

# 2015 JOINT COMMUNIQUE

## 48<sup>TH</sup> ASEAN FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETING

*Issued in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, on 4 August 2015*

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## **2015 JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ 48<sup>TH</sup> ASEAN FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETING**

*Adopted in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, on 4 August 2015*

### **“OUR PEOPLE, OUR COMMUNITY, OUR VISION”**

1. We, the Foreign Ministers of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), met on 4 August 2015 at the 48<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Foreign Ministers Meeting (48<sup>th</sup> AMM) in Kuala Lumpur. His Excellency Dato' Sri Anifah Aman, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Malaysia chaired the meeting.

2. We had a productive deliberation under the theme “Our People, Our Community, Our Vision”, to create an ASEAN Community which is truly people-oriented, people-centred comprising all areas of cooperation. We also had fruitful discussions on regional and international issues as well as our ongoing efforts to maintain peace, stability and prosperity in the region.

### **ASEAN COMMUNITY BUILDING**

3. We welcomed the successful convening of the 26<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit held in Kuala Lumpur and Langkawi on 27 April 2015 and the outcome documents. We will continue to work to realise our Leaders' aspiration to create an ASEAN Community as envisaged in the Cha-Am Hua Hin Declaration on a Roadmap for an ASEAN Community (2009-2015), the Bandar Seri Begawan Declaration and the Nay Pyi Taw Declaration on the ASEAN Community's Post-2015 Vision, and the Kuala Lumpur Declaration on a People-Oriented, People-Centred ASEAN.

4. We reaffirmed that the ASEAN Community should be built on the established foundation of the ASEAN Charter, the Treaty of Amity and Co-operation in Southeast Asia (TAC) and the Bali Concord III and its Plan of Action (2013-2017). We recognised the importance of moderation and tolerance in ASEAN Community building and remain committed to implementing the Langkawi Declaration on the Global Movement of Moderates 2015.

5. We are confident that the action lines under the Roadmap for an ASEAN Community 2009-2015, the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity, and the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) Strategic Framework and its Work Plan II (2009-2015) will be completed with significant achievements across all three pillars. We took note of the gaps in the implementation of the current Roadmap (2009-2015) and are committed to addressing them under the ASEAN Community's Post-2015 Vision and its Attendant Documents as well as the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) Work Plan III and post-2015 Connectivity Agenda.

6. We are encouraged by the progress of the implementation of the recommendations of the High Level Task Force on Strengthening the ASEAN Secretariat and Reviewing the ASEAN Organs to strengthen the capacity of and coordination among ASEAN organs, including improving the work processes in the ASEAN Secretariat, and the coordination across and within the three community pillars in order to accelerate ASEAN Community building and integration efforts.

7. We are pleased with the progress achieved by the High Level Task Force on the ASEAN Community's Post-2015 Vision, and looked forward to the submission of the ASEAN Community's Post-2015 Vision and its Attendant Documents to the ASEAN Coordinating Council, for subsequent adoption by ASEAN Leaders at the 27<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit in Kuala Lumpur.

8. We are determined to strengthen ASEAN's centrality and all ASEAN-led mechanisms to ensure that the evolving regional architecture would be beneficial to ASEAN and to better meet the challenges and dynamics of global development.

9. We continue to deepen cooperation with Dialogue Partners, engage other external parties for mutually beneficial relations, and play a responsible and constructive role globally based on ASEAN common platform on international issues.

## **ASEAN POLITICAL SECURITY COMMUNITY**

### **IMPLEMENTATION OF THE APSC BLUEPRINT**

10. We welcomed the progress in the implementation of the APSC Blueprint, which has brought APSC cooperation to a higher plane, contributing to peace and stability in the region. In line with the commitment to launch the ASEAN Community by end of this year, we encouraged expediting implementation of the remaining action lines in the Blueprint.

### **TREATY OF AMITY AND COOPERATION IN SOUTHEAST ASIA**

11. We reaffirmed the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation 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.

12. We recognised that the growing interest of other non-ASEAN Member States to accede to the TAC reflects a positive signal of their commitment to the purpose and principles contained in the TAC, to strengthen cooperation with ASEAN and contribute to peace and security in the region. We agreed to consider new applications in accordance with the Revised Guidelines for Accession to the TAC.

### **SOUTHEAST ASIA NUCLEAR WEAPON-FREE ZONE TREATY**

13. We underscored the importance of preserving the Southeast Asian region as a Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone and free of all other weapons of mass destruction as enshrined in the Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ) and the ASEAN Charter.

14. In this regard, we underscored the importance of the full and effective implementation of the SEANWFZ Treaty, including through the Plan of Action to Strengthen the Implementation of the SEANWFZ Treaty (2013-2017). We tasked the Senior Officials to intensify the ongoing efforts of the State Parties to the SEANWFZ Treaty and the Nuclear Weapon States to resolve all outstanding issues in accordance with the objectives and principles of the SEANWFZ Treaty pertaining to the signing and ratifying of the Protocol to that Treaty. Bearing in mind the related decisions of the SEANWFZ Commission in 2011 for all Nuclear Weapon States to sign the Protocol together, we noted Indonesia's Concept Paper concerning China's readiness to be the first among Nuclear Weapon States to sign and ratify the Protocol to the SEANWFZ Treaty without reservations.

15. We encouraged the full support of the UN Member States, particularly the NWS for the ASEAN-sponsored United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) Resolution on the SEANWFZ Treaty in the upcoming 70<sup>th</sup> Session of the UNGA. We also looked forward to the submission and eventual adoption by consensus of the 70<sup>th</sup> UNGA draft resolution on the SEANWFZ Treaty.

16. We looked forward to the convening of the next meeting of the ASEANTOM on 20 August 2015 in Malaysia, following the decision of the 25<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit in Nay Pyi Taw, which welcomed the outcome of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the ASEAN Network of Regulatory Bodies on Atomic Energy

(ASEANTOM) held in Chiang Mai, Thailand, from 25 to 27 August 2014 and its decision on the ASEANTOM as an ASEAN body under the APSC Pillar in the Annex 1 of the ASEAN Charter.

#### **COOPERATION BETWEEN ASEAN AND THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY**

17. We recognised the central role of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in nuclear non-proliferation and the promotion of peaceful uses of nuclear energy and agreed to explore ways to formalise relations between ASEAN and the IAEA.

#### **ASEAN INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS (AICHR)**

18. We continued to reaffirm the role of the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) as the overarching human rights institution in ASEAN for the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms of the peoples in the region. We welcomed the progress of the work of the AICHR in the promotion and protection of human rights, and encouraged AICHR to engage more in current human rights challenges in the region, in accordance with the principles of the ASEAN Charter, the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration (AHRD) and the Phnom Penh Statement on the Adoption of the AHRD, as well as the Terms of Reference (TOR) of the AICHR.

19. We appreciated the Government of Indonesia for organising a dialogue with the AICHR to share information on the promotion and protection of human rights in the country as well as the Government of Thailand for organising a dialogue with AICHR to share information on thematic issues of human rights. The dialogues were useful in supporting AICHR in conducting its work. We noted that AICHR and an ASEAN Member State, Indonesia, might consider having such a dialogue in the future.

20. We took note of the AICHR's Annual Report that reflects the progress of the work of the AICHR for the past one year as well as since its establishment in 2009. We noted the observations, challenges and recommendations that the AICHR has outlined in its Annual Report and encouraged the AICHR to continue its work done thus far. We further welcomed the AICHR's submission on the Assessment and Recommendations on the Review of the TOR and took note of the assessment and recommendations provided therein.

21. Entering its second term, we commended the AICHR's efforts in finalising its Five-year Work Plan (2016-2020) which is the continuation of the AICHR Work Plan (2010-2015). We welcomed the Philippines' offer to host the Special Meeting of the AICHR from 16-17 September 2015 in order to facilitate AICHR smooth transition into its new Work Plan. The new Work Plan will endeavor to build upon AICHR's achievements towards the promotion and protection of human rights in the region. In this regard, we approved the AICHR's Five-year Work Plan (2016-2020), the indicative budget for the cycle of five years, the Priority Programmes and Activities and indicative budget for 2016.

