase II (AADCP II) and its successor programme in 2022 on the basis of equal benefit and opportunity for all parties;
- 2.2.4. Explore support in implementing the ASEAN Mutual Recognition Arrangement for Inspection and Certification Systems on Food Hygiene for Prepared Foodstuff Products through technical assistance and capacity building programmes;
- 2.2.5. Collaborate, where appropriate, with the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA) to orient its policies and research activities towards the priorities and concerns of ASEAN and Australia as well as other EAS Participating Countries;
- 2.2.6. Strengthen coordination and cooperation on G20-related matters, including, where appropriate, supporting the continued participation of the ASEAN Chair in future G20 Summits and its related Meetings;
- 2.2.7. Support ASEAN's efforts on regulatory improvement through exchange of best practices and capacity building;
- 2.2.8. Further develop regional and global supply chain opportunities to promote inclusive growth between ASEAN and Australia;
- 2.2.9. Continue strengthening cooperation in areas of mutual interest at the regional and multilateral levels to create more trade and investment opportunities;
- 2.2.10. Ensure synergy between the AECSP, AADCP II, the successor programs of both, and other economic cooperation programs in support of the AEC on the basis of equal benefit and opportunity for all parties;
- 2.2.11. Promote greater digital connectivity through the ASEAN-Australia Digital Trade Standards Initiative by supporting the development, adoption and use of international standards that promote digital trade and support inclusive economic growth;
- 2.2.12. Enhance technical assistance provided to the Customs Working Groups in the form of trainings and/or workshops to support the capacity building programme of customs officers;

### **2.3. Finance**

- 2.3.1 Encourage the expansion of trade financing and other available funding support mechanisms for SMEs to stimulate trade;
- 2.3.2 Support regional financial development and integration, through deepening the

understanding of capital market development in ASEAN Member States including strengthening the capacity of financial regulators (ASEAN) in the areas of financial inclusion, and international payments and remittance services;

- 2.3.3 Explore technical assistance in strengthening cooperation in taxation, particularly in addressing tax-related impediments to economic and financial integration;

## **2.4. Information Communications Technology (ICT) and Digital Integration**

- 2.4.1. Promote cooperation and information sharing on ICT, including broadband and mobile telephone connectivity, with support for the implementation of the ASEAN ICT Master Plan 2020 and its successor documents;
- 2.4.2. Promote sustainable and inclusive economic growth and prosperity through increasing digital trade, entrepreneurship, preparing MSMEs for digital transformation and developing a digital-ready workforce equipped for the Fourth Industrial Revolution;
- 2.4.3. Enhance cooperation on digital integration, including e-commerce, with support for the implementation of the ASEAN Agreement on Electronic Commerce and the ASEAN Digital Integration Framework Action Plan;

## **2.5. Energy and Resources**

- 2.5.1. Explore cooperation, including through the private sector, to promote energy security through regional power integration and the development of renewable and alternative energy sources as well as promotion of clean energy technologies and energy efficiency and conservation practices;
- 2.5.2. Explore the application of clean coal and carbon capture and storage (CCS) technologies as one of the key measures to reduce environmental and climate change impacts;
- 2.5.3. Promote best practices on energy regulatory frameworks and technical standards, consistent with the ASEAN Plan of Action for Energy Cooperation (APAEC), including technology transfer and capacity building support for the programme area to realize APG multilateral power trade and greater integration of renewables into the grid;

## **2.6. Agriculture and Forestry**

- 2.6.1. Promote closer cooperation in agriculture in key areas of mutual interest, including capacity building, strengthening agricultural markets and establishing linkages and partnerships between relevant agriculture authorities to enable greater access for ASEAN and Australian products to regional and global markets;

- 2.6.2. Explore collaboration to promote sustainable management of soil and water resource for soil conservation and sustainable productivity including through the implementation of the Strategic Plan for ASEAN Cooperation in Food, Agriculture and Forestry 2016-2025 and through other regional initiatives;
- 2.6.3. Support activities that reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries through capacity building for measurement, reporting and verification of greenhouse gas emissions;
- 2.6.4. Combat illegal logging, and promote trade in sustainable and legal wood products;

## **2.7. Science and Technology**

- 2.7.1. Encourage cooperation and cross-sectoral collaboration in science and technology, including but not limited to joint research and development projects, and support implementation of the ASEAN Plan of Action on Science, Technology and Innovation (APASTI) 2016-2025;

