

2016 ASEAN-AUSTRALIA JOINT DECLARATION FOR COOPERATION TO COMBAT INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM

Adopted in Vientiane, Lao PDR on 7 September 2016

The Governments of Brunei Darussalam, the Kingdom of Cambodia, the Republic of Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, the Republic of the Philippines, the Republic of Singapore, the Kingdom of Thailand, the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), and the Government of Australia (hereinafter referred to collectively as "the participants");

Unequivocally condemning in the strongest terms recent terrorist attacks around the world resulting in the unacceptable loss of innocent lives and countless injuries, and extending their condolences and sympathy to the victims, their families and the people of affected countries;

Reaffirming that terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, committed by whomever, wherever and for whatever purposes, constitutes a serious threat to international peace and security and that any acts of terrorism are criminal and unjustifiable;

Recognising that the growing threat from terrorism and violent extremism poses an unacceptable risk to their communities and to regional stability, security and prosperity, and contravenes the laws, religious beliefs and fundamental values of all countries concerned;

Noting that terrorism has multiple dimensions, manifestations and causes and respects no national boundaries, reinforcing the importance of strengthening bilateral, regional and international cooperation to combat this threat;

Expressing grave concern over the acute and growing threat posed by foreign terrorist fighters and the need to develop effective measures to counter that threat, including through more timely sharing of information and intelligence and stronger border controls;

Recalling the 2001 ASEAN Declaration on Joint Action to Counter Terrorism, the 2004 ASEAN-Australia Joint Declaration for Cooperation to Combat International Terrorism, the 2007 ASEAN Convention on Counter Terrorism, the ASEAN Comprehensive Plan of Action on Counter Terrorism, and the Plan of Action to Implement the ASEAN-Australia Strategic Partnership (2015-2019), which serve as valuable frameworks for regional efforts to combat terrorism and deepen counter-terrorism cooperation;

Reaffirming their determination to prevent, suppress and eliminate international terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and international law and having regard to all relevant United Nations resolutions and declarations on international terrorism, including the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy;

Recognising the principles of sovereign equality, territorial integrity and non-interference in the internal affairs of other States;

Rejecting any attempt to associate terrorism with any religion, race or nationality;

Reiterating the need to combat terrorism in a comprehensive manner, including by identifying and addressing the underlying factors and conditions that contribute to the growth and spread of violent extremism and radicalisation;

Noting the 2015 East Asia Summit Statement on Countering Violent Extremism which recognised that responding to the threat of terrorist groups exploiting the internet and social media platforms to recruit and radicalise vulnerable individuals requires international cooperation as well as action by all tiers of government, civil society and the private sector;

Reaffirming their continuing commitment to strengthening regional cooperation and collaboration in the fight against terrorism through the East Asia Summit, ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), Asia-Pacific Group on Money Laundering (APG), ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus), Senior Officials Meeting on Transnational Crime (SOMTC) and various other regional fora;

Encouraged by the strong existing co-operation between ASEAN Member States and Australia on security, intelligence, law enforcement and other matters, and reaffirming their collective resolve to deepen and expand this cooperation to fight international terrorism to advance their shared interest in promoting stability and security in the region;

Declare as follows:

OBJECTIVE

1. This Declaration provides a framework for regional cooperation to prevent, disrupt and suppress international terrorism and violent extremism and to strengthen cooperation between the participants and their agencies in support of this objective.

SCOPE AND AREAS OF COOPERATION

2. The participants reaffirm their commitment to implementing the principles and objectives of this Declaration in conformity with their obligations under international law and in accordance with their respective domestic laws and specific circumstances.
3. The participants undertake to strengthen cooperation to counter the threat from terrorism and violent extremism through the following actions, as appropriate:
 - i. Enhancing cooperation, liaison, dialogue and the exchange of information among their intelligence, law enforcement, security, border management, defence and other relevant agencies to strengthen counter-terrorism regimes and develop practical and effective responses to the terrorist threat.
 - ii. Encouraging stronger cooperative and consultative arrangements between national counter-terrorism agencies to engender a more coordinated approach to responding to the threat.
 - iii. Adopting measures such as the sharing of information and best practices and public outreach to counter violent extremist ideology and propaganda, including the use of the internet and social media platforms for terrorism-related purposes.
 - iv. Sharing views and best practices on rehabilitative programs including, where appropriate, social reintegration of foreign terrorist fighter returnees and people involved in the commission of terrorism-related offences.

- v. Encouraging closer dialogue with civil society, academic and other institutions to foster greater understanding and support aimed at suppressing terrorism and violent extremism, including by continuing to promote tolerance, interfaith dialogue, gender equality and the empowerment of women and young people.
- vi. Improving intelligence and information-sharing on terrorist financing and crime related to money laundering, and strengthening regulatory and administrative counter-terrorism financing regimes, to detect and disrupt those seeking to use the global financial system to fund terrorism.
- vii. Supporting capacity-building and broader efforts to strengthen national counterterrorism capabilities through technical cooperation, meetings of officials and experts, training and education, conferences, workshops and joint exercises, the development of capacity-building programs and sharing best practices.
- viii. Enhancing cooperation to strengthen counter-terrorism laws and legal frameworks and capacity within the law enforcement, judicial and prisons sectors, including through entities such as the Jakarta Centre for Law Enforcement Cooperation and the Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism.
- ix. Providing assistance and bolstering cross-border cooperation in the areas of transport security and border management, including document and identity fraud, to help identify terrorist suspects and their supporters and to disrupt and deter the flow of foreign terrorist fighters as well as terrorism-related funds and materials.
- x. Strengthening capabilities and readiness to deal with chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) terrorism, cyber terrorism and any new forms of terrorism that emerge.
- xi. Enhancing collaboration in regional and international fora and implementing the measures contained in the ARF Cooperation Framework on Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime and counter-terrorism related commitments agreed in other regional and multilateral fora, including the United Nations.
- xii. Adhering to relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions and declarations on international terrorism, particularly resolutions 1267, 1269, 1373, 1390, 1455, 1456, 1989, 2170, 2178, 2195, 2199, 2253, and other UN resolutions and declarations on international terrorism.
- xiii. Exploring on a mutual basis additional areas of practical cooperation to further strengthen the region's response to emerging threats from terrorism and violent extremism.

IMPLEMENTATION

- 4. The participants are encouraged to become parties to all 19 of the United Nations conventions and protocols relating to terrorism.
- 5. The participants are each called upon to make full use of existing cooperation arrangements or, if necessary, establish new mechanisms, to strengthen cooperation and collaboration among agencies involved in tackling terrorism and violent extremism to give effect to the objectives of this Declaration.