22. Noting the achievement made by AICHR in advancing its human rights promotion function, we encouraged AICHR, together with the ASEAN Secretariat, to integrate a more programme-based approach to its planning of activities and implementation. We also encouraged AICHR to acquire a long-term perspective to planning and implementation which will help it realise its human right protection mandate alongside its promotion mandate, as provided for in its TOR.

23. We are encouraged with the progress made by the AICHR in strengthening its cooperation with other ASEAN Sectoral Bodies and stakeholders on promotion and protection of human rights. We acknowledged that human rights is a cross-cutting issue and in this regard we noted progress of AICHR's efforts in working towards proper alignment with other sectoral bodies. We further noted with satisfaction the various initiatives being undertaken by AICHR to promote awareness of human rights in 2015, such as the AICHR Human Rights Training the Trainers Programme for Journalists in Thailand and the upcoming AICHR Youth Debates on Human Rights in Singapore, the Regional

Workshop on the Role of Youth in Malaysia, the first ever AICHR Symposium on the Judiciary, also in Malaysia, the AICHR Workshop on the Implementation of Human Rights Obligations relating to the Environment and Climate Change to be held in Myanmar, and AICHR Workshop on the Development of ASEAN Legal Instruments on Human Rights in the Philippines.

### **PROMOTION OF MODERATION**

24. We welcomed the adoption of the Langkawi Declaration on the Global Movement of Moderates by the Leaders at the 26<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit on 27 April 2015, which comprehensively outlines moderation and tolerance, which is an established 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 promoting social harmony and mutual understanding within countries and regions.

### **ASEAN SECURITY OUTLOOK**

25. We emphasised the importance of the ASEAN Security Outlook (ASO) to promote transparency in security-related policies and complement ASEAN's confidence building efforts in the region. In this regard, we looked forward to its next publication.

### **ASEAN INSTITUTE FOR PEACE AND RECONCILIATION**

26. We are encouraged by the progress of work of the ASEAN Institute for Peace and Reconciliation (AIPR) and appreciated the efforts undertaken by its Governing Council and Advisory Board to fully operationalise the Institute. We welcomed the convening of the AIPR Workshop on Strengthening Women's Participation in Peace Processes held in Cebu, the Philippines on 17-18 March 2015 in promoting and enhancing women's participation in peace processes worldwide.

27. We also encouraged AIPR, in accordance with its TOR, to enhance its capacities, including through activities related to peace and reconciliation with relevant stakeholders, such as think tanks, CSOs, and ASEAN external parties.

### **ASEAN REGIONAL MINE ACTION CENTRE**

28. We noted with satisfaction the positive progress towards the operationalisation of the ASEAN Regional Mine Action Centre (ARMAC) which serves as a regional centre of excellence in addressing the humanitarian aspects of the explosive remnants of war (ERW) for interested ASEAN Member States.

29. We encouraged the nomination of representatives to the ARMAC Steering Committee by all ASEAN Member States so that the inaugural meeting of the ARMAC Steering Committee could be convened as soon as possible.

30. We looked forward to the convening of the Second Regional Seminar on the Establishment of an ASEAN Regional Mine Action Centre (ARMAC): Collaboration towards Operationalisation to be held in Siem Reap, on 14 -15 August 2015.

### **MARITIME COOPERATION**

31. We recognised that maritime security includes both traditional and non-traditional security threats. We underscored the importance of strengthening regional cooperation and promoting mutual trust and understanding in maritime security and maritime safety to ensure peace, stability, safety of sea lanes, freedom of navigation and unimpeded commerce as well as humanitarian assistance and disaster relief through, inter alia, capacity building, exchanging of experiences and sharing of best

practices by utilising existing ASEAN-led frameworks, where appropriate, including the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime (AMMTC), ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus) and the ASEAN Maritime Forum (AMF) / Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum (EAMF).

32. We welcomed the work to enhance maritime cooperation in, among others, maritime surveillance, port security, illegal, unregulated and unreported (IUU) fishing, and sustainable management of maritime resources, through, inter alia, information sharing, capacity building and sharing of experiences and best practices.

33. We noted the proposal at the 5<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Maritime Forum for the establishment of the ASEAN Coast Guard Forum (ACGF). In this regard, we looked forward to the Experts' Group Meeting on the ACGF on 19-20 August 2015, in Manila, the Philippines, to discuss the possible establishment of the ASEAN Coast Guard Forum (ACGF) and its Terms of Reference.

34. We took note of the successful outcomes of the 5<sup>th</sup> AMF and 3<sup>rd</sup> EAMF held in Viet Nam in August 2014 and looked forward to the convening of 6<sup>th</sup> AMF and 4<sup>th</sup> EAMF in Manado, Indonesia in September 2015.

### **NON-TRADITIONAL SECURITY ISSUES**

35. We reaffirmed our commitment in addressing non-traditional security issues, particularly in combating transnational crimes and other trans-boundary challenges. In this regard, we looked forward to the convening and outcome of the 10<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime (AMMTC) to be held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on 29 September – 1 October 2015. We also looked forward to the convening of the Special Ministerial Meeting on the Rise of Radicalisation and Violent Extremism in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on 2 October 2015 as part of ASEAN's efforts in addressing the growing threat of radicalisation and violent extremism to the ASEAN region.

36. We believe that the issue of irregular movement of persons, including its connection with people smuggling and trafficking in persons in our region requires the parties concerned to identify and address the root causes and other contributory factors, whether at origin, during transit or destination as well as the involvement of relevant stakeholders based on the principle of international burden sharing and shared responsibility as well as a balanced approach between law enforcement and humanitarian response to tackle the challenges. In this regard, we welcomed the outcomes of the Emergency ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime (EAMMTC) Concerning Irregular Movement of Persons in the Southeast Asia Region on 2 July 2015 in Kuala Lumpur and the Special Meeting on Irregular Migration in the Indian Ocean held in Bangkok on 29 May 2015 to address this issue.

37. We also welcomed the outcome of the EAMMTC, among others, that supported the establishment of a trust fund to be administered by the ASEAN Secretariat for voluntary contributions from ASEAN Member States and members of the international community to support the humanitarian and relief efforts to deal with the irregular movement of persons in Southeast Asia; the consideration to include people smuggling under the purview of SOMTC and AMMTC; and the recommendation for the ASEAN Leaders to task relevant ASEAN bodies to explore the possibility in setting up a task force to respond to crisis and emergency situations arising from irregular movement of persons in Southeast Asia. We noted the offer by the Philippines to provide support towards the skills training of persons affected by the irregular movement.

38. Recognising the threat of drugs to the region, we looked forward to the convening of the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Drug Matters to be held on 27-29 October 2015 in Langkawi, Malaysia. We also welcomed the institutionalisation of the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Drug Matters which will

provide political impetus to ASEAN cooperation on drug matters and strategic guidance to the ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Drug Matters (ASOD). In this regard, we reiterated our commitment to double our efforts in achieving a drug free ASEAN, to address the drug problem in a comprehensive and holistic manner involving both demand and supply reduction measures, in line with ASEAN Leaders Declaration on Drug Free ASEAN 2015, which was adopted at the 20<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit in 2012, in Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

39. Recognising the need to strengthen ASEAN legal integration in addressing and combating transnational crimes, we encouraged the ASEAN Law Ministers to work towards elevating the Treaty on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters 2004 to an ASEAN treaty and continue their work to enhance cooperation on the issue of extradition.

40. Recalling the ASEAN Leaders' Joint Statement in Enhancing Cooperation against Trafficking in Persons in Southeast Asia adopted at the 18<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit held on 8 May 2011 in Jakarta, Indonesia, we looked forward to the endorsement of the ASEAN Convention Against Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children (ACTIP) and the ASEAN Plan of Action Against Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children (APA) by the 10<sup>th</sup> AMMTC in September 2015 and its subsequent adoption by the ASEAN Leaders at the 27<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit in November 2015.

### **DEFENCE AND SECURITY COOPERATION**

41. We commended the progress of defence cooperation among ASEAN Member States and between ASEAN and its external partners through the important mechanisms of the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM), the ADMM Plus and the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF). We noted the positive outcomes of the 9<sup>th</sup> ADMM held on 17 March 2015 in Langkawi, Malaysia and its role in promoting regional peace and security through dialogue and cooperation in defence and security matters. In this regard, we welcomed the adoption of the concept papers on ASEAN Militaries Ready Group on Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) and on the Establishment of the ASEAN Centre of Military Medicine (ACMM), as well as, the Guidelines to Respond to the Request for Informal Engagements or Meetings by the ADMM-Plus Countries.

42. We also welcomed the endorsement by the 9<sup>th</sup> ADMM of the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for the Utilisation of Military Assets for Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) under the framework of the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) as the ASEAN defence and militaries' contribution to the existing ASEAN SOP for Regional Standby Arrangements and Coordination of Joint Disaster Relief and Emergency Response Operations (SASOP).

43. We noted with appreciation the achievements of the ADMM-Plus process in forging practical defence and military cooperation among ASEAN and the eight Plus Countries, in particular, through the six ADMM-Plus Experts' Working Group. We looked forward to the convening of the 3<sup>rd</sup> ADMM-Plus in November 2015 in Malaysia.

### **ASEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY**

44. We are encouraged by the favourable regional economic outlook for 2015. Whilst the projected outlook for ASEAN growth rate is expected to accelerate to 4.9 per cent this year from 4.6 per cent in 2014, some downside risks remain relevant to the growth prospect in the region. The continued moderation in China would have an impact on the ASEAN's forecast growth rate, given ASEAN's strong economic linkages to China. The region is also faced with financial challenges as the persistent strengthening of the U.S dollar against domestic currencies, as well as the ongoing Greece debt crisis, which may cause volatility in the global financial markets. Going forward, the realisation of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) coupled with continued adoption of appropriate policy mix



and the continued focus on productivity growth and infrastructure development to improve connectivity, will help sustain economic growth, maintain regional financial stability and enhance ASEAN's competitiveness.

### **IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ASEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY BLUEPRINT**

45. We welcomed the commitment by ASEAN Member States to complete the implementation of the fourth and final phase at the ASEAN Economic Community Blueprint by the end of 2015 and noted that 458 measures targeted for ASEAN-wide implementation have been implemented from 2008 to end-March 2015.

46. We are encouraged by the progress towards the elimination of tariffs which now stands at 95.99 per cent across all ten (10) ASEAN Member States. There has also been progress on trade facilitation with the reactivation of the ASEAN Trade Facilitation Joint Consultative Committee and the revamping of the ASEAN Trade Consultation to Solve Trade and Investment Issues (ACT). Further progress has been made in the development of National Trade Repositories (NTRs) which is a precursor to the ASEAN Trade Repository (ATR), targeted to be operationalised this year.

47. We are pleased with the ongoing progress in the implementation of both the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Self-Certification Pilot Projects of the Rules of Origin that will allow certified exporters to self-declare goods of ASEAN origin and gain preferential access into ASEAN markets. We encouraged the convergence and possible reconciliation of the two pilot projects towards achieving ASEAN-wide Self Certification.

48. Recognising the importance of accelerating Customs integration, we noted the completion of the ratification process of the new ASEAN Agreement on Customs which effectively operationalise the Customs Chapter of the ASEAN Trade in Goods Agreement (ATIGA), and welcomed the endorsement of the new Strategic Plan of Customs Development (SPCDs) for 2016-2020.

49. We took note that the Terms of Reference (TOR) for the "full-fledged" ASEAN Single Window (ASW) Pilot Project Component 2 have been endorsed, and its implementation is expected to commence in 2015. The Protocol on the Legal Framework to implement the ASW (PLF), which will govern the legal aspects of the eventual implementation of the ASW across Member States, has almost been finalised.

### **TRANSPORT**

50. We welcomed the progress towards promoting the harmonisation of shipping-related regulations and policies within the region and endorsed the implementation Framework of the ASEAN Single Shipping Market (ASSM), which will provide strategic guidance to coordinate policy and harmonise rules and regulations to further liberalise shipping services in the region.

51. We noted with pleasure the good progress made on the development of the ASEAN Single Aviation Market in support of the ASEAN Economic Community and looked forward to both the full ratification of the ASEAN Air Services Agreements and the conclusion of the Ninth Package of Commitments on Air Transport Services under the ASEAN Framework Agreement on Services by 2015. In particular, we welcomed the completion of several key regional initiatives such as the Capacity Building Framework on Air Traffic Management and the ASEAN Regional Contingency Plan, and the development of initiatives, such as the ASEAN Aviation Regulatory Monitoring Systems; ASEAN Foreign Operator Safety Assessment; and Mutual Recognition Arrangement on Certificates, Approvals and Licences of Civil Aviation.

52. We welcomed the significant progress towards the finalisation of the ASEAN Framework Agreement on Cross-Border Transport of Passengers by Road Vehicles (ASEAN CBTP) and looked

forward for the Agreement to be signed at the 21<sup>st</sup> ASEAN Transport Ministers Meeting in November 2015.

### **MINERALS**

53. We welcomed the development of the ASEAN Minerals Cooperation Action Plan (AMCAP) 2016-2025 and recognised the ongoing effort in four strategic areas, namely in facilitating and enhancing trade and investment in minerals; promoting environmentally and socially sustainable mineral development; strengthening institutional and human capacities in the ASEAN minerals sector; and maintaining an efficient and up-to-date ASEAN minerals database.

### **ENERGY**

54. We are encouraged that energy cooperation is on track to meet most of the key targets set out in the ASEAN Plan of Action on Energy Cooperation (APAEC) 2010-2015. We welcomed the steady progress in the ASEAN Power Grid (APG) and the Trans-ASEAN Gas Pipeline (TAGP) physical interconnection projects with the completion of APG's 7<sup>th</sup> power interconnection (i.e. the Sarawak–West Kalimantan power interconnection project in June 2015) and TAGP's 13<sup>th</sup> pipeline interconnection (i.e. Block B17 in Malaysia-Thailand Joint Development Area to Kerteh, Terengganu in April 2015).

### **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

55. We noted the progress on the final review of the implementation of ASEANICT Master Plan 2015 (AIM 2015) and are pleased to note that the Master Plan's action points are on-track for completion in 2015. The report thus far showed that 86 percent of the initiatives have been completed, while the remaining 14 per cent are expected to be completed before December 2015. The outcome of the AIM 2015 Final Report would be taken into account in the development of the next ASEAN ICT Master plan for 2016-2020. We further noted that an ASEAN Framework on ICT Skill Upgrading is currently being formulated to serve as a voluntary guide for organisations in ASEAN Member States to develop their respective ICT work force. Additionally, we are encouraged by the efforts of the ASEAN Telecommunication Regulators Council (ATRC) which, inter alia, published a report on Transparency of Broadband Internet Access Speeds in ASEAN. This report provided ASEAN Member States with information and recommendations to further promote transparency in broadband; hence enabling greater consumer awareness and protection.

### **FINANCE**

56. We are committed to implementing appropriate monetary and fiscal policies aimed at sustaining economic growth and maintain financial stability as outlined during the 1<sup>st</sup> ASEAN Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors Meeting in Kuala Lumpur in March 2015.

57. We noted the progress on the Protocol to implement the 6<sup>th</sup> Package of Commitments on Financial Services under AFAS for the implementation of the ASEAN Banking Integration Framework.

58. We took note of the progress of ASEAN Regulators working towards liberalising and integrating the insurance sector commencing with the Marine, Aviation and Goods International Transit (MAT) insurance as non-sensitive sub-sector and look forward to the expected commencement in 2015 of the initial project on Disaster Risk Financing and Insurance (DRFI).

