



JOINT STATEMENT OF THE THIRTY-THIRD ASEAN SOCIO-CULTURAL COMMUNITY (ASCC) COUNCIL

24 April 2025

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1. The 33rd ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) Council Meeting was held on 24 April 2025, in Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia.
 2. The Meeting expressed its deepest sympathies and condolences to the peoples of Myanmar and Thailand by recent earthquake. The Meeting reaffirmed ASEAN's solidarity and commended the prompt humanitarian response in supporting the relief and recovery efforts.
 3. The Meeting congratulated Malaysia on assuming the ASEAN Chairmanship in 2025 and commended the chosen theme "Inclusivity and Sustainability" which reflects the aspiration for shared progress where no one is left behind, and underscores ASEAN's commitment towards strengthening regional peace, stability, and prosperity within an inclusive, sustainable, and future-oriented framework.
 4. The Meeting expressed full support to the five ASCC priorities under Malaysia's ASCC Chairmanship to advance ASCC's goal of improving the quality of life of ASEAN people while ensuring inclusivity and sustainability, namely: (i) cultural heritage for value creation; (ii) artificial intelligence, digitalisation and green jobs towards future-proofing skills and talents for ASEAN; (iii) healthy ASEAN initiatives towards a prosperous ASEAN; (iv) youth and sports potential for all to foster growth, unity and excellence; and (v) climate action for stewardship, partnership and ownership.
 5. Building on those priorities, the Meeting discussed the importance of advancing the Future of Work agenda and preparing the ASEAN workforce through inclusive education, along with targeted upskilling and reskilling initiatives, particularly in digital, green, and blue economy skills.
 6. The Meeting expressed their support for the ASEAN Creative Economy Sustainability Framework which outlines the desired social, cultural, economic and environmental outcomes to achieve in promoting the development of the ASEAN Creative Economy.
 7. The meeting, recognising the significant role of vaccines, drugs and diagnostics security and self-reliance, endorsed the ASEAN Declaration of Commitment on ASEAN Drug Security and Self-Reliance (ADSSR) which outlines the sustained and high-level commitment in ensuring broader and meaningful engagement with relevant sectors across ASEAN as well as with Dialogue and Development partners.

8. The Meeting noted the submission of the ASCC Strategic Plan to the High-Level Task Force on ASEAN Community's Post-2025 Vision (HLTF-ACV) and thanked the Senior Officials' Committee for the ASCC (SOCA) and the Ad Hoc Working Group for their efforts. The Meeting discussed the strategic directions for ASCC considering the evolving regional and global landscape and shared views on the development of the ASCC Results Framework, highlighting its critical role in the operationalisation and translation of the ASCC Strategic Plan into concrete performance measures to support its implementation, monitoring and review.
9. The Meeting noted with satisfaction the progress of the ASCC Blueprint 2025 implementation, including follow-up actions on various declarations under the ASCC Pillar. The Meeting applauded the 99% achievement of the ASCC Blueprint 2025 Strategic Measures which consists of the sectoral workplans' implementation. The Meeting acknowledged the importance of the ASCC Database for Monitoring and Evaluation (ADME) System in tracking the progress of the ASCC Blueprint 2025 and encouraged ASCC sectoral bodies to continue its utilisation. The Meeting also noted the findings and recommendations from the Interim Report of the End-Term Review of the ASCC Blueprint 2025, which provided evidence-based assessment of its milestones and challenges, both at the national and regional level.
10. Recognising the importance of strengthening policies and practices on fair recruitment and decent employment practices for migrant workers, the Meeting endorsed the Checklist for ASEAN Member State governments, labour recruiters and employers of migrant workers on fair recruitment and decent employment practices. The Checklist will serve as an essential tool for private recruitment agencies/public employment services and employers in assessing their practices and progress.
11. The Meeting also noted the progress of cross-pillar and cross-sectoral initiatives of the ASCC and urged relevant sectoral bodies to ensure their smooth and effective implementation. The Meeting encouraged the strengthening of cross-pillar mechanisms and platforms to support collaboration among all pillars and ASEAN Connectivity.
12. The Meeting noted the endorsed Rules of Procedures for the ASCC Officer on Secondment to the Permanent Missions to ASEAN which outline decision-making processes, roles and procedural steps for meetings and engagement with partners. The Meeting further noted the change in the nomenclature of the ASCC Secondment Officers to Socio-Cultural Officials.
13. The Meeting expressed its continued support for Timor-Leste towards its full membership in ASEAN and commended its active participation in ASEAN meetings and non-policy-making activities. The Meeting also noted the progress of Timor-Leste's accession to the six ASCC legal instruments.
14. The Meeting conveyed deep appreciation to Malaysia for the effective Chairmanship and excellent arrangements for the 33rd ASCC Council Meeting and looked forward to the 34th ASCC Meeting in September 2025.
