



**H.E. Dr. Kao Kim Hourn, Secretary-General of ASEAN**

**Remarks at the  
Opening Ceremony of the “Growing Together, Commemorating the  
10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the ASEAN-Germany Development Partnership”  
Photo Exhibition**

*11 May 2026, ASEAN Headquarters/ASEAN Secretariat*

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***Your Excellency Ralf Beste, Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to ASEAN,***

***Mr. Hans-Ludwig Bruns, Country-Director for GIZ Indonesia and ASEAN,***

***Excellencies, Permanent Representatives of ASEAN Member States,***

***Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,***

*Guten Morgen.* It is a pleasure to join you this morning at this special exhibition. Allow me to begin by extending my warm appreciation to His Excellency Ambassador Ralf Beste and his able team for the thought and care that have gone into curating this commemorative display. Each panel before us represents more than a photograph. It captures 4 M's – Milestones, Moments, Memories and Meanings, that have shaped ASEAN-Germany cooperation since the establishment of our Development Partnership in 2016.

Together, these images tell the story of a decade of meaningful cooperation. They invite us to reflect on how far our partnership has progressed, in breadth, in depth, and in the positive impact it has delivered across our region. They remind us that ASEAN-Germany relations have been built steadily over the years upon a strong foundation of trust, shared values, and purposeful collaboration. I warmly recall my working visit to Germany in February this year, which reaffirmed the depth of our mutual understanding and highlighted the broad opportunities that a decade of patient and purposeful engagement has created between us.

***Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,***

Germany has stood with ASEAN as a trusted and valued partner, both in advancing ASEAN Community-building efforts and in upholding ASEAN Centrality.

Our cooperation has gone well beyond meetings and frameworks; it has translated into practical initiatives and capacity-building programmes that have contributed meaningfully to regional integration and development. Across the three ASEAN Community pillars, the past decade has yielded tangible progress. In the political-security sphere, we have worked together to address non-traditional security challenges — from counter-terrorism, to maritime cooperation, to combating transnational crime — while also advancing good governance, the rule of law, and human rights.

In the economic sphere, Germany has been a key partner in promoting inclusive and sustainable growth. From infrastructure development and competition policy and law, to tourism and dedicated support for our MSMEs and the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI), Germany's contributions have helped narrow development gaps and expand opportunities across the region. Our collaboration on biodiversity and climate change, including Germany's sustained support for the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity, has helped safeguard the natural heritage of our region for generations to come. Germany has likewise invested in our people, strengthening the capacities of ASEAN diplomats and officials in areas such as negotiation, public communication, and regional cooperation.

*Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,*

In a world of shifting geopolitical currents and growing economic uncertainty, ASEAN's partnerships with its external partners, including Germany, are increasingly important. At a time when countries and regions alike are navigating profound economic and strategic transitions, the ASEAN-Germany Development Partnership reflects our shared commitment to stability, resilience, and a rules-based international order that delivers for our peoples.

The 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of our Development Partnership is therefore a fitting occasion not only to celebrate what we have achieved together, but also to renew our commitment to deeper cooperation in the years ahead. I believe ASEAN Member States are also discussing Germany's request for Sectoral Dialogue Partnership (SDP), which we hope to get back to you on.

Let me close with this thought. May this exhibition stand not only as a record of how far we have come together, but also as a reminder of the opportunities that lie ahead. I look forward to deepening our cooperation in support of *ASEAN 2045: Our Shared Future*, and to continuing the practical and impactful collaboration that will define the next chapter of ASEAN-Germany relations.

Danke and thank you very much.

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