

2001 ASEAN DECLARATION ON JOINT ACTION TO COUNTER TERRORISM

Adopted in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei on 5 November 2001

We, the Heads of State/Government of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) gathered in Bandar Seri Begawan for the Seventh ASEAN Summit,

Recalling the agreement among Heads of State/Government during the Second Informal Summit in December 1997 in Kuala Lumpur to take firm and stern measures to combat transnational crime,

Reaffirming our primary responsibility in ensuring the peaceful and progressive development of our respective countries and our region,

Deeply concerned over the formidable challenge posed by terrorism to regional and international peace and stability as well as to economic development,

Underlining the importance of strengthening regional and international cooperation in meeting the challenges confronting us,

Do hereby,

Unequivocally condemn in the strongest terms the horrifying terrorist attacks in New York City, Washington DC and Pennsylvania on 11 September 2001 and consider such acts as an attack against humanity and an assault on all of us;

Extend our deepest sympathy and condolences to the people and Government of the United States of America and the families of the victims from nations all around the world, including those of our nationals;

View acts of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, committed wherever, whenever and by whomsoever, as a profound threat to international peace and security which require concerted action to protect and defend all peoples and the peace and security of the world;

Reject any attempt to link terrorism with any religion or race;

Believe terrorism to be a direct challenge to the attainment of peace, progress and prosperity of ASEAN and the realisation of ASEAN Vision 2020;

Commit to counter, prevent and suppress all forms of terrorist acts in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and other international law, especially taking into account the importance of all relevant UN resolutions;

Ensure that, in observing the above, all cooperative efforts to combat terrorism at the regional level shall consider joint practical counter-terrorism measures in line with specific circumstances in the region and in each member country;

Recommit ourselves to pursue effective policies and strategies aimed at enhancing the well-being of our people, which will be our national contribution in the fight against terrorism;

Note that, towards this end, ASEAN had established a regional framework for fighting transnational crime and adopted an ASEAN Plan of Action that outlines a cohesive regional strategy to prevent, control and neutralise transnational crime;

Approve fully the initiatives of the Third ASEAN Ministers Meeting on Transnational Crime (AMMTC) held in October 2001 to focus on terrorism and deal effectively with the issue at all levels and endorse the convening of an Ad Hoc Experts Group Meeting and special sessions of the SOMTC and AMMTC that will focus on terrorism;

Warmly welcome Malaysia's offer to host the Special AMMTC on issues of terrorism in April 2002.

This meeting would represent a significant step by ASEAN to the United Nations' call to enhance coordination of national, sub-regional and international efforts to strengthen a global response to this serious challenge and threat to international security;

In strengthening further ASEAN's counter-terrorism efforts, we task our Ministers concerned to follow-up on the implementation of this declaration to advance ASEAN's efforts to fight terrorism by undertaking the following additional practical measures.

1. Review and strengthen our national mechanisms to combat terrorism;
2. Call for the early signing/ratification of or accession to all relevant anti-terrorist conventions including the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism;
3. Deepen cooperation among our front-line law enforcement agencies in combatting terrorism and sharing "best practices";
4. Study relevant international conventions on terrorism with the view to integrating them with ASEAN mechanisms on combating international terrorism;
5. Enhance information/intelligence exchange to facilitate the flow of information, in particular, on terrorists and terrorist organisations, their movement and funding, and any other information needed to protect lives, property and the security of all modes of travel;
6. Strengthen existing cooperation and coordination between the AMMTC and other relevant ASEAN bodies in countering, preventing and suppressing all forms of terrorists acts. Particular attention would be paid to finding ways to combat terrorist organisations, support infrastructure and funding and bringing the perpetrators to justice;
7. Develop regional capacity building programmes to enhance existing capabilities of ASEAN member countries to investigate, detect, monitor and report on terrorist acts;
8. Discuss and explore practical ideas and initiatives to increase ASEAN's role in and involvement with the international community including extra-regional partners within existing frameworks such as the ASEAN + 3, the ASEAN Dialogue Partners and the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), to make the fight against terrorism a truly regional and global endeavour;
9. Strengthen cooperation at bilateral, regional and international levels in combating terrorism in a comprehensive manner and affirm that at the international level the United Nations should play a major role in this regard.

We, the Leaders of ASEAN, pledge to remain seized with the matter, and call on other regions and countries to work with ASEAN in the global struggle against terrorism.

Adopted this Fifth Day of November 2001 in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam