



## **Joint Statement**

### **THE ASEAN PLUS THREE LABOUR MINISTERS MEETING**

**6 MAY 2006, SINGAPORE**

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#### **Introduction**

1. ASEAN Labour Ministers gathered in Singapore on 6 May 2006 to discuss joint labour initiatives with their counterparts from the People's Republic of China, Japan and the Republic of Korea. This is the fifth ASEAN Plus Three Labour Ministers Meeting, and was preceded by a preparatory senior officials meeting on 4 May 2006.

2. The Meeting was attended by Ministers responsible for labour from ASEAN Member Countries, the People's Republic of China, Japan and the Republic of Korea, and their respective delegations. The ASEAN Secretariat was also in attendance. The list of the ASEAN Plus Three Labour Ministers is attached.

#### **Partnerships in Labour**

3. The ASEAN Plus Three Ministers discussed occupational safety and health (OSH) as a central theme of their meeting. The Ministers also discussed current and planned joint initiatives to support sustained economic growth in their respective countries and the region through Human Resource Development and employment creation. The Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to collaborate in addressing key priorities for labour and employment, with a view to alleviating poverty within the region and ensuring economic growth with equity. The ASEAN Ministers thanked

their Plus Three counterparts for continued support and assistance in promoting closer cooperation among their respective labour ministries.

4. The ASEAN Plus Three Ministers reiterated the importance of occupational safety and health (OSH) in pursuing economic development and growth. The Plus Three Ministers welcomed the addition of a new priority area on OSH to the ASEAN Labour Ministers Work Programme, and looked forward to future cooperation with ASEAN in this area. The ASEAN Ministers invited the Plus Three to explore areas for closer collaboration among ASEAN Plus Three, including sharing of experience and expertise in support of the work of the ASEAN Occupational Safety and Health Network (ASEAN-OSHNET)<sup>1</sup>. In this regard, the ASEAN Ministers invited the Plus Three to participate in the ASEAN Policy Dialogue on National OSH Frameworks and Management Systems, in early 2007. The experience of the Plus Three is relevant especially in raising OSH standards in small and medium enterprises.

5. Future joint labour initiatives to be undertaken by the ASEAN Plus Three include:

- a. Continuation of the High-Level Social Security Seminars, jointly coordinated by China and ASEAN, to contribute to the strengthening of social security and protection, as well as addressing the impact of the global economy on workers in East Asia. China will convene the Seminar for 2006 in Qingdao, on the topic of employment injury insurance.
- b. Addressing industrial relations in the context of economic integration and trade liberalisation under the ASEAN-Japan Programme on Industrial Relations (AJPIR) – Phase II. The Ministers thanked Singapore for serving as the lead country for the AJPIR for

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<sup>1</sup>The ASEAN-OSHNET was established in 2000 and has carried out collaborative activities on information-sharing, standards, inspection, training, and research among the ASEAN Member Countries.

2005/06. A Regional Industrial Relations website had also been launched on 4 May 2006 as a joint initiative of Singapore and Japan. Malaysia and Thailand, in partnership with Japan, will lead regional capacity-building and knowledge-sharing programmes among ASEAN Plus Three countries, to address issues in wages and productivity, globalisation, labour management and response to workplace changes.

- c. Continued dialogue among ASEAN Plus Three labour ministries to realise the ASEAN Labour Ministers' vision of providing productive employment and adequate social protection for the region's workers through innovative and culturally appropriate programmes. The Republic of Korea will assist ASEAN Member Countries in addressing this through the Human Resource Development Programmes for Officials of ASEAN Countries and cooperative programmes on occupational safety and health.

### **ASEAN Plus Three Cooperation with ILO**

6. The ASEAN Plus Three Labour Ministers exchanged views on matters to be discussed at the 95<sup>th</sup> International Labour Conference (ILC), including the proposed new ILO Convention and Recommendation on Occupational Safety and Health.

7. The Ministers supported the principles of prevention and protection embodied in the ILO's Global OSH Strategy, and acknowledged that the new ILO instruments proposed under the Strategy would be helpful in enhancing OSH standards for safer, healthier and more productive workplaces. The Ministers urged the ILO to provide more resources to help ASEAN Plus Three countries in addressing these priorities.

8. The ASEAN Plus Three Ministers also noted that the Republic of Korea will be hosting the 14<sup>th</sup> ILO Asian Regional Meeting in Busan from 29 August to 1 September 2006. The

Ministers expressed their support for the event, and agreed to ensure the active participation of their countries at the Regional Meeting.

**Next ASEAN Plus Three Labour Ministers Meeting**

9. The Ministers looked forward to further exchanges of views on joint labour initiatives at the next ASEAN Plus Three Labour Ministers Meeting in 2008 in Thailand.

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**List of ASEAN Plus Three Labour Ministers or Their  
Representatives attending the ASEAN Plus Three Labour  
Ministers Meeting, 6 May 2006, Singapore**

1. **H.E. Pehin Dato Adanan Yusof**  
Minister of Home Affairs  
Brunei Darussalam
2. **H.E. Sok San**  
Secretary of State of Labour and Vocational Training  
Cambodia
3. **H.E. Erman Suparno**  
Minister of Manpower and Transmigration  
Indonesia
4. **H.E. Le Kakanya**  
Acting Minister of Labour and Social Welfare  
Lao PDR
5. **H.E. Datuk Seri Dr. Fong Chan Onn**  
Minister of Human Resources  
Malaysia
6. **H.E. Brigadier General Win Sein**  
Minister of Labour  
Myanmar
7. **H.E. Patricia A. Sto. Tomas**  
Secretary of Department of Labour and Employment  
The Philippines
8. **H.E. Dr. Ng Eng Hen**  
Minister for Manpower and Second Minister for Defence  
Singapore
9. **H.E. Chalernpol Thanchitt**  
Thai Ambassador to Singapore  
Thailand

**10. H.E. Le Bach Hong**

Vice Minister of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs  
Viet Nam

**11. H.E. Xin Changxing**

Under Secretary General, Ministry of Labour and Social Security  
China

**12. H.E. Hiroshi Okada**

Parliamentary Secretary of Health, Labour and Welfare  
Japan

**13. H.E. Kim Sung Joong**

Vice Minister of Labour  
Korea