



JOINT STATEMENT OF THE ASEAN TOURISM MINISTERS ON ADVANCING SUSTAINABLE AND RESILIENT TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

**The Second ASEAN Tourism Ministers' Retreat,
29 September 2026, Manila, the Philippines**

1. We, the ASEAN Tourism Ministers, convened at the Second ASEAN Tourism Ministers' Retreat on 29 September 2026 in Manila, the Philippines, and exchanged views on the evolving global and regional situation and its implications for ASEAN tourism. We underscored the importance of the Retreat as a valuable platform for candid, strategic and forward-looking ministerial dialogue, enabling ASEAN to respond collectively and in a timely manner to emerging challenges and opportunities affecting the tourism sector. We reaffirmed our commitment to ASEAN Centrality and recognised the need for continued regional coordination, vigilance and policy preparedness amidst an increasingly complex and uncertain global environment.
2. We recognised tourism as a vital driver of ASEAN's economic growth, employment, micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), investment and people-to-people connectivity. We noted that, while tourism in the region continues to recover and expand, the sector remains highly exposed to external shocks, including geopolitical tensions, energy market volatility, economic uncertainty, climate-related risks, natural hazards and increasingly frequent and severe extreme weather events, and rapid technological change. In this context, we stressed that the Retreat has an important role in strengthening collective leadership, promoting timely policy coordination and ensuring that ASEAN tourism remains resilient, competitive, sustainable and inclusive. We further underscored the need to strengthen climate adaptation and disaster risk reduction across the tourism sector, including through enhanced business continuity planning, preparedness and coordinated crisis communication, as well as measures to support the timely recovery of affected destinations and tourism-dependent communities following disasters and other major disruptions.
3. We expressed concern over the continued tensions in the Middle East and the resulting volatility in global energy markets, noting their direct impact on aviation fuel and transportation costs, travel demand, connectivity, tourism businesses, investor confidence and destination competitiveness. We recognised the need to closely monitor these developments and their implications for ASEAN tourism, and to strengthen coordination with relevant ASEAN Economic Community sectoral bodies, particularly those responsible for energy and transport, to support the resilience and continued growth of the sector. We placed particular emphasis on strengthening interdependence among ASEAN Member States through closer intra-regional travel linkages, and agreed on the value of directing greater marketing investment toward emerging second- and third-tier destinations across the region, as a means of

cushioning the sector against any decline in long-haul arrivals driven by higher fuel prices.

4. We recognised that the Retreat provides an important opportunity for Ministers to provide strategic direction on key priorities for ASEAN tourism cooperation and to translate the ASEAN Tourism Sectoral Plan (ATSP) 2026–2030 into concrete and actionable outcomes. In this regard, we discussed the review and updating of the ASEAN Tourism Agreement to ensure its continued relevance to the evolving regional and global tourism landscape, including developments in digitalisation, sustainability, connectivity and changing traveller expectations. We tasked the ASEAN National Tourism Organisations (NTOs) to advance the review and report progress to the ASEAN Tourism Ministers.

5. We discussed the development of the ASEAN Sustainable and Resilient Tourism Investment Outlook and underscored the importance of mobilising quality and sustainable investment to strengthen tourism infrastructure, enhance destination resilience and improve competitiveness across ASEAN. We welcomed engagement with the private sector, financial institutions and development partners to help develop investment-ready projects and expand opportunities for tourism destinations and enterprises, including MSMEs. We expressed our appreciation to the Asian Development Bank for its support in developing the Outlook.

6. We acknowledge with appreciation the Philippines' initiative on ASEAN Tourism Intelligence and exchanged views on the value of stronger regional tourism data, analytics and demand forecasting to support evidence-based policymaking and more timely responses to shocks and changing market conditions. We agreed that improved tourism intelligence could strengthen ASEAN's collective capacity to anticipate emerging trends, support destination management and enhance the region's competitiveness. We tasked the ASEAN NTOs, supported by the ASEAN Secretariat, to further study the initiative and recommend the way forward.

7. We recognised that a skilled and adaptable tourism workforce is essential to the resilience and long-term competitiveness of the sector. In line with the ASEAN Tourism Sectoral Plan (ATSP) 2026–2030, we encouraged stronger cooperation on tourism education, skills development, upskilling and reskilling, including digital and sustainability-related capabilities, to help workers and enterprises adapt to changing visitor needs and future disruptions. We also emphasised the importance of inclusive opportunities for women, youth and local communities across the tourism value chain.

8. We emphasised that the effectiveness of ASEAN tourism cooperation depends on stronger coordination within the tourism sector and across relevant ASEAN sectoral bodies. We therefore encouraged closer cooperation with sectors responsible for transport, energy, trade, investment and the digital economy, as well as appropriate cross-pillar coordination, to address issues that directly affect tourism competitiveness and resilience. We also recognised the importance of ensuring that regional initiatives respond to the different levels of tourism development among ASEAN Member States and deliver tangible benefits to local communities and MSMEs.

9. We reaffirmed our commitment to the effective implementation of the ATSP 2026–2030 and to advancing sustainable, resilient, inclusive and digitally enabled tourism. We agreed to deepen cooperation with ASEAN's Dialogue Partners, international organisations, financial institutions and relevant stakeholders where such

cooperation can support ASEAN priorities, build capacity, mobilise investment and strengthen the region's preparedness for future disruptions.

10. We recognised the value of the ASEAN Tourism Ministers' Retreat as a strategic forum for Ministers to take stock of emerging developments, exchange views on policy directions, and reinforce ASEAN's collective response to issues affecting the tourism sector. Through this Retreat and our continued cooperation, we reaffirmed our shared commitment to strengthening ASEAN as a resilient, competitive, sustainable and high-quality tourism region that contributes to regional economic integration and the well-being of the peoples of ASEAN.