## **3. Socio-Cultural Cooperation**

### **3.1 Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance**

- 3.1.1. Continue to support the implementation of the second phase of the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) Work Programme for 2016-2020 and beyond, the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on disaster management's (AHA Centre) ongoing initiatives and explore other areas of collaboration;
- 3.1.2. Continue consultations between the ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management (ACDM) and its partners including Australia to facilitate synergy between the AADMER Work Programme and disaster management cooperation under EAS, ADMM-Plus, and ARF frameworks;
- 3.1.3. Continue to strengthen humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) cooperation through ASEAN-led mechanisms as well as with regional and international agencies to promote effective HADR in the region and beyond;

### **3.2. Education**

- 3.2.1. Strengthen engagement between Australian and ASEAN education institutions, staff and students, including through the New Colombo Plan, Australia Awards, BRIDGE schools partnerships and other scholarships and awards programs;
- 3.2.2. Explore enhancements to qualification recognition arrangements based on



international best practices, including through the AANZFTA-supported ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework;

- 3.2.3. Enhance inclusiveness and quality of early childhood care and development (ECCD), primary, secondary, Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET) and higher education through sharing of best practices in regard to education curricula and syllabuses, teaching pedagogies, and resource development;
- 3.2.4. Promote regional collaboration in the area of TVET, such as by promoting a shared understanding of the principles and quality indicators of the EAS TVET Quality Assurance Framework in the quality assurance systems for TVET of ASEAN Member States, and providing policy input to the EAS TVET Provider Network, as appropriate;
- 3.2.5. Encourage the exchange and mobility of scientists and researchers and encourage conducting joint research projects in ASEAN and Australia;
- 3.2.6. Work collaboratively to exchange information and technical expertise about the development of occupational standards to meet the demand of local and regional labour markets;

### **3.3 People-to-People Links, Sports, Arts and Culture**

- 3.3.1 Encourage ASEAN-Australia youth dialogue, exchange, entrepreneurship and leadership, including through the ASEAN-Australia Emerging Leaders Program (A2ELP) and possible internships with Australian companies in ASEAN Member States;
- 3.3.2 Promote deeper people-to-people linkages, including through media, sports for development and training programs, arts and cultural exchange, including through programs and the activities of the ASEAN-Australia Council (AAC) and the ASEAN Foundation;
- 3.3.3 Promote the greater participation of the youth in development through volunteering and other community building activities in ASEAN member countries or in Australia;
- 3.3.4 Promote the professional development of athletes and coaches, through training and exchange programmes, coaching clinics, as well as partnerships with Australian sports academies and related institutions;
- 3.3.5 Support development in sports through collaborative and ethical research, knowledge-exchange and other relevant activities;
- 3.3.6 Encourage cooperation and collaboration on policies governing arts and culture, including tangible and intangible heritage to foster understanding, appreciation, and appropriate management;
- 3.3.7 Explore opportunities to support ASEAN's implementation of the Declaration on a Culture of Prevention for a Peaceful, Inclusive, Resilient, Healthy and Harmonious

Society, including through youth engagement;

### **3.4 Social Inclusion and Gender**

- 3.4.1 Promote cooperation and engage relevant stakeholders to support social inclusion and promote cohesive and multicultural societies;
- 3.4.2 Support the implementation of the ASEAN Consensus on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers and its corresponding action plan through cooperation with the ACMW under the Tripartite Action for the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers in the ASEAN Region (TRIANGLE) in ASEAN Project (2015-2025);
- 3.4.3 Collaborate across the breadth of ASEAN's pillars, to promote and protect the rights of women and children, gender equality and reduce barriers to women's full participation in the economy particularly via support for AICHR and ACWC activities;
- 3.4.4 Raise the profile of women's economic empowerment as a strong driver of economic growth, including through "Women in Business";
- 3.4.5 Integrate gender equality in relevant activities and promote gender mainstreaming in ASEAN-Australia cooperation;
- 3.4.6 Provide technical assistance to support programmes and projects for vulnerable groups;
- 3.4.7 Promote and protect the rights of persons with disabilities via activities in line with the ASEAN Enabling Masterplan 2025: Mainstreaming the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in the ASEAN Community;
- 3.4.8 Engage relevant stakeholders and exchange best practices to support the ASEAN Declaration on Strengthening Social Protection and its Regional Framework and Action Plan;

### **3.5 Public Health**

- 3.5.1 Continue to collaborate and share information on priority health issues, including but not limited to: Emerging Infectious Diseases; Communicable Diseases including de-identified information on HIV and AIDS, support the implementation of ASEAN Cities Getting to Zeros Project (i.e. zero new infection, zero discrimination, and zero AIDS related deaths) in priority ASEAN Member States identified by ASEAN and Australia; and pandemics by supporting effective monitoring, prevention, preparedness and response systems, in coordination with relevant international and regional agencies currently collaborating with the sectors involved with public health and animal health;
- 3.5.2 Enhance coordination and collaboration in sectors involved with public health and animal health in addressing zoonotic diseases and antimicrobial resistance;

