

OVERVIEW

ASEAN-FRANCE DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP

1. France was conferred the status of Development Partner of ASEAN at the 53rd ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting (AMM) on 9 September 2020 via videoconference.

2. The ASEAN-France Development Partnership was institutionalised through the convening of the 1st ASEAN-France Development Partnership Committee (AF-DPC) Meeting on 4 March 2021 via videoconference. The Meeting exchanged views on the potential areas of ASEAN-France cooperation, including projects/activities to support ASEAN's priorities across the three pillars of the ASEAN Community and the implementation of the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework. To date, there have been three AF-DPC Meetings, held in 2021, 2022, and 2023 to review and shape the future direction of cooperation between ASEAN and France.

3. The ASEAN-France Development Partnership: Practical Cooperation Areas (PCA) 2022-2026 adopted ad-referendum in November 2022 serves as a practical guide to substantiate the ASEAN-France partnership to foster resilient, inclusive and sustainable growth models in the regions, in practical areas where ASEAN and France have the expertise and mutual interests, including peace and reconciliation, security cooperation, maritime cooperation, good governance and human rights, energy, food, agriculture and forestry, blue economy, tourism, science, technology and innovation, information and communication technology, transport, people-to-people exchanges, disaster management and humanitarian assistance, public health, climate change, biodiversity, environmental protection, circular economy, and culture, media and information.

A. Political-Security Cooperation

4. France acceded to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC) in 2007, making it the first European Union Member State to accede to the Treaty.

5. France has accredited its Ambassadors to ASEAN since 2009. The current Ambassador of France to ASEAN, H.E. Fabien Penone, presented his Letter of Credence to the Secretary-General of ASEAN on 1 August 2023.

6. A France-supported Workshop Regional Security on "Navigating through Concurrent Security Challenges: How to Keep ASEAN in the Driver Seat" was convened in December 2023 to discuss challenges and support to ASEAN-led mechanisms and ASEAN Centrality.

B. Economic Cooperation

7. ASEAN and France have enjoyed considerable trade and investment relations despite recent fluctuation. The total two-way trade grew by 11.80%, from

US\$ 31.94 billion in 2021 to US\$ 35.70 billion in 2022. Meanwhile, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) flows from France to ASEAN recorded a significant increase from US\$ 2.06 billion in 2021 to US\$ 4.71 billion in 2022.¹ In tourism, the number of tourists arriving from France to ASEAN has increased every year since 2010. Based on preliminary ASEAN data for 2022, there were 37,755 tourist arrivals from France to ASEAN in 2021. This number increased to 715,259 arrivals in 2022.

8. On the economic sphere, France has been supporting ASEAN to establish and strengthen regional cooperation on port waste management and promoting sustainable management of the coastal and marine environment.

C. Socio-Cultural Cooperation

9. France has undertaken bilateral socio-cultural cooperation with ASEAN Member States. France's cooperation in this field with ASEAN Member States (AMS) includes, among others, contribution to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria; institutional cooperation projects between environment ministries; humanitarian assistance in response to natural disasters; students training; research cooperation; and archaeological cooperation. In the area of public health, France supported projects with the Research Institute for Development (IRD), through its joint international laboratory DRISA: Drug Resistance in Southeast Asia (2016-2020) on antibiotic resistance and the French Agency for Research on AIDS and Viral Hepatitis (ANRS), through almost 100 research projects. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on the ASEAN region, France, through the French Development Agency (AFD), provided additional financing of EUR 2 million to the project ECOMORE II (Economic Development, Ecosystem Modifications, and Emerging Infectious Diseases Risk Evaluation), and EUR 650 million to support strengthening financial systems and to mitigate impacts on SMEs in several AMS. At the regional level, France provided humanitarian assistance through the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA Centre) following the earthquake and tsunami, which hit Central Sulawesi, Indonesia, in September 2018.

10. In 2022, France contributed USD 200,000 to the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA Centre) as part of its contribution towards the operationalisation of the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER).

11. France has been supporting ASEAN in improving air quality in the region and promoting regional cooperation to reduce climate risk.

D. Development Cooperation

12. The French Development Agency (AFD) has been operating in the ASEAN region since 1993, and its operation has been extended to cover seven ASEAN Member States, namely Cambodia, Laos, Viet Nam, Thailand, Philippines, Indonesia, and Myanmar. Since 2010, the AFD has supported more than 170 projects representing more than EUR 4 billion of commitments (mostly in the form

¹ ASEAN Statistics Database as of December 2023

of loans). It also supported a number of regional projects, including in the areas of biodiversity, health, environment, energy, cultural heritage, and economy. France made a voluntary contribution of EUR 100,000 to support the ASEAN Junior Fellowship Program in 2022.

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