

# 1972 JOINT COMMUNIQUE OF THE 5<sup>TH</sup> ASEAN MINISTERIAL MEETING

*Issued in Singapore on 13-14 April 1972*

1. The Fifth ASEAN Ministerial Meeting was held in Singapore from 13 to 14 April 1972. The Meeting was chaired by Mr. S. Rajaratnam, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Singapore. His Excellency Dr. Thanat Khoman was elected Vice-Chairman.
2. The Meeting was attended by His Excellency Mr. Adam Malik, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Indonesia, the Honorable Tun (Dr.) Ismail Al-Haj bin Dato Haji Abdul Rahman, Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia, the Honorable Dr. Jose D. Ingles, Special Envoy and Undersecretary of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Philippines, Mr. A. Rahim Ishak, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of Singapore, and His Excellency Dr. Thanat Khoman, Special Envoy of the National Executive Council of Thailand.
3. The Meeting was declared open by the Temporary Chairman, the Honorable Dr. Jose D. Ingles, Special Envoy and Undersecretary of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Philippines. The Temporary Chairman then invited the Prime Minister of Singapore to deliver the opening address.
4. In his opening address, the Prime Minister of Singapore said that ASEAN whose two major objectives were to accelerate economic growth and to promote regional peace and stability, had developed cohesion in the last five years and was becoming an institution which had been able to ride several upheavals that had shaken Southeast Asia.
5. Although five years was not time long enough to measure progress in regional cooperation, there had been perceptible progress in various fields. However, the Prime Minister noted that over the last five years intra-ASEAN trade had declined due to similarity of exports. But he added that an ASEAN Advisory Committee had been working with a UN Study Team in investigating the possibilities of economic cooperation.
6. The Prime Minister added that from the records of ASEAN proceedings, he gained the impression that ASEAN did not for the present aim at integrating a regional economy. It would, therefore, be unrealistic for ASEAN to propose programs and projects which did not fit into and assist in the consolidation of the respective economic development plans of the five countries. He stated that perhaps the most valuable achievement of ASEAN since its inception was the understanding and goodwill created at the various ASEAN meetings which had helped to lubricate relationships which could otherwise have generated friction.
7. In conclusion, the Prime Minister emphasized the need for ASEAN to consolidate itself to endure the changes which the future had in store.
8. The ASEAN Ministers and Special Envoys reviewed significant world events and noted the important changes that had taken place and were expected to take place in the relations among the major powers. They recognized the necessity for cooperating even more closely in view of

these developments. They also recognized the necessity of strengthening and expanding their national economies with a view to increasing the economic and politic stability of the region.

9. They surveyed ASEAN's performance over the five years and in view of the anticipated increase in the cooperation among the ASEAN countries, agreed that an overall review of ASEAN's organizational and procedural framework including the consideration of the need and desirability of a central secretariat should be undertaken and new guidelines and criteria of priorities formulated with a view to rendering the Association more effective as an instrument for regional cooperation. They agreed that for greater self-reliance and more effective cooperation, a coordinated and well planned strategy was needed on the national as well as regional levels. It was necessary for member countries to develop national resilience which would enable them to face the present changes and challenges of the future with greater confidence.
10. They agreed that the progress of ASEAN in general had been satisfactory not only in regard to the number of projects implemented but also by way of intangible accomplishments. They noted in particular the development of an ASEAN consensus in decision making in accordance with the ASEAN spirit of solidarity.
11. The ASEAN Ministers and Special Envoys approved the Report of the Standing Committee and noted that out of a total of 215 recommendations covering the work of eleven Permanent Committees and the Advisory Committee on United Nations Study on ASEAN economic cooperation, 48 recommendations had been implemented during the year.
12. In approving the Report, the Meeting expressed satisfaction at the establishment by the Standing Committee of a Special Coordinating Committee of ASEAN (SCCAN) with Professor Sumitro Djojohadikusumo, the Indonesian Minister of Trade as its first chairman. The Meeting noted that SCCAN as expected to convene its first meeting soon to prepare the way for an early dialogue between ASEAN and the EEC. The Meeting also welcomed the establishment of the Permanent Committee on Socio-Cultural Activities Committee which filled a vital gap in the activities of ASEAN which would encourage the further growth of a regional spirit. In particular, the Meeting noted two of the major projects of the Committee, namely, the prevention of drug-trafficking and addiction and the problems affecting youth.
13. The Meeting expressed its appreciation for the work done by the United Nations Study Team and urged member governments to study the Team's recommendations with a view to identifying those areas in which ASEAN could cooperate more fruitfully. In this regard the Meeting noted that the Association was in the process of seeking continued United Nations technical assistance which was vital not only for future and more effective cooperation but also for the implementation of the recommendations made by the United Nations Team.
14. The Meeting expressed regret that the Philippine Secretary of Foreign Affairs could not be present and wished him a speedy recovery with the hope that he would soon be able to resume his duties and continue to contribute to the work of ASEAN.
15. The ASEAN Ministers and the Special Envoys signed the Agreement for the Facilitation of Search for Aircraft in Distress and Rescue of Survivors of Aircraft Accidents.

16. They also agreed to hold the Sixth Ministerial Meeting of ASEAN in Thailand, and consequently, the seat of the Standing Committee for the next year would be in Bangkok.

17. The Meeting was held in atmosphere of traditional ASEAN cordiality