



**CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT OF
THE 16TH ASEAN PLUS THREE FOREIGN MINISTERS' MEETING
KUALA LUMPUR, 6 AUGUST 2015**

"OUR PEOPLE, OUR COMMUNITY, OUR VISION"

The 16th Meeting of the Foreign Ministers of ASEAN and the People's Republic of China, Japan and the Republic of Korea was held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on 6 August 2015. The Meeting was chaired by His Excellency Dato Sri' Anifah Aman, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Malaysia.

Review and Future Direction of ASEAN Plus Three Cooperation

2. The Ministers welcomed the substantive progress made in ASEAN Plus Three cooperation since its formation in 1997 and reiterated their commitment to further intensify and expand cooperation under the ASEAN Plus Three framework with ASEAN as the driving force for enhanced peace, security and prosperity in the East Asian region, with the long-term goal of building an East Asian community.

3. Mindful that within the next two decades, the ASEAN region is set to account for 40% of global GDP and 60% of the world's middle class, the Ministers reiterated the importance of ASEAN Plus Three cooperation as a main vehicle towards achieving greater regional integration, including through realising the ASEAN Community by the end of 2015.

4. The Ministers recalled the East Asia Vision Group II Report, adopted by the ASEAN Plus Three Commemorative Summit in Phnom Penh, Cambodia on 19 November 2012 and which recommended the realisation of an East Asia Economic Community by 2020 as the main pillar of ASEAN Plus Three vision. They looked forward to the final report on the follow-up to the EAVG II Report, to be submitted to the 18th ASEAN Plus Three Summit in November 2015.

5. The Ministers expressed satisfaction with progress in the implementation of the ASEAN Plus Three Cooperation Work Plan (2013 – 2017) and looked forward to its full and effective implementation.

6. The Ministers reaffirmed the importance of ASEAN Plus Three cooperation in maintaining peace, security and stability, which are indispensable conditions for development in the East Asia region and agreed to further strengthen political-security cooperation as provided in the Work Plan.

7. The Ministers welcomed the continued growth in trade and investment relations between ASEAN and the Plus Three Countries and expressed confidence that the

region's economies will maintain their positive trajectory despite challenges due to uncertainties in the global economy. Given the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership's (RCEP) potential to further integrate ASEAN into the global economy, uphold ASEAN centrality and further improve the region's influence on the global stage, the Ministers welcomed the progress made in negotiations and urged participating countries to intensify efforts with the aim of a substantive conclusion by the end of 2015.

8. The Ministers acknowledged the continuous efforts by the East Asia Business Council to promote ASEAN among the private sector and entrepreneurs of East Asian countries. The Ministers looked forward to positive outcomes from the 18th ASEAN Plus Three Economic Ministers' Consultations in August 2015 and welcomed the East Asia Business and Investment Forum to be co-hosted by Malaysia and China in August 2015.

9. Recognising the importance of a regional financial safety net, particularly during financial crises, the Ministers welcomed the achievements made in enhancing the Chiang Mai Initiative Multilateralisation (CMIM) Operational Guidelines, conducting CMIM Test Runs under various scenarios and conducting a CMIM peace-time preparation exercise. To further complement the CMIM, the Ministers welcomed the signing of the Agreement Establishing the ASEAN+3 Macroeconomic Research Office in October 2014 and reaffirmed their commitment to exert their best efforts to complete their respective domestic procedures for the entry into force of the Agreement in 2015, to transform AMRO into an international organisation.

10. The Ministers noted the progress made under the Asian Bond Markets Initiative (ABMI), particularly in developing efficient and liquid bond markets in the region through the Credit Guarantee and Investment Facility (CGIF), the ASEAN+3 Multi-Currency Bond Issuance Framework (AMBIF) and the ASEAN+3 Bond Market Forum (ABMF). The Ministers welcomed ASEAN+3 new initiatives comprising non-binding high-level guiding principles for macro-prudential policies (MPPs) and capital flow measures (CFMs), sharing of experiences and future agenda in structural reforms as well as a study on 'Using currency swap-financed trade settlement facility'.

11. The Ministers underscored the importance of tourism as a tool in promoting economic development and people-to-people connectivity, including through joint tourism marketing and promotion and exchange of cultural programmes. The Ministers noted the progress of implementation of the ASEAN Plus Three Tourism Cooperation Work Plan 2013-2017 and looked forward to its full and effective implementation. They looked forward to the signing of the Memorandum of Cooperation on ASEAN Plus Three Tourism Cooperation in 2016.

12. The Ministers expressed concern over the adverse effects of climate change to the East Asia region and welcomed continued cooperation and initiatives among ASEAN Plus Three countries to mitigate and adapt to the impact of climate change to agriculture, fisheries and forestry. The Ministers acknowledged the progress made in the implementation of the ASEAN Plus Three Emergency Rice Reserve (APTERR) Agreement, ASEAN Food Security Information System (AFSIS) and ASEAN Plus Three Comprehensive Strategy on Food Security and Bio-energy Development (APTCS-FSBD) in ensuring food security in the region.