## **FOOD AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY**

59. We appreciated the preparation of the Vision and Strategic Plan for ASEAN Cooperation in Food, Agriculture and Forestry 2016-2025 and recognised its ongoing efforts in covering seven priority areas of cooperation, namely: (i) enhancing quantity and quality of production with sustainable, 'green' technologies, resource management systems and minimise pre and post-harvest losses and waste; (ii) enhancing trade facilitation and economic integration; (iii) ensuring food security, food safety, better nutrition and equitable distribution; (iv) increasing resilience to climate change, natural disasters and other shocks; (v) assisting resource constrained small producers and SMEs to improve productivity, technology and product quality to meet global market standards and increase competitiveness in line with the ASEAN Policy Blueprint on SME Development; (vi) strengthening ASEAN joint approaches on international and regional issues affecting the Food, Agriculture and Forestry sector and (vii) promoting sustainable forest management.

60. We noted that a study on Mutual Recognition Models for the ASEAN Agricultural Best Practices would be carried out to identify an efficient mechanism for regional accreditation and certification of good agricultural practices.

## **TOURISM**

61. We appreciated the growth of the tourism industry with more than 105 million international tourists visiting ASEAN Member States in 2014, posting a growth of 2.7 per cent compared to 2013. We are pleased to note that an agreement to establish a Regional Secretariat for the Implementation of the MRA on Tourism Professionals was finalised in January 2015, and is being signed ad-referendum by ASEAN Member States.

62. We further noted that the Regional Secretariat would support the implementation of the ASEAN Tourism Professional Registration System to enhance ASEAN's competitiveness as a single tourist destination. We welcomed the adoption to enhance tourism standards and certification process for green hotels, homestay, spa services, public toilets, clean tourist city and community-based tourism standards.

## **SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES**

63. We are encouraged by the progress in promoting SMEs under the current ASEAN Strategic Action Plan for SME Development (2010-2015).

64. We welcomed the plans initiated by ASEAN SME Agencies Working Group to complete several flagship deliverables in 2015 which are the establishment of the ASEAN SME Service Center Web Portal, the launch of ASEAN SME Online Academy, the holding of the ASEAN SME Showcase and Conference in May 2015 and other conferences and business events to promote SME opportunities including the coming ASEAN Youth Creative Industry Fair.

65. We noted the formulation of the ASEAN Strategic Action Plan for SME Development (2016-2025) with the vision of 'Globally Competitive and Innovative SMEs'. We encouraged the inclusion of micro enterprises in the promotion of SMEs to widen the coverage of ASEAN sectoral and developmental efforts into the larger group comprising micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs).

## **STATISTICAL COOPERATION**

66. We noted the progress made by the ASEAN Community Statistical System (ACSS) in harmonising statistical domains relevant to integration monitoring; the enhancement of the dissemination system including the development of a consolidated ASEAN statistical database; and

the use of info-graphics in statistical communication and advocacy. These efforts contributed towards delivering relevant, timely and comparable ASEAN statistics to support ongoing efforts for enhanced integration monitoring and evidence-based policy making.

## **INITIATIVE FOR ASEAN INTEGRATION**

67. Recognising the importance of narrowing the development gaps (NDGs) as one of the priorities in the ASEAN community building process, we called for efforts to be intensified to implement the remaining action lines of the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) Work Plan II (2009-2015). We looked forward to developing a successor document which would align IAI activities with ASEAN's integration efforts through equitable and inclusive development. Noting that IAI is cross-cutting in nature, we called upon ASEAN sectoral bodies to ensure full participation of all ASEAN Member States in realising regional commitments as well as closer cooperation between ASEAN and the Mekong sub-regional arrangements in achieving IAI's goals. We also welcomed the continuous assistance rendered by our Dialogue Partners and other external parties in supporting our regional integration efforts.

## **ASEAN SOCIO-CULTURAL COMMUNITY**

### **SOCIAL WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT**

68. We continued to support the establishment of an ASEAN Community that is people-oriented, people-centred and socially responsible with a view to achieving enduring solidarity and unity among the nations and peoples of ASEAN by forging a common identity and building a caring and sharing society which is inclusive and harmonious, and where the well-being, livelihood, healthy lifestyle, access to healthcare and welfare of the peoples are enhanced. We are pleased with the progress in the development of the Regional Framework and Action Plan to Implement the ASEAN Declaration on Strengthening Social Protection, Regional Plan of Action on Elimination of Violence Against Women and Regional Plan of Action on Elimination of Violence Against Children. We are also encouraged by the development of the draft Putrajaya Joint Declaration on ASEAN Post-2015 Priorities towards an ASEAN Citizen-Centric Civil Service and the draft Kuala Lumpur Declaration on Ageing: Empowering Older Persons in ASEAN.

### **MIGRANT WORKERS**

69. Recognising the contribution of migrant workers to both society and economy of ASEAN, we reiterated the importance of safeguarding the human rights and fundamental freedoms of individuals, including the protection and promotion of the rights of migrant workers, in accordance with national laws, regulations, and policies. We also noted the progress made so far by the ASEAN Committee on the implementation of the ASEAN Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers (ACMW) in drafting the ASEAN instrument on the protection and promotion of migrant workers' rights. In this regard, we urged ASEAN Committee on the Implementation of the ASEAN Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers (ACMW) to take necessary actions to facilitate the timely conclusion of such an instrument to ensure the rights of the migrant workers are well protected within the region. We noted Indonesia's proposal for a statement on the protection and promotion of the rights of migrant workers.

### **CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENT**

70. We noted with great concern that climate change is already having significant impact in the region, posing challenges to our environment, causing severe social and economic disruption and damage throughout the region. We supported the timely finalisation of an ASEAN Joint Statement on

Climate Change to be adopted at the 27<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit in November 2015 and encouraged ASEAN Member States to highlight ASEAN's joint efforts, concerns and response to climate change, and where appropriate, ASEAN position at the 21<sup>st</sup> Conference of Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP21 UNFCCC).

71. We recognised the urgency in promoting environmental sustainability in Southeast Asia by ensuring a stable climate, preventing land degradation, promoting water resources management, including integrated river basin management and ensuring sustainable management of natural resources, restoring watershed forests, conserving coastal and marine environment, including terrestrial and marine biodiversity. In this context, we welcomed Viet Nam's efforts in organising the 13<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on the Environment (AMME) and related Meetings to be held on 26-31 October 2015 in Ha Noi, and expected positive outcomes of the Meetings, including the adoption of the ASEAN Joint Statement and Action Plan to Protect Threatened Species from Extinction.

72. We also recognised that education and capacity building for sustainable development is essential in ensuring effective implementation of the ASEAN Action Plan on Joint Response to Climate Change for environmental sustainability in the region.

73. We highlighted the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB) and emphasised the important role of the ACB as a regional centre of excellence dedicated to the promotion of regional collaboration on biodiversity conservation. We encouraged the ratification of the Agreement on the Establishment of the ASEAN Centre of Biodiversity by all ASEAN Member States.

74. We noted that transboundary haze pollution remained a concern in the region, as also noted by the ASEAN Leaders at the 26<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit. We commit to greater regional cooperation to address this concern, including through the ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution (AATHP) and the ASEAN Sub-Regional Haze Monitoring System (HMS). We hoped with the ratification of the AATHP by all ASEAN Member States, it would be timely for us to work closely and effectively in fulfilling our roles and obligations to the Agreement. We should increase our efforts in mitigating and preventing the annual occurrence of transboundary haze in this region. We looked forward to the establishment and operationalisation of the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Transboundary Haze Pollution Control under the AATHP. We acknowledged that the ASEAN Sub-regional Haze Monitoring System (HMS) is a useful tool to assist in monitoring and internal enforcement actions against irresponsible parties contributing to fires. We urged the Sub-Regional Ministerial Steering Committee (MSC) on Transboundary Haze Pollution countries to take the necessary actions to operationalise the HMS as soon as possible.

## YOUTH

75. We recognised that over sixty percent of the ASEAN population today comprises those under 35 years old, and they are the driving force in shaping ASEAN's future direction.

76. We noted the outcome of the 9<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Youth in Siem Reap, Cambodia, 4 June 2015 which reiterated the importance of youth development in the region towards the ASEAN Community building through among others the establishment of ASEAN Youth Development Index (AYDI).

77. We welcomed Malaysia's effort in organising the ASEAN Young Leaders Summit from 18-20 November 2015 in Kuala Lumpur in conjunction with the 27<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit to promote meaningful youth involvement in building an ASEAN Community, the outcomes of which would be reported to ASEAN.