- 3.5.3 Promote collaboration in research and development on priority health issues identified by ASEAN and Australia;
- 3.5.4 Promote cooperation on issues under the ASEAN Post-2015 Health Development Agenda and its four priority clusters;
- 3.5.5 Continue to support the implementation of the 2012 EAS Declaration on “Regional Responses to Malaria Control and Addressing Resistance to Anti-malarial Medicines” through the Asia-Pacific Leaders Malaria Alliance (APLMA) in consultation with relevant bodies;
- 3.5.6 Promote cooperation on health security through the ASEAN-Australia Health Security Fellows programme;
- 3.5.7 Address other growing health challenges including aging through capacity development programmes, exchange of best practices and research and development;

### **3.6 Environment**

- 3.6.1 Promote biodiversity conservation and management in the region, including encouraging collaboration with the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity;
- 3.6.2 Provide support for conservation and sustainable management of ASEAN’s terrestrial and aquatic environment with focus on restoration of degraded and fragile ecosystems;
- 3.6.3 Continue to collaborate on capacity building for the implementation of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and Sustainable Development Goals, information exchange and knowledge for the conservation and management of terrestrial, coastal and marine habitats/ecosystems;
- 3.6.4 Strengthen implementation of the Integrated Water Resources Management programs through, public participation and awareness raising, partnership and cooperation, and capacity building to ensure the effectiveness and sustainability of water resources management;
- 3.6.5 Explore opportunities for regional coordination and cooperation to address waste-related issues including chemical waste and efficient waste management;
- 3.6.6 Promote regional collaboration with an effective holistic approach to combat marine debris, in line with the 2018 EAS Leaders’ Statement on Combatting Marine Plastic Debris, Bangkok Declaration on Combating Marine Debris in ASEAN Region, and the ASEAN Framework of Action on Marine Debris;
- 3.6.7 Explore opportunities to address transboundary haze issues through cooperation with ASEAN Member States, recognising ASEAN’s efforts in the implementation of the ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution;

### **3.7 Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation**

- 3.7.1 Promote regional cooperation to implement the ASEAN Action Plan on Joint Response to Climate Change;
- 3.7.2 Pursue regional cooperation to advance climate change adaptation and mitigation, including through supporting communities and ecosystems to be adaptive and resilient, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions to transition into low carbon development;
- 3.7.3 Promote quality climate change-resilient infrastructure development including through investments with participation by the private sector, as appropriate, such as through PPP mechanisms;

## **4 Cross-Pillars Cooperation**

### **4.1 Connectivity**

- 4.1.1 Strengthen cooperation on the ASEAN Connectivity agenda, including through implementation, communication, outreach and monitoring and evaluation of the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity (MPAC) 2025 and through other regional fora;
- 4.1.2 Continue to undertake regular consultations between ASEAN and Australia on connectivity issues through the ASEAN Connectivity Coordinating Committee (ACCC) and other relevant ASEAN sectoral bodies, as appropriate;
- 4.1.3 Encourage robust private sector investments in infrastructure projects and capacity building to develop economically viable projects, including through public private partnership (PPP) schemes and other financing modalities, towards achieving a seamlessly connected and integrated ASEAN;
- 4.1.4 Support the implementation of an ASEAN-Australia Infrastructure Cooperation programme and the ASEAN-Australia Smart Cities initiative, as part of initiatives arising from the ASEAN-Australia Special Summit, to deliver MPAC 2025 sustainable infrastructure projects;
- 4.1.5 Promote quality, sustainable and transparent infrastructure development that upholds robust standards and avoids unsustainable debt burdens;
- 4.1.6 Facilitate access to sustainable finance and smart and sustainable urban planning during the implementation of the MPAC 2025;
- 4.1.7 Increase the supply of investment-ready infrastructure projects in ASEAN countries by supporting project preparation facilities, enhancing investment enabling environments through governance programs and providing targeted technical assistance and capacity building;

### **4.2 Smart Cities**

- 4.2.1 Support the ASEAN Smart Cities Network (ASCN) which aims to build communities that are resilient, innovative and well-connected and explore partnerships with cities in the ASCN;
- 4.2.2 Promote smart and sustainable planning and development of the urban environment through continued cooperation on the ASEAN-Australia Smart Cities initiative, including through implementation of the ASEAN Sustainable Urbanisation Strategy;
- 4.2.3 Implement the Smart City innovation accelerator to promote collaboration between city authorities, academic institutions, private investors and businesses;