13. Noting the convening of the 3rd APTERR Council Meeting on 22-23 April 2015 in Brunei Darussalam, the Ministers welcomed the implementation of APTERR's project for natural disasters as well as noted the efforts to transform AFSIS into a permanent mechanism to further strengthen food security in the region through systematic collection, analysis and dissemination of food security related information. The Ministers acknowledged the importance of establishing food value chains through Public Private Partnership and affirmed the importance of sustainable use of aquatic fishery resources, including cetaceans, based on scientific evidence.

14. The Ministers recognised the need for ASEAN Plus Three Countries to collaborate in conducting various energy cooperation projects to enhance energy security as well as new and renewable energy in pursuing environmental sustainability. The Ministers welcomed ASEAN's target of reducing regional Energy Intensity by 8% based on 2005 levels and of increasing the share of Renewable Energy to 15% by 2015 and looked forward to the convening of the 12th ASEAN Plus Three Energy Ministers' Meeting on 8 October 2015 in Kuala Lumpur.

15. The Ministers acknowledged the importance of contributions by Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) as the backbone to ASEAN's economic integration, generating between 51% and 97% of employment in ASEAN. The Ministers acknowledged the progress made by the SME Working Group in drafting an ASEAN Strategic Action Plan for SME Development Post-2015 with a focus on access to finance, technology and innovation, markets, human resource development and an enabling policy and regulatory environment.

16. The Ministers recognised that youth are the leaders of tomorrow and pillars of a nation's development and welcomed the convening of the 5th ASEAN Plus Three Ministerial Meeting on Youth (5th AMMY+3) on 2-5 June 2015, in Siem Reap, Cambodia. They looked forward to the convening of the ASEAN Young Leaders' Summit 2015 on 18-20 November 2015 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia with the theme *Maximising Young Leaders' Potential Towards One ASEAN Community*.

17. The Ministers recognised the importance of addressing environmental issues including transboundary environment pollution and ensuring sustainable development and welcomed the convening of the 14th ASEAN Plus Three Environment Ministers' Meeting on 26-31 October 2015 in Viet Nam. They reaffirmed their commitment to the implementation of sustainable forest management through enhancing capacity-building and strengthening cooperation and joint approaches in addressing forestry and environmental management issues.

18. The Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to the implementation of the Plan of Action on Education (2010-2017) and welcomed the convening of the 3rd Working Group on Mobility of Higher Education and Ensuring Quality Assurance of Higher Education among ASEAN Plus Three countries on 11 June 2015 in Bangkok, Thailand and the Experts Meeting for ASEAN Plus Three Guidelines on Transcripts for Exchange Students in March 2016 in Tokyo, Japan.

19. The Ministers acknowledged the importance of strengthening cooperation on civil service and noted the progress made under the ASEAN Conference on Civil Service Matters Plus Three (ACCSM+3) in implementing the Luang Prabang Joint Declaration on ASEAN Plus Three Civil Service Cooperation 2010. The Ministers

welcomed the formulation of the ACCSM+3 Work Plan 2016-2020 and highlighted the need for projects to foster effective civil service cooperation.

20. The Ministers underscored the need to enhance cooperation in the information sector to promote awareness of ASEAN and the East Asia region. The Ministers noted progress in the implementation of the Work Plan on Enhancing ASEAN Plus Three Cooperation through Information and Media (2012-2017) and called for its implementation to be accelerated.

21. The Ministers looked forward to the implementation of the ASEAN Plan of Action on Science, Technology and Innovation (APASTI) 2016-2025 in which clear and effective mechanisms for further cooperation with Dialogue Partners will be underlined. They noted the progress of implementation of the various initiatives under ASEAN COST+3 and looked forward to the convening of the 4th ASEAN Plus Three Junior Science Odyssey in Serpong, Indonesia from 24 to 29 August 2015, the 10+3 Young Scientists Exchange Programme in Beijing, China from 19 to 23 October 2015, the 9th ASEAN Plus Three Centre for the Gifted in Science Board of Directors Meeting from 24 to 27 November 2015 in Jeju Island, ROK and the ASEAN Plus Three Science, Technology and Innovation Ministerial Forum in Daejeon, ROK on 20 October 2015 in conjunction with the World Science and Technology Forum.

22. The Ministers underscored the importance of cooperation in the areas of pandemic preparedness and response, communicable diseases and emerging infectious diseases and noted the continuous progress made in health cooperation through the ASEAN Plus Three Field Epidemiology Training Network (FETN), ASEAN Plus Three Partnership Laboratories (APL), Risk Communication and disease-intervention activities including malaria, rabies and dengue. The Ministers called for the full implementation of the ASEAN Strategic Framework on Health Development (2010-2015) and looked forward to continuous support from the Plus Three countries to achieve the ASEAN Post-2015 Health Development Agenda.

