

16 April 2015

CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT OF THE 26TH ASEAN SUMMIT

KUALA LUMPUR & LANGKAWI, 27 APRIL 2015

“OUR PEOPLE, OUR COMMUNITY, OUR VISION”

We, the Heads of State/Government of ASEAN Member States, gathered in Kuala Lumpur and Langkawi, Malaysia for the 26th ASEAN Summit on 26-27 April 2015, had productive discussions under the theme ‘Our People, Our Community, Our Vision’ which reflects the overarching spirit of Malaysia’s Chairmanship, namely to create a truly people-centred ASEAN comprising all areas of political and security, economic growth and socio-cultural development.

2. We expressed deep and heartfelt condolences to the Government and people of Singapore on the demise of former Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew, a true Statesman who had made significant contributions to his country, to ASEAN and to regional community-building.

3. We fully supported the eight priorities for ASEAN outlined by Malaysia during her Chairmanship in 2015, namely to formally establish the ASEAN Community; to develop the ASEAN Community’s post-2015 vision; to steer ASEAN closer to its peoples; to strengthen the development of SMEs in the region; to expand intra-ASEAN trade and investments; to strengthen ASEAN’s institutions; to promote regional peace and security through moderation; and to enhance ASEAN’s role as a global player.

4. We adopted the following documents as outcomes of the Summit:

- Kuala Lumpur Declaration on a People-Centred ASEAN
- Langkawi Declaration on the Global Movement of Moderates
- Kuala Lumpur Declaration on Institutionalising the Resilience of ASEAN and its Communities and Peoples to Disasters and Climate Change

ASEAN COMMUNITY BUILDING

5. We are pleased with the positive progress made since 2009 in implementing the Roadmap for an ASEAN Community comprising the ASEAN Political Security Community (APSC), ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) and the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) Blueprints, Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) Strategic Framework and IAI Work Plan II (2009-2015) as well as the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity, which all contribute towards establishing the ASEAN Community by the end of 2015.

6. We agreed to further intensify our work to realise an ASEAN Community that is politically cohesive, economically integrated and socially responsible in order to take advantage of current and future opportunities, and effectively respond to regional and international challenges.

7. We expressed satisfaction at the implementation of the provisions of the ASEAN Charter in providing the legal status and institutional framework for ASEAN since its adoption in 2007. We urged ASEAN Member States on the timely ratification of all outstanding legal instruments.

8. We continued to encourage the ASEAN Coordinating Council (ACC) and the ASEAN Community Councils, with the support of the relevant Senior Officials and the Committee of Permanent Representatives to ASEAN to implement the recommendations of the High Level Task Force on Strengthening the ASEAN Secretariat and Reviewing the ASEAN Organs within the time-bound targets.

9. We are pleased to welcome the progress made thus far in developing the ASEAN Community's Vision and the attendant documents for the three community pillars for the period of 2016-2025. We looked forward to the submission of the documents by the ASEAN Coordinating Council (ACC) at the 27th ASEAN Summit.

ASEAN POLITICAL-SECURITY COMMUNITY

10. We reaffirmed the Treaty of Amity and Co-operation in Southeast Asia (TAC) as the key code of conduct governing inter-State relations in the region and a foundation for the maintenance of regional peace and stability. We agreed to deliberate on requests made by countries to accede to the TAC, in accordance with its revised guidelines for accession.

11. We reiterated our commitment to implementing the Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ Treaty) and its Plan of Action and called on the Nuclear Weapon States to consider signing the Protocol to the SEANWFZ Treaty to further promote Southeast Asia as a region free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction.

ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly

12. We welcomed the significant contribution by AIPA to the ASEAN Community-building process and appreciated the interface with Representatives of AIPA. We are convinced that AIPA Representatives are significant intermediaries in the realisation of a "People-Centred ASEAN" as it is well-appointed to reach out directly to all stakeholders of ASEAN and propagate the importance of the ASEAN Community and its impact on ASEAN peoples. We looked forward to the convening of the 36th AIPA on 6 - 12 September 2015 in Kuala Lumpur, which would further strengthen the role of AIPA in supporting the realisation of the ASEAN Community by 2015 and in the development of the ASEAN Community's post-2015 Vision.