#### **4.3 Cybersecurity**

- 4.3.1 Promote an open, secure, stable, accessible and peaceful ICT environment;
- 4.3.2 Improve joint efforts to promote security, peace and stability in cyberspace as well as the protection of online personal information, where appropriate, including through the biennial ASEAN-Australia Cyber Policy Dialogues;
- 4.3.3 Promote a rules-based cyberspace based on international law, cooperative capacity building, practical confidence building measures, and voluntary and non-binding norms of responsible behaviour taking reference from the voluntary norms recommended in the 2015 Report of the United Nations Group of Governmental Experts on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security (UNGGE);
- 4.3.4 Cooperate on national CERT-to-CERT cyber response, efforts and cyber information exchanges especially where cyber incidents have direct impact to ASEAN and Australia by leveraging on the ARF Points of Contact Directory on Security of and In the Use of ICTs and established contacts in the CERT community;

#### **4.4 Initiative for ASEAN Integration/Narrowing the Development Gap (IAI/NDG)**

- 4.4.1 Continue to Support ASEAN's efforts in narrowing the development gap within and between ASEAN Member States, through the implementation of IAI Work Plan III (2016-2020) and its successor documents as well as alleviating poverty and promoting sustainable development in order to realise the ASEAN Community and regional integration;

#### **4.5 Development Cooperation**

- 4.5.1 Strengthen dialogue and cooperation on sustainable development to promote complementarities between the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development including through exchange of best practices and capacity building in areas of poverty eradication, infrastructure and connectivity, sustainable management of natural resources, sustainable consumption and production and resilience;
- 4.5.2 Support ASEAN institutions and mechanisms that help facilitate sustainable

development cooperation in the region, including but not limited to the ASEAN Centre for Sustainable Development Studies and Dialogue (ACSDDSD) in Thailand, the ASEAN Institute for Green Economy in Myanmar;

- 4.5.3 Continue to support ASEAN-Australia development cooperation, including through Australia's ASEAN regional development programmes;

## **5 ASEAN Institutional Strengthening**

- 5.1.1 Support ASEAN's efforts to implement measures aimed to build capacity in the ASEAN Secretariat, including in the areas of analysis and monitoring;

## **6 Implementation Mechanisms**

- 6.1.1 This Plan of Action will be taken forward with the support, where appropriate, of funding mechanisms available through the Australian and ASEAN governments;
- 6.1.2 Review of this Plan of Action will be made through appropriate mechanisms comprising ASEAN and Australian officials, including through the ASEAN-Australia JCC Meeting and the ASEAN-Australia Forum, with the assistance of the ASEAN Secretariat; and
- 6.1.3 Submit a summary progress report of the implementation of the POA to the PMC+1 session with Australia.

---

## **Annex A – ASEAN-Australia Comprehensive Strategic Partnership**

At the 1<sup>st</sup> ASEAN-Australia Summit on 27 October 2021, ASEAN and Australia agreed to establish an ASEAN-Australia Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (CSP) that is substantive, meaningful and mutually beneficial. This deepened cooperation will promote regional peace, stability and prosperity, and enhance our region’s resilience for the future. Our CSP reflects our mutual commitment to ASEAN Centrality, upholding regional rules and norms that underpin peace, stability and prosperity, and supporting the ASEAN-led regional architecture, including the East Asia Summit (EAS), anchored in international law. It reflects our mutual respect for the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity, equality, non-interference and political independence of all nations as espoused in the Charter of the United Nations, the ASEAN Charter, as well as the principles contained in the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC) and the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP).

To mark this new chapter in ASEAN-Australia relations under the CSP, this annex outlines further commitments for ASEAN and Australia to deepen practical cooperation, building on the priorities already outlined in the Plan of Action to Implement the ASEAN-Australia Strategic Partnership (2020-2024). It includes the initiatives announced by Australia at the 1<sup>st</sup> ASEAN-Australia Summit, and new commitments made in Australia’s response to ASEAN’s Non-Paper on Australia’s Proposal to Establish a CSP.

