



JOINT STATEMENT ON SKILLS DEVELOPMENT FOR THE FUTURE WORKFORCE IN ASEAN

WE, the Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (hereinafter referred to as “ASEAN”), namely Brunei Darussalam, the Kingdom of Cambodia, the Republic of Indonesia, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Malaysia, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, the Republic of the Philippines, the Republic of Singapore, the Kingdom of Thailand, and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam;

RECALLING the Report of the International Labour Organization (ILO) Director-General entitled “Jobs, rights and growth: Reinforcing the connection” at the 113th session of the International Labour Conference (ILC), the ILO Strategy on Skills and Lifelong Learning 2030 and the ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work 2019;

RECALLING our shared objective of enhancing skills of the ASEAN workforce as stipulated in the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Blueprint 2025, the ASEAN Labour Ministers’ Statement on the Future of Work: Embracing Technology for Inclusive and Sustainable Growth; the ASEAN Declaration on Human Resources Development for the Changing World of Work; the ASEAN Declaration on Promoting Competitiveness, Resilience, and Agility of Workers for the Future of Work; and the Vientiane Declaration on Skills Mobility, Recognition, and Development of Migrant Workers;

REAFFIRMING our commitment to achieving better understanding of the impact of skills development and workforce adaptability on ASEAN’s economic resilience and labour markets of ASEAN Member States, and to advocating the importance of inclusive and future-ready workforce strategies with the objective of enhancing employability, competitiveness, and sustainable economic growth across the region;

COGNISANT of the ASEAN Year of Skills 2025 (AYOS 2025) as an initiative of ASEAN, led by Malaysia under its ASEAN Chairmanship in 2025, to collectively harness its shared strengths in addressing regional disparities, unlocking the full potential of its youth, and advancing workforce resilience through inclusive and sustainable workforce strategies;

TAKING NOTE of the key outcomes of the AYOS 2025 Planning Workshop held in Kuala Lumpur, on 25–27 November 2024, which identified five strategic objectives of the implementation of AYOS 2025, namely: (i) Bridge Existing Skills Gaps; (ii) Promote Talent Mobility; (iii) Ensure Inclusive Growth; (iv) Strengthen Regional Collaboration; and (v) Enhance Public-Private Partnerships (PPP);

HEREBY EXPRESS ASEAN's strong commitment to:

1. catalyse workforce transformation by cultivating an inclusive, skilled, and adaptable workforce that meets the evolving demands of the global economy. This can be achieved through regional collaboration, exchange of good practices, complementary labour market intelligence and skills needs anticipation where appropriate, and the acceleration of digital and lifelong learning initiatives.
2. empower its people with future-ready competencies, including digital, green, and Artificial Intelligence (AI) skills, to ensure that the region's workforce remains competitive and resilient. Achieving this vision requires the mobilisation of local institutions and the strategic optimisation of investments in inclusive, forward-looking skills development across all Member States.
3. facilitate workforce mobility across ASEAN by strengthening and promoting mechanisms to recognise skills of ASEAN workers, where relevant.
4. ensure workforce development is both inclusive and equitable by promoting robust, targeted policies that expand access to quality skills training, employment opportunities, financial support mechanisms and innovative learning platforms, including women, youth, and persons with disabilities.
5. deepen collaboration through Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) as a strategic means (such as work-based learning, industry-aligned skill certification frameworks, and apprenticeships) to align workforce strategies and training curricula with shifting economic trends and labour market demands—thereby bolstering the region's resilience, adaptability, and global competitiveness in the future economy.
6. ensure that its initiatives remain consistently aligned with international priorities and frameworks, where relevant. This alignment reinforces efforts to strengthen skills development, drive long-term sustainability, and enhance both regional and global workforce resilience.

ADOPTED through ad-referendum by the ASEAN Labour Ministers Meeting (ALMM) on this Twenty Second Day of October in the year Two Thousand and Twenty-Five in a single original copy, in the English Language.