



JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ
THE TWENTY SEVENTH ASEAN LABOUR MINISTERS MEETING (27th ALMM)
28 OCTOBER 2022, MANILA, THE PHILIPPINES

1. The 27th ASEAN Labour Ministers Meeting (ALMM) was held on 28 October 2022 in Manila, the Philippines, and chaired by His Excellency Bienvenido E. Laguesma, Secretary of Labour and Employment of the Philippines.

2. Guided by the theme of the 27th ALMM “Together as One: Reshaping the World of Work in the ASEAN Community Through Digitalized, Inclusive and Sustainable Recovery and Growth”, we exchanged views on the current and emerging global and trans-national challenges affecting workers and labour markets in the region, including to those in the hard-to-reach sectors. We were pleased with the progress and development of the various action plans, programmes and responses as ASEAN Member States took on new challenges and opportunities across the region and refined national priorities from recovery and beyond. We agreed to: (i) continue promoting information and communication technology (ICT) and digitalisation through the ASEAN Digital Integration Framework and in operationalising the priority areas in the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework (ACRF); (ii) assist in modernising agriculture as a strategic priority, a pathway to food security and as a key employment generator; and (iii) link with the key actions for policy makers to reform ASEAN human resources development systems under the ASEAN Declaration on Human Resources Development for the Changing World of Work and the ASEAN TVET Council (ATC) for an upskilled and employable ASEAN workforce.

3. We agreed that drawing lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic, occupational safety and health standards should be improved for stronger resilience in the future. Accessibility and portability of social security benefits for workers, especially migrant workers, should be further explored. Human resources development, especially through up-skilling and re-skilling of our workforce, should receive higher attention as a response to the changing world of work amidst digitalisation and greening of our economies. Life-long learning culture is pivotal in the high informality of economies and ageing of societies in most AMS. The well-being and rights of workers in the platform economy should be well protected by the labour laws. A more robust and strengthened migration architecture in the entire migration process is pivotal in better protection of our migrant workers now and beyond.

4. We reaffirmed our commitment to attain the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 for a peaceful, stable, and resilient and outward looking community and support the development of the Post-2025 ASEAN Community Vision. We resolved to continue implementing the ACRF which supports a holistic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and strengthen our resilience and preparedness for the future through

focused, balanced and impactful strategies and priorities. We were committed to utilise the Consolidated Strategy on the Fourth Industrial Revolution for ASEAN in further supporting our workers' competitiveness and adaptability to technological advancement.

5. We endorsed the ASEAN Declaration on Portability of Social Security Benefits for Migrant Workers in ASEAN for adoption by the 40th and 41st ASEAN Summits. The Declaration highlights ASEAN Member States' commitment for smooth and fair transition of social security benefits that migrant workers are entitled to from countries of employment to their home countries. It will also support the implementation of the ASEAN Consensus on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers (ASEAN Consensus). We looked forward to the development of the guiding document to realise the Declaration that will serve as a roadmap of regional actions by 2030 as well as the ASEAN Guidelines on Portability of Social Security Benefits for Migrant Workers.

6. We adopted the ASEAN Guidelines on HIV Counselling and Testing in the Workplace for the greater involvement of the business community in developing and implementing policies and programmes to ensure protection of workers' rights and further create a productive, safe and inclusive workplace.

7. We established the ASEAN Labour Inspection Committee (ALICOM) in 2021 and adopted its Work Plan 2022-2030 that will guide the work of the Committee in ensuring the efficiency and effectiveness of labour inspection towards safe, harmonious, and progressive workplaces in the region.

8. We were pleased with the progress of the ATC Work Plan 2021-2030 following its establishment by the ASEAN Labour, Education and Economic Ministers in 2020. We noted the endorsement and implementation of the ATC's Organisational Development Framework this year. We noted the completion of the Study on Enhancing the Competitiveness of ASEAN Human Resources through Responsive TVET Curriculum Supported by Involvement of Industries and Labour Markets which examined the overall responsiveness of TVET systems in the region based on the findings and recommendations of the ten country reports of ASEAN Member States.

9. We noted with satisfaction the achievements made over the last two years in implementing the ASEAN Labour Ministers' (ALM') Work Programme 2021-2025, Action Plan 2018-2025 of the ASEAN Consensus, SLOM's Working Group on Progressive Labour Practices to Enhance the Competitiveness of ASEAN (SLOM-WG) Work Plan 2021-2025, and ASEAN Occupational Safety and Health Network (ASEAN-OSHNET) Work Plan 2021-2025. The tremendous progress in spite of the challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic has further deepened ASEAN cooperation on labour and employment. We applauded the adoption of the Terms of References of the ALICOM and the ASEAN Forum on Migrant Labour (AFML) which will further strengthen institutional mechanisms of both the Committee and the Forum. We took stock of the progress of the action plans and recommended practical initiatives cognizant of the emerging trends and developments in the region and the future of work.