## **DISASTER MANAGEMENT AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE**

78. We underscored the importance of enhanced cooperation to prevent and reduce disaster risk as well as to enhance community resilience. We reiterated our commitment to strengthen the ASEAN Disaster Management and Emergency Response mechanism to better respond to disaster and to substantially reduce loss of life and damage to economic, social, physical and environmental assets of ASEAN Member States caused by natural and human-induced disasters. We also encouraged cooperation with other ASEAN-led mechanisms, as well as with relevant regional and international agencies to promote effective Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR).

79. We welcomed the Joint Statement of ASEAN for the 3<sup>rd</sup> UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction on 14-18 March 2015, Sendai, Japan, and the Declaration on Institutionalising the Resilience of ASEAN and its Communities and People to Disaster and Climate Change adopted at the 26<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit in Kuala Lumpur. In this regard, we looked forward to the convening of the 27<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management Meeting and the 3<sup>rd</sup> ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Management, to be held on 14 – 18 December 2015 in Siem Reap, Cambodia.

80. Towards enhancing the region's preparedness and resilience in facing disasters, we welcomed the successful convening of the ARF Disaster Relief Exercises (ARF DiREx) in Kedah and Perlis on 24-28 May 2015, co-chaired by Malaysia and China. The ARF DiREx tested the civil-military coordination efforts, created synergy, and synchronised efforts towards supporting the effective implementation of the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) as the common platform for disaster management in the region.

81. We also welcomed and expressed support to the ongoing efforts to draft the ASEAN Declaration on One ASEAN, One Response: ASEAN Responding to Disasters as One in the Region and Outside the Region. We underscored the importance of ASEAN centrality in the AADMER and that the draft Declaration would strengthen the response of ASEAN in disaster management. In this regard, we affirmed AHA Centre's key role as ASEAN's coordinating body for disaster management in the region, that will, where appropriate, work in partnership with other relevant regional and international agencies and centres, to strengthen HADR efforts and effectively implement the work programme under AADMER.

## **ASEAN CONNECTIVITY**

82. We are encouraged by the progress in implementing the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity (MPAC), which contributes to ASEAN integration and Community-building. We acknowledged that a better-connected ASEAN is imperative in promoting economic growth, narrowing the development gap and promoting greater people-to-people contacts, realising the Millennium Development Goals, and implementing the Post-2015 Development Agenda. In this regard, we welcomed contributions by our Dialogue Partners and External Parties and their initiatives such as Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and Partnership for Quality Infrastructure which support the implementation of the MPAC. We also welcomed continuous efforts to strengthen public private partnership (PPP) in ASEAN through a pipeline of potential ASEAN PPP projects, such as the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia's (ERIA) ASEAN PPP Guideline and a database on risk mitigation instruments.

83. We encouraged ongoing efforts by the ASEAN Connectivity Coordinating Committee (ACCC) to formulate a post-2015 Agenda on Connectivity which would be bold, visionary and contain practical and implementable measures contributing to a well-integrated ASEAN region. We looked forward to the convening of the 6<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Connectivity Symposium with the theme 'The Connectivity Agenda for an Integrated ASEAN Community' which will be held in Penang, Malaysia on 15-16 October 2015.

## EXTERNAL RELATIONS

84. We reaffirmed our commitment to continue enhancing ASEAN's relations with Dialogue Partners and external parties for mutual benefit. We emphasised the importance of ASEAN Centrality in the evolving regional architecture, and agreed to continue to work closely with all our partners in the various ASEAN-led mechanisms, including the ASEAN Plus One, ASEAN Plus Three, ARF, ADMM-Plus, and EAS, in promoting peace, stability, security and prosperity in the region. We acknowledged the increased interest from external parties in engaging ASEAN, which should be governed by the Guidelines for ASEAN's External Relations, and based on the principles of equality and parity of treatment for all ASEAN Member States. We recognised the importance of strengthening ASEAN's effectiveness in managing its external relations, including through the streamlining of ASEAN meetings and exploring other appropriate modalities.

85. We expressed our satisfaction with the progress made in our relations with Dialogue Partners, and stressed the significance of further promoting dialogue and enhancing existing cooperation. We noted the important developments in ASEAN's external relations and expressed our appreciation to our Dialogue Partners for their commitment to strengthen relations with ASEAN and their continued support and assistance for ASEAN community building efforts over the past year.

86. With the ASEAN Community in the horizon, we underscored the importance of cooperation with Dialogue Partners in ASEAN's post-2015 priority areas, namely, ASEAN Community building, connectivity, narrowing development gaps, disaster management and maritime security and safety, as laid out in the Bandar Seri Begawan Declaration on the ASEAN Community's Post-2015 Vision and the Nay Pyi Taw Declaration of Realisation of the ASEAN Community in 2015. We looked forward to the adoption of the Plans of Action between ASEAN-Canada, ASEAN-India and ASEAN-Republic of Korea (ROK). We noted the progress of negotiations on the successor documents of the Plans of Action with China, New Zealand, Russia and the US.

### ASEAN-AUSTRALIA

87. We agreed that the elevation of ASEAN-Australia Dialogue Relations from a Comprehensive Partnership to a Strategic Partnership during the ASEAN-Australia Commemorative Summit to celebrate the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of ASEAN-Australia Dialogue Relations on 12 November 2014 in Nay Pyi Taw will contribute to more enhanced and focused ASEAN-Australia political-security, economic and socio-cultural cooperation for mutual benefit which will promote regional peace, stability, prosperity and appreciated Australia's contribution to this.

88. We noted the benefits of deeper regional economic integration and appreciated Australia's support for the realisation of the ASEAN Community 2015 and the ASEAN Community Post-2015 Vision.

89. We noted with satisfaction progress in the implementation of the Plan of Action to Implement the ASEAN-Australia Strategic Partnership 2015-2019. We welcomed the extension of the ASEAN-Australia Development Cooperation Program Phase II (AADCP II) with additional funding for 2015-2019.

90. We acknowledged Australia's consistent support for the implementation of the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Relief (AADMER) and collaboration with the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA Centre) to strengthen cooperation in disaster management.

91. We supported the strengthening of people-to-people connectivity between ASEAN and Australia, including the New Colombo Plan and the various Australian scholarship programmes.

### **ASEAN-CANADA**

92. We welcomed progress in the implementation of the Plan of Action to implement the Joint Declaration on ASEAN-Canada Partnership (2011-2015) and looked forward to the adoption of the new Plan of Action to Implement the Joint Declaration on ASEAN-Canada Enhanced Partnership (2016-2020) at the PMC+1 with Canada, which reflects the goals and priorities of both sides in the next five years.

93. We are committed to working with Canada on concrete activities to address regional security challenges, including international terrorism and violent extremism, as well as agricultural development, technology and innovation, small and medium enterprises (SMEs) development, connectivity, climate change and disaster management, pandemic disease and the promotion and protection of human rights, including the rights of women and children. We looked forward to the endorsement of the new Work Plan to implement the ASEAN-Canada Joint Declaration on Trade and Investment for 2016-2020 at the 4<sup>th</sup> AEM-Canada Consultations.

94. We emphasised the need to enhance ASEAN-Canada connectivity, specifically through forging an Air Services Agreement, with a view to increase tourism flow between both sides and promoting people-to-people exchanges.

95. We welcomed Canada's commitment to appoint the first dedicated Canadian Ambassador to ASEAN, as well as the establishment of the Canadian Mission to ASEAN in Jakarta to further enhance the engagement and cooperation of ASEAN-Canada Dialogue Relations. We believed that this will lead to more substantive cooperation between both sides.

### **ASEAN-CHINA**

96. We noted with satisfaction the commitment of ASEAN and China to further strengthening the strategic partnership and welcomed the progress of activities undertaken by both sides to enhance cooperation in a wide range of political-security, trade, investment, and socio-cultural areas to promote peace and stability, prosperity and mutual understanding in the region. We welcomed the commemoration of the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of ASEAN-China Dialogue Relations in the year 2016.