### **1. Australia for ASEAN initiatives**

- 1.1. As announced by Australia at the 1<sup>st</sup> ASEAN-Australia Summit on 27 October 2021, Australia and ASEAN will deepen our practical cooperation through implementation of the following Australia for ASEAN initiatives [*totaling A\$154 million over 10 years*]:
  - 1.1.1. The A\$124 million **Australia for ASEAN Futures Initiative** to support projects that address complex regional challenges across all three ASEAN pillars, cross-cutting issues and support implementation of the AOIP;
  - 1.1.2. One hundred **Australia for ASEAN Scholarships** to support emerging ASEAN leaders to study in Australia in fields that advance the AOIP under its priority areas of cooperation including maritime, connectivity, economic, and sustainable development cooperation;
  - 1.1.3. The **Australia for ASEAN Digital Transformation and Future Skills initiative** to support our region’s futures skills needs, respond to rapid

digitalisation, and support long-term economic recovery through a new skills policy dialogue, 350 VET scholarships, and technical assistance partnerships between Australian and ASEAN training institutions;

- 1.1.4. Australia will consult closely with ASEAN Member States to finalise design, governance, and implementation arrangements for the above initiatives.

## **2. Further commitments to deepen the ASEAN-Australia partnership**

### **2.1. Cross-Pillar**

- 2.1.1. Convene annual ASEAN-Australia Summits, in addition to the annual ASEAN Post Ministerial Conference with Australia (PMC+1), ASEAN-Australia Forum (AAF), and ASEAN-Australia Joint Cooperation Committee (JCC) Meeting;
- 2.1.2. Support ASEAN's efforts to build back cleaner and achieve a green recovery after COVID-19 including by investing in clean energy and smart and sustainable solutions through capacity-building programmes, cooperative activities and training;
- 2.1.3. Enhance cooperation to support regional energy security and transition to lower-emissions technologies and promote renewable energy for power generation and cross-border power trade;
- 2.1.4. Further explore opportunities for cooperation in support of sub-regional frameworks in the ASEAN region, which would contribute to narrowing the development gap and promoting sustainable and equitable development and inclusive growth across the ASEAN Community by aligning sub-regional growth with the comprehensive development of ASEAN.

### **2.2. Political-Security**

- 2.2.1. Cooperate to strengthen ASEAN Centrality, including through ASEAN led mechanisms such as the EAS, ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM-Plus), and Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum (EAMF) in accordance with the objectives and principles laid out in the ASEAN Charter, TAC, the Southeast Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty (SEANWFZ) and the AOIP;



2.2.2. Consider holding ASEAN-Australia Defence Ministers' Informal Meetings, subject to approval by the ADMM.

2.2.3. Deepen engagement in support of regional security through the ADMM-Plus in areas such as maritime security, counter-terrorism, peacekeeping operations, humanitarian assistance and disaster response, military medicine, humanitarian mine action, and cyber security, and promote dialogue and cooperation on the Chemical, Biological and Radiological domain, in accordance with ADMM processes;

### **2.3. Economic**

2.3.1. Continue cooperation to support regional economic recovery from COVID-19 and promote regional and global value chains for future economic resilience, including through capacity-building, cooperative activities, training, and development programs, and leveraging digital technologies and platforms to reskill and upskill workforces;

2.3.2. Enhance trade and economic cooperation through the substantial conclusion of the upgraded ASEAN-Australia-New Zealand Free Trade Area (AANZFTA) Agreement by September 2022, so that AANZFTA remains of a high standard, fit for purpose, relevant and adds value for businesses, while ensuring ASEAN Centrality in the regional economic architecture.

2.3.3. Enhance the adoption and use of secure digital technologies/innovations by MSMEs and start-ups to stimulate trade and investment, as well as inclusive economic growth via the promotion of digital integration and connectivity.

2.3.4. Explore cooperation in sustainable minerals mining, capacity building programmes and exchange of knowledge and experiences in minerals, and support the implementation of the ASEAN Mineral Cooperation Action Plan (AMCAP) Phase 2 2021-2025.

### **2.4. Socio-Cultural**

2.4.1. Continue ASEAN-Australia cooperation on COVID-19 response and recovery as well as to boost the health security of the region, including cooperation through the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework,

COVID-19 ASEAN Response Fund, Regional Strategic and Action Plan for ASEAN Vaccine Security and Self-Reliance (AVSSR) 2021-2025, the ASEAN Regional Reserve of Medical Supplies for Public Health Emergencies, and the ASEAN Centre for Public Health Emergencies and Emerging Diseases;

- 2.4.2. Enhance mental health cooperation through exchange of information, best practice, case studies, mentorship and training programmes for mental health experts;
- 2.4.3. Enhance cooperation on gender equality and women's empowerment, including but not limited to the empowerment of women in digital economy and financial inclusion;
- 2.4.4. Cooperate on combatting the over-exploitation of fisheries, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing (IUU Fishing), marine plastic debris and ocean habitat destruction, and promoting healthy oceans.