23. In light of recent developments regarding the spread of MERS in the region, the Ministers welcomed the convening of the APT Health Ministers' Video Conference on the Outbreak of MERS-CoV on 27 July 2015, which aims to strengthen cooperation in addressing threats and outbreaks of pandemic diseases in the region.

24. The Ministers underscored the importance of forging closer collaboration in disaster management, given the increasing number of calamities occurring in the region. Complementing disaster relief efforts, the Ministers called for the full operationalisation of the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA Centre) and the full implementation of the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) Work Programme 2010-2015 as part of its commitment towards establishing a disaster resilient community by the year 2015.

25. The Ministers acknowledged the importance of forging closer cooperation in poverty alleviation. They underscored that rural development and poverty eradication were crucial to building a strong ASEAN community. In this regard, the Ministers welcomed China's offer of RMB100 million to facilitate poverty alleviation in rural areas in East Asia as well as the setting up of pilot programmes on poverty reduction cooperation in the region.

26. The Ministers recognised that regional integration and narrowing development gaps are priorities in the ASEAN community-building process and in this regard welcomed a post-2015 Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) agenda and a successor document to the IAI Work Plan II. Noting that IAI is cross-cutting in nature, the Ministers called for closer collaboration among the various ASEAN sectoral bodies in ensuring the full participation and realisation of regional commitments and initiatives.

27. The Ministers welcomed the progress made in the implementation of the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity (MPAC) in promoting economic growth, narrowing development gaps and contributing to ASEAN integration and community-building and looked forward to the formulation of a post-2015 Connectivity Agenda which should be bold, visionary and contain concrete and feasible measures which will contribute to seamless connectivity in the East Asia region. Noting that financing mobilisation is an important factor in moving the ASEAN Connectivity agenda forward, the Ministers welcomed progress in the establishment of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank by China as well as the proposed Partnership for Quality Infrastructure by Japan to address infrastructure financing needs in the region.

28. The Ministers acknowledged the important contribution of the East Asia Forum (EAF) as a think-tank incorporating government, business and academia with a view to deepening East Asia regional cooperation and noted the convening of the 13th EAF held in Jeju, Republic of Korea on 20-21 May 2015 with the theme *Prosperous East Asia through Non-Traditional Security Cooperation* and noted Cambodia's proposal to host the 14th East Asia Forum in 2016.

29. The Ministers also acknowledged the important contribution of the Network of East Asia Think-tanks (NEAT) towards the APT cooperation process and commended the initiative of the APT Senior Officials to invite the Chair of NEAT for a dialogue with a view to encouraging closer interaction and gaining deeper insights into the work and deliberations of NEAT as well as encouraging both sides to share ideas on how to further strengthen APT cooperation. In this connection, we welcomed the convening of the 22nd Country Coordinators Meeting (CCM) of NEAT in Yogyakarta, Indonesia in May 2015 and looked forward to the convening of the 23rd NEAT CCM/13th Annual Conference in Bandung, Indonesia in September 2015.

30. The Ministers took note of the convening of the Annual Meeting of Deans and Directors of Diplomatic Training Institutions of ASEAN Plus Three countries, which met for the tenth time in 2015 in Bali, Indonesia on 8-10 April 2015 to share experiences and best practices as well as promote greater institutional collaboration among the diplomatic institutions of the APT countries.

31. The Ministers recognised the role and contribution of the ASEAN-China Centre, the ASEAN-Japan Centre and the ASEAN-Korea Centre in promoting trade, investment, tourism and cultural exchanges between the ASEAN Member States and individual Plus Three countries. They urged the three Centres to collaborate more closely in the larger context of ASEAN Plus Three cooperation.

Exchange of Views on Regional and International Issues

32. The Ministers expressed concern over recent developments on the Korean Peninsula and underlined the importance of maintaining peace, stability and security

in the region. They registered deep concern over the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's recent ballistic missile launches and highlighted the importance of trust-building activities on the Peninsula, the need to fully comply with all relevant United Nations Security Council Resolutions and for all parties to comply with commitments under the 19 September 2005 Joint Statement of the Six-Party Talks. The Ministers called for the creation of necessary conditions for the early resumption of Six-Party Talks which would pave the way for the complete and verifiable de-nuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula in a peaceful manner.

33. The Ministers discussed preparations for the upcoming ASEAN Plus Three Summit, scheduled to be held in November 2015 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

34. The Ministers looked forward to the convening of the 17th ASEAN Plus Three Foreign Ministers' Meeting, to be held in Lao PDR in 2016.