97. We appreciated China's commitment and constructive initiatives in support of ASEAN Connectivity goals, through diverse cooperation programmes, including enhancing practical cooperation and intensifying people-to-people contacts. We also noted China's One Belt One Road initiative that includes the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Maritime Silk Road project, which aims at creating greater regional prosperity.

98. We noted with satisfaction the progress made in the implementation of the ASEAN-China Air Transport Agreement and looked forward to continued engagement between ASEAN and China on aviation cooperation. We also noted the Joint Ministerial Statement of the 13<sup>th</sup> ASEAN-China Transport Ministers Meeting that looked forward to enhancing cooperation between ASEAN and China including eventually putting in place a liberal and substantial air services framework in support of the upgrading of the ASEAN-China Free Trade Agreement.

99. We also expressed a common desire to expedite the negotiation on upgrading the ASEAN-China Free Trade Area with an aim to achieve our target of USD 1 trillion on trade by 2020.

100. We noted with satisfaction the progress in the implementation of the 2011-2015 Plan of Action to implement the Joint Declaration on the ASEAN-China Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity. We noted the progress made in the negotiation of the Plan of Action (2016-2020) and looked forward



to its endorsement by the Foreign Ministers and adoption by the Leaders at the 18<sup>th</sup> ASEAN-China Summit in Kuala Lumpur in November 2015.

### **ASEAN-EU**

101. We noted with satisfaction the progress of the implementation of the Bandar Seri Begawan Plan of Action to Strengthen the ASEAN-EU Enhanced Partnership (2013-2017) that serves as a catalyst which contributes to further strengthening the ASEAN-EU Partnership as well as the fruitful outcomes of the Informal ASEAN-EU Leaders' Meeting held in Milan in 2014 for the first time since 2007, the meeting between H.E. Herman Van Rompuy, former President of the European Council and the Committee of Permanent Representatives to ASEAN (CPR) in November 2014, and the 23<sup>rd</sup> ASEAN-EU SOM in July 2015 in Brussels. We also welcomed the EU's continuous support for the ASEAN regional integration and Community building process, including enhancing ASEAN Connectivity.

102. We noted with satisfaction the progress achieved in ASEAN-EU Relations and the shared willingness to work towards a Strategic Partnership. We welcomed the interest of the EU in furthering engagement through all ASEAN-led processes.

103. We noted with appreciation the EU's commitments and efforts to further strengthen the ASEAN-EU Partnership and its continued support for the ASEAN regional integration and Community building process. In this regard, we encouraged the EU to increase engagement with and support ASEAN sub-regional cooperative mechanisms and initiatives, including sharing experience regarding sustainable water management between countries in Danube and Mekong regions.

104. We noted the convening of the 4<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Plus European Union Senior Officials Meeting on Transnational Crime (SOMTC + EU) Consultation on 11 June 2015 in Siem Reap, Cambodia. Both sides reaffirmed the commitments to intensify ASEAN-EU cooperation in the fight against terrorism and transnational organized crime.

105. We noted with satisfaction the progress made at the 2<sup>nd</sup> ASEAN-EU Aviation Working Group Meeting in Yangon in May 2015 and the large degree of compatibility between the principles and objectives of the aviation policies of ASEAN and the EU. We looked forward to a mandate from the EU for the European Commission to start negotiations with ASEAN on an ASEAN-EU Comprehensive Air Transport Agreement to strengthen air connectivity in support of tourism, trade and investment flows.

106. We looked forward to the 4<sup>th</sup> ASEAN-EU Business Summit that will be held on 23 August 2015 in Kuala Lumpur which is aimed at further strengthening and building opportunities for ASEAN and EU's business communities especially after the launching of the ASEAN Community 2015.

107. We noted the success of the 2<sup>nd</sup> ASEAN-EU High Level Dialogue on Maritime Security co-hosted by Malaysia and the EU, and welcomed the Philippines' offer to co-host the 3<sup>rd</sup> ASEAN-EU High Level Dialogue on Maritime Security in 2017.

108. We welcomed EU's commitment to appoint the first dedicated EU Ambassador to ASEAN, as well as the establishment of the EU Mission to ASEAN in Jakarta.

### **ASEAN-INDIA**

109. We noted with satisfaction the progress of the implementation of the ASEAN-India Plan of Action to implement the ASEAN-India Partnership for Peace, Progress and Shared Prosperity (2010-2015). We looked forward to the adoption of the Plan of Action to Implement the ASEAN-India Partnership

for Peace, Progress and Shared Prosperity (2016-2020) at the ASEAN PMC +1 Session with India to further enhance the ASEAN-India cooperation in the identified areas of mutual interests.

110. We appreciated the efforts made by India in deepening ASEAN-India cooperation and strengthening coordination through the appointment of its first dedicated Ambassador of India to ASEAN and the establishment of the Mission of India to ASEAN in Jakarta in April 2015.

111. We looked forward to the signing of Memorandum of Understanding on the Establishment of the ASEAN-India Centre. We believed the ASEAN-India Centre would serve as a good platform to promote cooperation in various areas and contribute to strengthening ASEAN-India Dialogue Relations. Therefore, we looked forward to the early operationalisation of the Centre. We looked forward towards the establishment of the ASEAN-India Trade and Investment Centre (AITIC) as a platform for ASEAN and India to strengthen the cooperation in trade and investment.

112. We looked forward to the convening of the 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the ASEAN-India Working Group on Regional Air Services Arrangements and the expeditious conclusion of an ASEAN-India Air Transport Agreement, which will enhance air connectivity between and beyond both sides to strengthen trade, investment, business and tourism flows.

113. We acknowledged India's commitment in sharing knowledge and experiences on information and technology, particularly in light of the establishment of Information and Technology Centres in CLMV countries. We encouraged India to gradually establish other Information and Technology Centres in all ASEAN Member States.

#### **ASEAN-JAPAN**

114. We noted with satisfaction the progress made in ASEAN-Japan relations in the past year, We looked forward to further strengthening the partnership across all areas through the effective implementation of the Vision Statement on ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation: Shared Vision, Shared Identity, Shared Future and its Implementation Plan.

115. We value Japan's support for ASEAN Community building efforts, especially through its contribution to the implementation of the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity, narrowing the development gap in ASEAN and enhancing ASEAN's capacity in disaster management, as well as its contributions through the Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF).

116. We noted with satisfaction the progress made at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the ASEAN-Japan Working Group on Regional Air Services Arrangement in Tagaytay, the Philippines in April 2015. We looked forward to the early conclusion of a more liberal and mutually beneficial ASEAN-Japan Air Services Agreement based on the principle of meaningful exchange of traffic rights over and above what has been exchanged bilaterally between Japan and each ASEAN Member State, to increase market access substantially.

117. We welcomed the adoption of The New Tokyo Strategy 2015 for Mekong-Japan Cooperation and Japan's efforts in narrowing development gap and promoting peace, prosperity in the Mekong region. We also welcome Japan's initiatives to promote cultural and art cooperation with ASEAN, especially people-to-people exchanges.

118. We acknowledged Japan's ongoing support for the implementation of the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Relief (AADMER) and collaboration with the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA Centre) to strengthen the cooperation in disaster management.

### **ASEAN-REPUBLIC OF KOREA**

119. We noted with satisfaction the progress in ASEAN-Republic of Korea (ROK) relations following the momentum set by the ASEAN-ROK Commemorative Summit, on the occasion of the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of ASEAN-ROK Dialogue Relations in December 2014. We are committed to implementing the decisions of the Leaders to further strengthen the partnership across the areas of political-security, economic and socio-cultural cooperation.

120. We noted with satisfaction the progress of implementation of the 2011-2015 Plan of Action to implement the Joint Declaration on the ASEAN-ROK Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity (2010-2015). We looked forward to the adoption of the Plan of Action for the next five years (2016-2020) at the ASEAN PMC +1 with ROK on 5 August 2015.

121. We noted the adoption of the Terms of Reference of the ASEAN-ROK Cooperation Fund (AKCF) by the ASEAN-ROK Joint Cooperation Committee which will enhance cooperative activities between ASEAN and the ROK in a more impactful and sustainable manner. We welcomed the ROK's commitment to support ASEAN Community building, especially in narrowing development gap and enhancing development cooperation through the ASEAN-ROK Cooperation Fund.

122. We welcomed the convening of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the ASEAN-ROK Working Group on Regional Air Services Arrangements to be held later in 2015/ 2016 to discuss the conclusion of an ASEAN-ROK Air Services Agreement. We reiterated the heightened expectations of the ASEAN Transport Ministers for the early conclusion of a more liberal and mutually beneficial air services agreement with the ROK to strengthen air connectivity in support of tourism, trade and investment flows.

123. We looked forward to the establishment of an ASEAN Culture House in Busan, as announced by the ROK last year, as well as to the observance of the ASEAN-ROK Cultural Exchange Year in 2017.

124. We took note the convening of the 19<sup>th</sup> ASEAN-ROK Dialogue on 28-29 May 2015 in Bali, Indonesia, which both sides agreed to further enhance the engagement and cooperation. We also supported the continued discussion on security related matters in a dedicated agenda within the framework of the ASEAN-ROK Dialogue.

125. We welcomed the progress of the ASEAN-ROK Business Council established during the ASEAN-ROK Commemorative Summit in 2014. We agreed to promote the development of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) by fully utilising the ASEAN-ROK Business Council.

126. We are pleased with the ASEAN-Korea Centre's contribution in promoting ASEAN-ROK relations, particularly in trade and investment, culture and tourism, as well as people-to-people contacts.

### **ASEAN-NEW ZEALAND**

127. We noted with satisfaction the progress of implementation of the Plan of Action to Implement the Joint Declaration for ASEAN-New Zealand Comprehensive Partnership (2010-2015) and the progress made in the negotiation of the new Plan of Action. We looked forward to adopting the Plan of Action (2016-2020) by the Commemorative Summit in Kuala Lumpur in November 2015.

128. We noted with appreciation the commemorative activities undertaken by New Zealand and ASEAN in conjunction with the convening of the Commemorative Summit to celebrate the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of ASEAN-New Zealand Dialogue Relations. We looked forward to the adoption of

the Joint Statement by the Leaders to chart the direction for a more substantive cooperation in the future.

129. We reaffirmed our commitment to enhance dialogue relations and recommended to elevate the ASEAN-New Zealand Comprehensive Partnership to Strategic Partnership. We looked forward to working closely with New Zealand to deepen our two-way cooperation and expand existing programmes, including the Flagship Initiatives to support the ASEAN Community Post-2015 Vision.

130. We welcomed the establishment of the New Zealand Mission to ASEAN in Jakarta as well as the appointment of a dedicated New Zealand Ambassador to ASEAN as an effort to further enhance the cooperation and in deepening the political, economic and socio-cultural relationship between ASEAN-New Zealand.

### **ASEAN-RUSSIA**

131. We welcomed the proposal to convene the ASEAN-Russia Commemorative Summit in 2016 in Russia, to mark the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the ASEAN-Russia Dialogue Relations. We agreed that the successful convening of the ASEAN-Russia Commemorative Summit would enhance the substantive cooperation between ASEAN and Russia in the years to come. We also welcomed the proposal to organize activities throughout 2016 to commemorate the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the ASEAN-Russia Dialogue Relations.

132. Recognising the significance of the ASEAN-Russia Dialogue Relations, we agreed to establish the ASEAN-Russia Eminent Persons Group (AREPG), which would look into ways of broadening and deepening of the ASEAN-Russia cooperation. We also looked forward to the adoption of the terms of reference of the AREPG and the nomination of candidates from both ASEAN and Russia to the Eminent Persons Group.

133. We also noted the progress of the implementation of the Comprehensive Programme of Action (CPA) to Promote Cooperation between ASEAN and the Russian Federation (2005-2015) and took note of the progress made in the negotiation of the Successor Document to the CPA (2005-2015). We look forward to adopting the Successor Document by the Commemorative Summit in 2016.

### **ASEAN-UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

134. We noted with satisfaction the progress of implementation of the Plan of Action to Implement the Joint Declaration for ASEAN-US Enhanced Partnership (2011-2015) and the progress made in the negotiation of the new Plan of Action. We look forward to adopting the Plan of Action (2016-2020) in time for the 27<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit and related Summits in Kuala Lumpur in November 2015.

135. We acknowledged the US' continued support for the ASEAN Community building efforts through various development cooperation programmes, including the ASEAN Connectivity through Trade and Investment project (ACTI) and the ASEAN-US Partnership for Good Governance, Equitable and Sustainable Development and Security (ASEAN-US PROGRESS).

136. We appreciated the US' continued support for ASEAN integration and ASEAN community building, especially in enhancing cooperation and capacity building to address regional security challenges, including maritime security, cyber security, climate change and disaster management, and transnational crime including international terrorism, trafficking in person, wildlife trafficking, as well as collaboration to support ASEAN in enhancing its economic competitiveness through development, education and training, women empowerment, entrepreneurship and Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and youth. We welcomed the US' initiative to enhance aviation relations

with ASEAN and looked forward to the development of an ASEAN-US Aviation Cooperation Framework covering comprehensive economic and technical components.

137. We reaffirmed our commitment to enhance dialogue relations and to elevate the ASEAN-US dialogue partnership to a strategic level in recognition of the role of the US in the region and the partnership's importance in sustaining Southeast Asia's rapid economic growth and maintaining peace and stability.

### **ASEAN PLUS THREE COOPERATION**

138. We reaffirmed our commitment to further strengthen ASEAN Plus Three cooperation framework to promote peace, security and prosperity in East Asia noting that this will contribute to the realisation of the ASEAN Community by the end of 2015 and deepen regional integration thereafter.

139. We acknowledged good progress made in the implementation of the ASEAN Plus Three Cooperation Work Plan (2013-2017) especially in the areas of finance, tourism and health cooperation.

140. We noted the ongoing work to follow-up on the recommendations of the East Asia Vision Group (EAVG) II and looked forward to the final report on the assessment and action plans for the selected recommendations to be submitted to the ASEAN Plus Three Summit in November this year.

141. We welcomed the convening of ASEAN Plus Three-related meetings this year and looked forward to their positive outcomes.

### **EAST ASIA SUMMIT**

142. We recognised the important contribution of the East Asia Summit to the maintenance and promotion of peace, security, stability and prosperity in the region. In this regard, we reaffirmed our commitment to further strengthen the EAS as a Leaders-led forum for dialogue and cooperation on broad strategic, political, security and economic issues of common interest and concern with ASEAN playing a central role and driving force based on the principles, objectives and modalities of the EAS as reflected in the 2005 Kuala Lumpur Declaration on the East Asia Summit, the 2010 Ha Noi Declaration on the Commemoration of the 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the East Asia Summit, and the 2011 Declaration of the East Asia Summit on the Principles for Mutually Beneficial Relations (Bali Principles).

143. Noting that 2015 marks the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the establishment of the East Asia Summit, we had an extensive discussion on its work processes and areas of cooperation with the aim of strengthening and consolidating the EAS based on the objectives, principles and modalities established by ASEAN, which is an important manifestation of ASEAN's Centrality in the evolving regional architecture. We encouraged greater engagement between the Committee of Permanent Representatives to ASEAN (CPR) and the EAS Missions in Jakarta.

144. We underscored the importance of maritime cooperation in order to effectively manage maritime-related issues in the region, including maritime security, maritime connectivity, freedom of navigation, search and rescue, marine environmental protection, fisheries, energy and food security. We welcomed Indonesia's proposal to deliberate on a standalone EAS Statement on Enhancing Regional Maritime Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific for consideration by the EAS Leaders at the 10<sup>th</sup> EAS in November 2015 in Malaysia.

## **APPLICATIONS FOR FORMAL PARTNERSHIP WITH ASEAN**

145. We are pleased to note the growing interest of external parties in pursuing formal partnerships with ASEAN. We agreed to consider the new and official applications in accordance with the guidelines for ASEAN's external relations and undertake the necessary ASEAN processes. In this regard, we reviewed and agreed to Norway's application and granted it Sectoral Dialogue Partner status.