Global Movement of Moderates

13. We welcomed the adoption of the 2015 Langkawi Declaration on the Global Movement of Moderates, which comprehensively outlines the philosophy of moderation, which is an established ASEAN value, in all its dimensions. We recognised that moderation is an all-encompassing approach not only in resolving differences and conflicts peacefully but also for ensuring sustainable and inclusive development and equitable growth as well as promoting social harmony and mutual understanding within countries and regions.

Special Ministerial Meeting on the Rise of Radicalisation and Violent Extremism

14. We welcomed the convening of the East Asia Summit Symposium on Religious Rehabilitation and Social Reintegration, held in Singapore on 16 – 17 April 2015 and looked forward to the convening of the Special Ministerial Meeting on the Rise of Radicalisation and Violent Extremism in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia as contributing to addressing the growing threat of radicalisation and violent extremism, and the real and present danger it poses to the ASEAN region.

Concept Paper on ASEAN Militaries Ready Group on Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief

15. We welcomed the adoption of the Concept Paper on ASEAN Militaries Ready Group on Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) by the ASEAN Defence Ministers at their 9th Meeting at Langkawi, Malaysia on 17 March 2015 and looked forward to the establishment of the ASEAN Militaries Ready Group for rapid deployment in a coordinated manner to areas of humanitarian crisis affected by natural disasters.

ASEAN Inter-Governmental Commission on Human Rights

16. We appreciated the work of AICHR in the promotion and protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms of the peoples of ASEAN. We acknowledged on-going efforts by AICHR to streamline its programmes and activities throughout 2015. We looked forward to the finalisation of AICHR's second Five-Year Work Plan 2016-2020, to be adopted at the forthcoming ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in August 2015.

ASEAN Regional Forum Disaster Relief Exercises

17. We looked forward to the convening of the ARF Disaster Relief Exercises (ARF DiREx), to be held in Kedah and Perlis, Malaysia on 24-28 May 2015 and convinced that it will contribute towards strengthening civilian-military coordination in support of the effective implementation of the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) at the strategic and operational levels through a Table Top Exercise (TTX) and at the tactical level through the Field Training Exercise (FTX).

ASEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY

18. We were satisfied that the ASEAN economy grew by 4.4 percent in 2014 amid challenges in the global economy. Recognising the contribution of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) to the economic growth of the region, we looked forward to the announcement of the ASEAN SME Development Strategic Action Plan 2016-2025, which will focus on access to finance, technology, enhancing management and marketing capability. Access to market information and strengthening microenterprises are important in enhancing SMEs' competitiveness and resilience.

19. We welcomed the further elimination of tariffs by Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Viet Nam on 1 January 2015. We welcomed progress in this area, with the complete elimination of duties on the remaining 6-7 per cent tariff lines by 1 January 2018, which will further contribute to the development of a more integrated regional market.

20. We further welcomed efforts taken towards developing a comprehensive action plan on trade facilitation and endorsed the reactivation of the ASEAN Trade Facilitation Joint Consultative Committee (ATF-JCC) comprising the public and private sectors, with the latter's inclusion to promote a more proactive role in identifying specific issues as well as facilitate in ways to reduce or eliminate non-tariff barriers in the region.

21. We also welcomed the decision to improve on the ASEAN Consultation to Resolve Trade and Investment Issues (ACT), an internet-based mechanism intended as a network of government focal points between ASEAN Member States to address operational issues encountered in the implementation of economic agreements, and which will be re-launched by year's end.

22. We were encouraged by the signing of the Protocol on the Legal Framework to Implement the ASEAN Single Window (PLF-ASW), which would expedite the implementation of the ASW measures. We were pleased with the entry into force of the ASEAN Agreement on Customs in November 2014, and welcomed the completion of the signing of Protocol 7 on Customs under the ASEAN Framework Agreement on the Facilitation of Goods in Transit (AFAFGIT). These developments would support the free flow of goods across the ASEAN region.

23. We noted with satisfaction progress made in the liberalisation of services under the ASEAN Frameworks Agreement on Services (AFAS). We looked forward to the completion of the final AFAS package by end of 2015, which would lead to the further removal of equity limitations and other barriers to the integration of the services sector and to sustain and attract foreign direct investments into the region.

24. We welcomed the commencement of negotiations on the Ninth Package of Commitments on Air Transport Services under AFAS and looked forward to its timely conclusion by end of 2015.

25. We noted the good progress made in the area of capital market integration through a number of initiatives such as the adoption of the Principles for Product Transparency and Disclosure on Cross-Border Trade Settlement. Investment regimes in ASEAN Member States have been further liberalised through improvements and removal of restrictions under the ASEAN Comprehensive Investment Agreement (ACIA), and looked forward to its full implementation in order to increase intra-ASEAN investments and to enhance ASEAN's competitiveness in attracting investments into the region.

26. We welcomed the efforts taken towards further strengthening the ASEAN + 1 Free Trade Agreements with China, Japan, Republic of Korea, India, Australia and New Zealand. We looked forward to the signing of the Protocol to incorporate the Trade in Services and Investment Chapters under the ASEAN Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership (AJCEP) Agreement. We noted with satisfaction the on-going progress made under the ASEAN-Hong Kong Free Trade Agreement (AHKFTA).

ASEAN Finance Ministers Meeting

27. We welcomed the convening of the First Joint Meeting of the ASEAN Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors, held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on 21 March 2015. We further welcomed the commitment to develop an implementation plan for a post-2015 ASEAN financial integration under the Roadmap for Monetary and Financial Integration of ASEAN (RIA-fin).

28. We are pleased that the Protocol to Implement the Sixth Package of Financial Services Liberalisation under the ASEAN Framework Agreement on Services has been signed by all ASEAN Finance Ministers. The Protocol contains the enabling provision for the implementation of the ASEAN Banking Integration Framework (ABIF) towards achieving greater financial and economic integration.

Entrepreneurship

29. We recognised the economic contribution of young entrepreneurs in the region and the need to establish a platform to foster networking and share best practices amongst them. In this regard, we commended Malaysia's efforts in organising the 1ASEAN Entrepreneurship Gathering, which was a prelude to the 1ASEAN Entrepreneurship Summit (1AES) to be held at the sidelines of the 27th ASEAN Summit and Related Summits, to be held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in November 2015, aimed at facilitating people-to-people linkages and promoting economic development and growth within ASEAN.

30. We further welcomed the establishment of national chapters of the ASEAN Young Entrepreneurs Association (YEA), designed to promote the inclusion of youth in entrepreneurial activities in the region. We looked forward to the establishment of similar networks involving women entrepreneurs.

Tourism

31. We welcomed the launching of GOASEAN, an ASEAN-focused travel channel to promote ASEAN as a single tourism destination as well as to promote intra-ASEAN travel and appreciation of ASEAN culture and heritage.

Regional Growth Areas

32. We reiterated the importance of sub-regional growth areas, such as the Indonesia-Malaysia-Thailand Growth Triangle (IMT-GT), the Brunei Darussalam-Indonesia-Malaysia-Philippines East ASEAN Growth Area (BIMP-EAGA), the Greater Mekong Sub-Region Economic Co-operation (GMS), the Ayeyawady-Chao Phraya-Mekong Economic Co-operation Strategy (ACMES), and the Cambodia-Lao-Viet Nam (CLV) Development Triangle, as important building blocks of the ASEAN Community 2015, and are committed to further strengthening strategic and institutional linkages as well as mobilising resources to improve coordination in this area.

ASEAN SOCIO-CULTURAL COMMUNITY

33. We were pleased to adopt the Kuala Lumpur Declaration on a People-Centred ASEAN, through which we outlined our desire to make ASEAN an even more effective vehicle in the realisation of our peoples

aspirations for good governance, transparency, higher standards of living, sustainable development focusing on climate change and the environment, the further empowerment of women as well as greater opportunities for all in ASEAN in a post-2015 era.

34. We took note of the views and proposals made by ASEAN Civil Society Representatives, and valued their contribution in the ASEAN Community-building process. Cooperation between governments and civil society must be fostered and further enhanced.