10. We were committed to the continuous implementation of the Roadmap of the ASEAN Declaration on Human Resource Development (HRD) for the Changing World

of Work. We noted the endorsement of the Roadmap's Monitoring and Evaluation Framework by the Senior Labour Officials Meeting (SLOM) and Senior Officials Meeting on Education (SOM-ED) in August 2022. We also noted the on-going brownbag series and scoping study to explore the establishment of a central pool of funds with contributions from governments and other relevant stakeholders to support the priorities and researches on future skills needs, which were committed to in the ASEAN Declaration. We put forth recommendations which will strengthen HRD systems of AMS which will result in a more skilled and employable ASEAN workforce.

11. We recognised that a modernised agriculture which is competitive, inclusive and resilient can ensure food security; enhance quantity and quality production; create productive and remunerative employment; and promote sustainable enterprises towards green technologies. The action plan and activities developed will be aligned with ASEAN Integrated Food Security (AIFS) Framework and Strategic Plan of Action on Food Security 2015-2020 as well as the initiatives of the ASEAN and World Economic Forum to assist MSMEs to enhance their capacity.

12. We fully supported the development of a guiding document for the implementation of the ASEAN Declaration on Promoting Competitiveness, Resilience and Agility of Workers for the Future of Work, which was adopted by the 38th and 39th ASEAN Summits in October 2021.

13. We were pleased with the strengthening of regional databases in labour sector through the establishment and updating of the ASEAN Labour Productivity Index and ASEAN Informal Employment Statistics. We noted the baseline data collection to track progress in attaining the objectives of the ASEAN Roadmap on Elimination of Worst Forms of Child Labour by 2025 and the Roadmap of the ASEAN Declaration on HRD for the Changing World of Work.

14. We noted the results of the ASEAN Member States' self-assessments of the ASEAN Consensus in 2020 and the on-going second self-assessments for completion by January 2023. Complementing this, the ASEAN Member States' self-assessments of the AFML Recommendations' implementation were completed last year. We were pleased with the finalisation of the audio-visual materials of the Public Campaign on Safe and Fair Migration in ASEAN which provide relevant and updated information on various and comprehensive aspects of safe and fair labour migration. We were also encouraged by the finalisation of the inaugural ASEAN Migration Outlook which analysed the return home of migrant workers due to crisis situations as well as economic and social costs of their return and reintegration. We supported the development of the ASEAN Guidelines on the Protection of Migrant Workers in Crisis Situation.

15. We commended the private companies from ASEAN Member States which received the Fourth ASEAN OSHNET Awards for their excellence and unwavering commitment in promoting safety and health standards in the workplace. We also applauded the private companies from ASEAN Member States for receiving the Fourth ASEAN Red Ribbon for Outstanding Workplace (ARROW) Award. These companies were recognised for their outstanding initiatives to prevent and control HIV in the workplace, raise HIV awareness of workers, and promote non-discriminatory policies and environment for workers with HIV and AIDS. The private sector plays an important role in realising an inclusive ASEAN Community.

16. We lauded various regional studies completed since 2020 including on portability of social security rights between ASEAN Member States, green jobs policy readiness, labour productivity, human resources development readiness, laws and policies in the management of migrant workers, old-age income security in ASEAN, impact of COVID-19 on livelihood across ASEAN, technology's implication for employment relationships in ASEAN, gender analysis of women migrant workers' rights protection in existing laws and policies on labour migration, and economic justification of occupational safety and health implementations in the construction sector. We were appreciative with the follow-up activities of completed studies.

17. We affirmed the importance of inclusive consultation processes through social dialogue and other consultative mechanisms in the development and implementation of labour- and employment-related plans, programmes and activities to ensure that representatives of workers, employers, industry and non-government institutions are adequately consulted in areas affecting them.

18. We expressed satisfaction and agreed to continue close cooperation with ASEAN Dialogue Partners particularly the Plus Three Countries, European Union, Germany, Australia, Canada, Switzerland and United States of America through activities in the SLOM+3 Work Plan 2021-2025, the Enhanced Regional EU-ASEAN Dialogue Instrument (E-READI), the Safe and Fair: Realizing Women Migrant Workers' Rights and Opportunities in the ASEAN Region (SAF), the Regional Cooperation Programme for the Development of TVET in ASEAN (RECOTVET), the Tripartite Action to Enhance the Contribution of Labour Migration to Growth and Development in ASEAN (TRIANGLE in ASEAN), the Poverty Reduction through Safe Migration, Skills Development and Enhanced Job Placement (PROMISE) and the Addressing Labour Exploitation in Fishing in ASEAN (ALFA) Projects, respectively. We also agreed to foster our partnerships with international organisations and other relevant stakeholders including through the development and endorsement of the ILO-ASEAN Work Programme 2022-2025, ASEAN-IOM Plan of Action 2022-2025 and OECD-ASEAN Memorandum of Understanding.

19. We expressed our sincere appreciation to the Government of the Philippines, particularly the Department of Labour and Employment, for the warm hospitality and excellent arrangement of the 27th ALMM. We also thanked the ASEAN Secretariat for its unwavering support to the Meeting.

20. We agreed to meet again in 2024 under the 28th ALMM Chairmanship of Singapore.
