

1977 JOINT COMMUNIQUE OF THE 10TH ASEAN MINISTERIAL MEETING

Issued in Singapore on 5-8 July 1977

1. The Tenth ASEAN Ministerial Meeting was held in Singapore on 5-8 July 1977. The Meeting was formally opened by the Prime Minister of Singapore, H.E. Lee Kuan Yew.
2. The Meeting was attended by H.E. Mr. Haji Adam Malik, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Indonesia, Y.B.M. Tengku Ahmad Rithauddeen, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Malaysia; H.E. Mr. Carlos P. Romulo, Secretary of Foreign Affairs of the Philippines; H.E. Mr. S. Rajaratnam, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Singapore; and H.E. Mr. Upadit Pachariyangkun, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand; and their respective delegations.
3. H.E. Hartono Rekso Dharsono, the Secretary-General of the ASEAN Secretariat was in attendance.
4. In his opening address, H.E. Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew observed that the Fourth Meeting of the ASEAN Economic Ministers in Singapore had reached some degree of understanding on a number of issues. He stated that their decisions had a claim to a place on the agenda at the forthcoming ASEAN Heads of Government Meeting in Kuala Lumpur. He noted that as the world was in a state of transition, the future of ASEAN would depend more on what it could do than on what others would or could do for the ASEAN countries. ASEAN would have to take the initiative through cooperation among themselves especially in the economic and political fields. ASEAN as a group must establish closer, constructive and complementary relationships with Japan, Australia and New Zealand as closer economic ties would increase the chances for a stable and thriving Southeast Asia.
5. Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew felt that the changed political situation in Southeast Asia required ASEAN countries to build their relations with Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea on a constructive and productive basis with the assurance that there would be no interference in each other's internal affairs.
6. Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew stressed that a strong vigorous and thriving ASEAN would become a desirable economic and trading partner. It was important that the ASEAN countries be regarded as desirable assets to be more closely associated with and not embarrassing liabilities to be shied away from. The Prime Minister noted that the statement by the Secretary of State of the United States on 29 June 1977 had stressed the economics of the relationship between the US and East Asia and the Pacific. In doing so, the US Secretary of State had expressed the hope that the US-ASEAN consultations would provide the basis for stronger American support of Southeast Asian regional efforts.
7. The Prime Minister then went on to note that adverse economic conditions in the industrial countries would put the countries of East Asia and the Pacific through a

difficult period. Industrial countries had talked of the importance of liberal trade while quietly introducing protectionist measures.

8. Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew asked whether ASEAN through its cooperation would be able to adopt new strategies to make it worthwhile for industrial countries to invest in ASEAN countries and speed up their industrialization. He noted that the industrial countries would want to broaden their economic links with ASEAN countries if steps beneficial to both sides were taken by ASEAN.
9. The Foreign Minister discussed the preparation and proposed agenda for the forthcoming Meeting ASEAN Heads and the Meeting between Heads of Government would provide the impetus towards greater regional cooperation and consolidation and expansion of relations between ASEAN and the three countries.
10. The Meeting, in approving the Annual Report of the Standing Committee, observed with satisfaction that there had been an encouraging increase in the number of projects implemented and noted that this would lead to other concrete regional endeavors.
11. In reviewing the developments in Southeast Asia and the activities of ASEAN since its founding on 8 August 1967, the Meeting noted with satisfaction that the increasing collective efforts and responsibilities of the ASEAN countries had enabled ASEAN to develop into a cohesive and dynamic regional Organization.
12. The Meeting reaffirmed the commitment of ASEAN countries to the principles and objectives of the Bangkok Declaration and of the ASEAN Concord. These historic documents would continue to provide the basis and operational framework for the further intensification of ASEAN cooperation and its expanding role in international relations.
13. The Meeting agreed on organizational changes which would strengthen its machinery to enable it to handle more effectively and efficiently the expanding activities of ASEAN, in keeping with its decision to maintain the status of the Bangkok Declaration as the basic agreement embodying the principles and objectives of ASEAN.
14. The Meeting commended the significant progress of the efforts of the ASEAN Economic Ministers to expand cooperation in trade, industry, food, agriculture, forestry, finance, banking, transportation and communications, particularly the exchange of trade concessions on 71 products under the Agreement on ASEAN Preferential Trading Agreements, and stressed the importance of expanding the scope and increasing the pace of regional cooperation in these areas.
15. The Meeting agreed on measures to consolidate and expand ASEAN's formal cooperation, relationships with Australia, Canada, the European Economic Community, Japan, New Zealand, and the United States.
16. The Meeting also agreed that ASEAN should establish joint consultative groups with the European Economic Community and other developed countries for consultations on matters of mutual interest.

17. The Meeting urged the developed countries to adopt policies which would increase the flow of investments into ASEAN countries, stabilize their export earnings and the prices of ASEAN commodities at remunerative levels, and provide improved access for ASEAN exports into the developed countries.
18. The Meeting also reaffirmed ASEAN's commitment to the Kuala Lumpur Declaration on the Establishment of the Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality in Southeast Asia. The Meeting adopted the Report of the Senior Officials Committee on the Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality. It was agreed that ASEAN countries would continue their deliberations on the various initial steps already proposed and to consider further initiatives which would create conditions conducive for the establishment of the Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality free from any form or manner of interference by outside Powers.
19. The Foreign Ministers reviewed the situation in Southeast Asia and reiterated the desire of ASEAN countries to promote peaceful and mutually beneficial relations with all countries, including Kampuchea, Laos and Vietnam, on the basis of mutual respect for each other's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and of non-interference in each other's internal affairs.
20. The Foreign Ministers noted with interest the statement of the Secretary of State of the United States of America on 29 June 1977, in particular the references to the relationship between ASEAN and the United States.
21. The Meeting reviewed developments in the Middle East and expressed its support for a just and peaceful solution that would take into account the legitimate rights and interests of all States concerned including the withdrawal from illegally occupied Arab territories, as well as the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, in accordance with relevant resolutions of the United Nations. In this connection, it welcomed the new initiatives towards an early solution of the conflict.
22. The Foreign Ministers expressed their concern over the continued intransigence of racist minority regimes in Southern Africa which constituted a threat to international peace and security. They reiterated their full support for the principles of self-determination and for the struggle for majority rule in Southern Africa in accordance with the principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter and the relevant resolutions of the United Nations.
23. The Eleventh ASEAN Ministerial Meeting will be held in Thailand in 1978.
24. The delegations of Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand expressed their appreciation to the people and government of Singapore for the warm and generous hospitality accorded to them and for the excellent arrangements made for the Meeting.
25. The Meeting was held in the traditional spirit of ASEAN friendship and solidarity.