35. We welcomed the ASEAN Leaders' Interface with Youth Representatives and took note of their desire for a peaceful and stable, economically resilient, socially and culturally responsible ASEAN Community. In a region where youth constitute 65 per cent of the population, ASEAN's development strategy must include both men and women, and by extension its youth, if it is to succeed. Further, innovation, critical thinking and problem solving skills are basic requirements in order to succeed in a rapidly globalising world. We urged the youth of ASEAN to exercise the trust invested in them in a responsible manner.

36. We welcomed the convening of the Forum for Spouses of ASEAN Heads of State/Government, held on 27 April 2015 in conjunction with the 26th ASEAN Summit. The Forum "Empowerment through Social Business" focused on increasing awareness on social business and its development in the alleviation of poverty. We urge the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Social Welfare and Development (AMMSWD) and the ASEAN Economic Ministers Meeting (AEM) to consider the recommendations of the Forum and further develop the concept of social business in achieving a caring and sharing society within ASEAN.

37. We reaffirmed our commitment to enhance cooperation to safeguard the rights and interests as well as provide equal opportunities and raise the quality of life and standard of living for women, children, the elderly and persons with disabilities. We noted with satisfaction the successful convening of the Regional Conference on Social Impact of Climate Change on Women and Children in Cambodia on 25-26 March 2015 as part of the ASEAN Committee on Women (ACW) Work Plan (2011-2015), and took note of the ASEAN Regional Workshop on Gender Issues in Climate Change and Its Adaptation, to be organised in Malaysia in June 2015.

38. We expressed our commitment to promote a healthy, active and productive environment for older persons in the ASEAN region, reaffirming that an age-friendly and psycho-spiritual environment is key to positioning older persons as vital members of the family, community and society, with attendant roles and responsibilities. Towards this end, we welcomed on-going efforts to finalise the Kuala Lumpur Declaration on Ageing: Empowering Older Persons in ASEAN at the 11th SOMSWD, to be held in Malaysia on 7-11 September 2015.

39. We are determined to move ASEAN forward, equipped with a higher level of knowledge and skills, to be inculcated through capacity building and knowledge management. ASEAN institutions of higher education should further enhance their role in developing graduates with the necessary attributes and competencies, able to contribute to the development and well-being of the ASEAN Community in the post-2015 era.

40. We underlined the importance of enhancing cooperation in disaster management and emergency response, wary that disasters related to natural hazards have rapidly increased, resulting in untold death and destruction in the region. We welcomed the ASEAN Declaration on Institutionalising the Resilience of ASEAN and Its Communities and People to Disasters and Climate Change, which underscores the importance of building an ASEAN Community that is resilient to disaster and climate change, viewing resilience as a unifying, multi-faceted process and outcome. We encouraged the efforts undertaken by various ASEAN bodies to improve synergies between the different platforms involved in the management of Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Response (HADR) to provide for more efficient outcomes and avoid the strain on limited resources and duplication of work.

41. We noted with great concern that climate change is already having significant impact in the region, causing major loss and damage throughout the region. We affirmed our commitment to address climate change at the national, regional and global levels. We called for a comprehensive 2015 agreement, based on science and the principles of equity, and common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, as well as the promotion of sustainable development for all in line with the UN Post-2015 Development Agenda.

INITIATIVE FOR ASEAN INTEGRATION

42. We recognised that regional integration and narrowing the development gap are priorities in the ASEAN community-building process and in this regard welcomed the drawing up of the IAI Work Plan III (2016-2020) and a post-2015 IAI Agenda. We welcomed closer collaboration between ASEAN and Mekong sub-regional cooperation arrangement to further strengthen IAI cooperation towards achieving equitable economic development in the region. Noting that IAI is cross-cutting in nature, we called for closer collaboration among the various ASEAN sectoral bodies in ensuring full participation and realisation of regional commitments and initiatives.

ASEAN CONNECTIVITY

43. We welcomed the significant 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. We stressed the importance of addressing the various challenges in implementing MPAC initiatives, such as resource mobilisation as well as coordinating MPAC initiatives which are multi-sectoral in nature. We welcomed the on-going efforts by the ASEAN Connectivity Coordinating Committee (ACCC) to formulate a post-2015 Connectivity agenda, which should be bold, visionary and contain practical measures which would contribute to the overall objective of creating a better-connected ASEAN region.

