

**JOINT COMMUNIQUE OF THE TWELFTH ASEAN LAW MINISTERS MEETING  
25 JANUARY 2024, VIDEO CONFERENCE**

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1. The Twelfth ASEAN Law Ministers' Meeting ("ALAWMM"), held on 25 January 2024, was hosted and chaired by Myanmar, via video conference.
2. The Meeting noted ASEAN's accomplishments, in particular, the implementation of its community and integration agenda as reflected in the ASEAN Community Vision 2025, and supported the on-going work on the development of the ASEAN Community Vision 2045. The Meeting also congratulated Indonesia on its successful Chairmanship in 2023, under the theme "*ASEAN Matters: Epicentrum of Growth*" and welcomed the Lao PDR on its assumption of the ASEAN Chairmanship in 2024, under the theme "*Enhancing Connectivity and Resilience*". The Meeting reiterated the commitment to strengthening ASEAN's unity and centrality, as well as to building an open, transparent, inclusive, and rules-based regional architecture anchored in international law and with ASEAN at the center, for peace, stability, and development in the region.
3. The Meeting noted with satisfaction its work progress in the area of law and legal cooperation since the Eleventh ALAWMM held on 27 October 2021, via video conference, hosted and chaired by Malaysia. The Meeting was also pleased with the work on exploring the harmonisation of trade laws, strengthening ASEAN's capacity on crime prevention and criminal justice, and mutual legal assistance in civil and commercial matters, development of an ASEAN Extradition Treaty ("AET"), as well as the collaborative work with other ASEAN Sectoral Ministerial Bodies ("ASMB") in supporting the implementation of the ASEAN Community 2025 Vision and its rules-based agenda.
4. The Meeting further took note of the ALAWMM's continued dialogue and engagement with external parties to promote the rule of law and justice as well as rules-based ASEAN, in particular the successful organisation of the ASEAN-Japan Special Meeting of Justice Ministers ("AJSMJ") and ASEAN-G7 Justice Ministers' Interface ("Interface") held on 6-7 July 2023, in Tokyo, Japan. The AJSMJ adopted its Joint Statement and endorsed the ASEAN-Japan Work Plan on Law and Justice to further promote the rule of law, respect for human rights, and shared common values. The historical Interface had enabled both ASEAN and G7 Justice Ministers to exchange views and explore possible areas of cooperation on issues of common concern and interest,

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such as upholding and promoting the rule of law and respect for national sovereignty and territorial integrity, supporting multilateralism, and rules-based resolutions to disputes, as well as crime prevention and criminal justice. The Meeting tasked the ASEAN Senior Law Officials Meeting (“ASLOM”), with the support of the ASEAN Secretariat, to work closely with Japan to ensure the effective implementation of the Work Plan and report its progress to the ALAWMM.

5. The Meeting noted the progress of negotiations of the text of the AET and urged ASLOM and the ASLOM Working Group on AET to expedite their work to complete negotiations of the draft text of the AET by September 2024.

6. The Meeting took note of ASLOM’s discussion on the possible cooperation on the Transfer of Sentenced Persons and noted the establishment of the Technical Working Group (“TWG”) among like-minded ASEAN Member States to work on the possible development of a treaty on the Transfer of Sentenced Persons. The Meeting further noted that some Member States will not be able to engage in such transfers of sentenced persons. However, such Member States will not stand in the way of the establishment of the TWG. The Meeting also took note that an ASEAN Member State offered to serve as a Secretariat to facilitate and coordinate the work among like-minded ASEAN Member States.

7. The Meeting commended ASLOM’s work and its continued active participation in and coordination with other ASEAN Sectoral Bodies in addressing cross-sectoral and cross-cutting issues in supporting other ASEAN works and initiatives across the ASEAN Political-Security Community, ASEAN Economic Community, and ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Pillars in the realization of the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 Blueprints. The Meeting was also encouraged by ASLOM’s initiative with the support of the ASEAN Secretariat to engage with other stakeholders such as the ASEAN Law Association (“ALA”) and the Council of ASEAN Chiefs Justice (“CACJ”) to promote the rule of law and a rules-based ASEAN as well as the awareness of ASEAN legal instruments.

8. The Meeting welcomed Timor-Leste’s participation in the Meeting as an observer and commended ASLOM’s continued initiatives to engage and support Timor-Leste to effectively implement the Roadmap for Timor-Leste’s Full Membership in ASEAN.

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9. The Meeting endorsed the Report of the 21<sup>st</sup> ASLOM held on 13-14 October 2022, in Manila, Philippines, and agreed for the Report of the 22<sup>nd</sup> ASLOM held on 23-24 January 2024, via video conference to be endorsed intersessionally.

10. The Meeting thanked Singapore for offering to host the 23<sup>rd</sup> ASLOM in 2024, and the Philippines for offering to host the 24<sup>th</sup> ASLOM and 13<sup>th</sup> ALAWMM in 2025.

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