## **ASEAN REGIONAL FORUM**

146. We reaffirmed the importance of the ARF as the primary forum for cooperation in political and security issues of common interest and concern in the Asia-Pacific region through dialogue and consultations. We reiterated the need to ensure that the ARF process continues to be relevant in light of the ongoing discussion on regional architecture, with ASEAN at its core. We underlined the need to make this forum more efficient and effective in providing meaningful contribution to address the increasingly complex regional non-traditional security challenges among others through increased synergy between the ARF and various ASEAN-led mechanisms. We welcomed the continued support of all ARF participating countries to ensure successful implementation of the Hanoi Plan of Action to Implement the ARF Vision Statement, as well as all other current work plans under the main priority areas to support ARF's confidence building efforts. We agreed to advance the ARF process towards the Preventive Diplomacy phase in parallel with the strengthening of confidence building measures through the implementation of concrete and practical activities, in line with the ARF Work Plan on Preventive Diplomacy.

147. We looked forward to the adoption of the draft ARF Work Plans on Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime, Maritime Security, Disaster Relief, and Security of and in the use of communications and technologies. We also looked forward to deepening the synergy and effective coordination within and among the ARF and other ASEAN-led mechanisms including the ADMM Plus to successfully implement the activities contained in the respective documents. We noted the convening of the 8<sup>th</sup> ARF Inter-session Meeting on Maritime Security in the Philippines in 2016.

## **REGIONAL SECURITY ARCHITECTURE**

148. We reiterated the importance of preserving ASEAN Centrality in the evolving regional architecture. In this context, we welcomed the convening of the 4<sup>th</sup> EAS Workshop and Dialogue on Regional Security Architecture in the Asia-Pacific Region which was held in Phnom Penh, Cambodia on 20-21 July 2015 as a follow-up to the three Workshops held in Brunei Darussalam, Russia and Indonesia. We looked forward to the continued deliberation on a common vision for regional security architecture in the Asia-Pacific that is ASEAN-led and ensures ASEAN Centrality based on ASEAN principles, norms, values and interests. To this end, we requested Indonesia to consolidate the various initiatives by China, India, Russia and Indonesia for further consideration, taking into account Cambodia's discussion paper, by the EAS SOM.

## **TIMOR-LESTE'S OFFICIAL APPLICATION FOR ASEAN MEMBERSHIP**

149. We were encouraged by the progress by the ASEAN Coordinating Council Working Group (ACCWG) in the consideration of all relevant aspects related to the application by Timor-Leste, as well as its possible implications on ASEAN, and agreed to explore the possibility of Timor-Leste's participation in ASEAN activities within the context of its need for capacity building.

## **REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ISSUES**

### **SOUTH CHINA SEA**

150. We discussed extensively the matters relating to the South China Sea and remained seriously concerned over recent and ongoing developments in the area. We took note of the serious concerns expressed by some Ministers on the land reclamations in the South China Sea, which have eroded trust and confidence, increased tensions and may undermine peace, security and stability in the South China Sea.

151. We reaffirmed the importance of maintaining peace, security, stability, and freedom of navigation in and over-flight above the South China Sea. We emphasized 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 (DOC) in its entirety: to build, maintain and enhance mutual trust and confidence; to exercise self-restraint in the conduct of activities that would complicate or escalate disputes; to not to resort to threat or use of force; and for the parties concerned to resolve their differences and disputes through peaceful means, in accordance with universally recognized principles of international law, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

152. We looked forward to the effective implementation of the agreed Early Harvest Measures to enhance mutual trust and confidence as well as to build a conducive environment for the maintenance of peace, security and stability in the region. We tasked our Senior Officials to continue working on this matter, and to further explore other initiatives, in pursuit of these objectives.

153. While noting the progress made in the consultations on the Code of Conduct in the South China Sea (COC), we reiterated the importance of expeditious establishment of an effective COC. To this end, we welcomed the recent outcome of the 9<sup>th</sup> ASEAN-China SOM on the Implementation of the DOC whereby they agreed to proceed to the next stage of consultations and negotiate the framework, structure, elements as well as to address crucial, difficult and complicated issues relating to the proposed COC. We, therefore, tasked our Senior Officials to follow up and work closely with China on this matter.

154. Pursuant to the full and effective implementation of the DOC in its entirety, and while the work towards the expeditious establishment of the COC are undertaken, we agreed that preventive measures should be undertaken to address developments in the South China Sea, with the objective, among others, to enhance trust and confidence amongst parties.

155. We took note of Indonesia's proposal to establish a hotline of communications at the high level in the government between ASEAN and China to address emergency situations on the ground that need immediate intervention, which aim to immediately reduce tensions on the ground.

156. We discussed extensively the matters related to the progress of the COC. The Philippines briefed the Meeting on further developments including matters particularly relating to the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

### **SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST**

157. 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 Palestine and Israel live side-by-side in peace. We 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.

### **COUNTERING EXTREMISM AND RADICALISATION**

158. We continued to condemn and deplore the violence and brutality committed by extremist organisations and radical groups in Iraq and Syria, whose impact increasingly poses a threat to all regions of the world. In this regard, we denounced all unlawful acts of destruction, violence and terror in all its forms and manifestations and reiterated our commitment of combating terrorism, including our support for UNSC Resolutions 2170 (2014), and 2178 (2014) which called on the international community to suppress the flow of foreign terrorist fighters.

159. We also reaffirmed our commitment to the full implementation of the ASEAN Convention on Counter Terrorism, the ASEAN Comprehensive Plan of Action on Counter Terrorism, and the relevant provisions of international law and the UN Charter. We will work with the international community in its fight against terrorism, extremism and radicalism and to address its root causes, including through the promotion of the Global Movement of Moderates.

160. We called for the promotion of religious tolerance and mutual understanding as well as fostering of interfaith dialogue so that adherents of various faiths can build harmonious and mutually beneficial cooperative relationships to address the negative repercussion directed towards moderates as a result of violent extremism.

### **DEVELOPMENTS ON THE KOREAN PENINSULA**

161. We expressed concern over recent developments in the Korean Peninsula including the recent ballistic missile launches and underlined the importance of maintaining peace, stability and security in the region. We highlighted the importance of trust-building activities on the Peninsula and we encouraged the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to fully comply with all relevant United Nations Security Council Resolutions and commitments under the 19 September 2005 Joint Statement of the Six-Party Talks. We called for the creation of necessary conditions for the early resumption of Six-Party Talks and the continuous inter-Korean dialogue, which would pave the way for the complete and verifiable de-nuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula in a peaceful manner and Korean reunification.

### **IRAN NUCLEAR ISSUE**

162. We welcomed the efforts by the parties concerned in reaching a comprehensive nuclear agreement between the Islamic Republic of Iran and E3/EU +3 (China, France, Germany, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States and the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy) on 14 July 2015 and the UN Resolution 2231 endorsing the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) regarding Iran's nuclear programme on 20 July 2015. In this regard, we called for full compliance of the agreement and resolution in order to contribute to peace, security and stability in the region and the world as whole.

### **THE US-CUBA RELATIONS**

163. We welcomed the normalisation of the diplomatic relations between the US and Cuba and the re-opening of diplomatic missions in their respective countries on 20 July 2015. We believe that this positive move would be mutually beneficial to the people of both countries as well as contribute to peace, security and stability and enhance cooperation in the region. We called for the timely lifting of all sanctions and embargoes imposed on Cuba.



### **GROUP OF TWENTY (G20)**

164. We welcomed the continuous engagement between G20 and ASEAN through the participation of the ASEAN Chair in the G20 processes including the G20 Leaders' Summit. We were pleased that this engagement provides us with the opportunity to work with the G20 in addressing pertinent global and regional issues. In this regard, we looked forward to the G20 Leaders' Summit hosted by Turkey in Antalya in November 2015.

### **49<sup>TH</sup> ASEAN FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETING**

165. We looked forward to the convening of the 49<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Foreign Ministers Meeting, Post Ministerial Conference, 17<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Plus Three Foreign Ministers Meeting, 6<sup>th</sup> East Asia Summit Foreign Ministers Meeting and 23<sup>rd</sup> ASEAN Regional Forum to be held in Lao PDR in 2016.