ASEAN EXTERNAL RELATIONS

44. We expressed satisfaction with the development of ASEAN's relations with its external partners. We welcomed further engagement and cooperation for the mutual benefit of ASEAN and its partners, including positive contribution towards ASEAN Community-building efforts and its impact on the maintenance of peace, stability and security in the region.

45. We reiterated ASEAN's central role in the evolving regional architecture and reaffirmed our commitment to further enhance and strengthen our partnerships through various ASEAN-led mechanisms, including the ASEAN Plus One and Plus Three Mechanisms, the East Asia Summit and the ASEAN Regional Forum.

Timor Leste

46. We welcomed progress in deliberations by the ASEAN Coordinating Council Working Group (ACCWG) looked forward to the outcome of the studies on ASEAN Membership Application by Timor Leste, as mandated to the ACCWG Sub-Working group.

Strengthening of the East Asia Summit

47. We acknowledged the need to continue efforts to create robust mechanisms to address issues related to deepening regional integration. We recognised that these institutions must aim at promoting strategic trust through dialogue and transparent behaviour as well as adherence to rules and norms commonly agreed to. We further acknowledged the need to promote effectiveness, synergies and minimise duplication in ASEAN-led institutions. In this regard, we called for the strengthening of existing mechanisms, including the East Asia Summit.

REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ISSUES

South China Sea

48. We reaffirmed the importance of maintaining peace, stability, security and freedom of navigation in the South China Sea. We emphasised the need for all parties to ensure the full and effective implementation of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea in its entirety: creating, maintaining and enhancing mutual trust and confidence; exercising self-restraint in the conduct of activities; not to resort to threat or use of force; and for the parties concerned to resolve their differences / disputes through peaceful means, in accordance with international law including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

49. While noting the progress made in the consultations / negotiations on the Code of Conduct in the South China Sea (COC), we urged for the consultations to be intensified, to ensure the expeditious establishment of an effective COC.

Middle East

50. We reiterated ASEAN's support for the legitimate right of the Palestinian people for an independent state of Palestine and a two-state solution where both countries live side-by-side in peace. We expressed concern at the seeming renunciation of the two-State solution as well as the expression of concern at Arab Israelis exercising their right of universal suffrage during the recent elections in Israel and called upon Israel and Palestine to constructively engage in peace negotiations. We reiterated our call for all parties to make every effort to remove obstacles related thereto, in particular the

construction of illegal settlements in the occupied Palestinian Territories, in order to reach a final status agreement.

51. We expressed concern at the deteriorating situation in Yemen, resulting in deaths, destruction and large scale displacement of people, compelling us to evacuate hundreds of ASEAN Nationals from the country. We expressed support for the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2216 on the Situation in the Middle East (Yemen) and called on all parties to exercise restraint and return to the country's roadmap for an inclusive democratic transition.

International Economic Slowdown

52. We acknowledged the importance of deeper, faster and better integration to mitigate the effects of uncertainties in the global economy, through ASEAN becoming more competitive, promote further FDI inflows and ultimately benefit the consumer. We acknowledged that falling oil prices could affect export earnings and government revenue for net oil-exporting economies in ASEAN and the concern posed by currency volatility, including possible capital flow reversals.

Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership

53. We welcomed the progress made in negotiations for the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) and urged all parties to intensify efforts to substantially conclude the negotiation by end of this year. We are convinced it would further integrate ASEAN into the global economy and to this end, tasked our Economic Ministers to outline measures which are pragmatic, credible, and acceptable to all parties.

G20

54. We expressed appreciation to Turkey for inviting ASEAN participation at the G20 Summit in Antalya, Turkey in November 2015 as well as related G20 meetings throughout the year, recognising it as acknowledgement of ASEAN's role on the global stage in tandem with its success as a regional organisation. We intend to highlight ASEAN's views and concerns vis-a-vis the international financial infrastructure.

UNSC

55. We welcomed Malaysia's non-permanent membership at the United Nations Security Council for the term 2015-2016 and called for the endorsement of ASEAN candidatures for positions and seats in international organisations, in line with our shared vision for ASEAN to coordinate action on various global issues of common interest and concern, leading to ASEAN becoming a global player.