

1996 JOINT PRESS STATEMENT FOR THE 14TH ASEAN MINISTERS ON ENERGY MEETING

Issued in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on 1 July 1996

1. The Fourteenth ASEAN Ministers on Energy Meeting (AMEM) was held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on 1 July 1996. The Meeting chaired by H.E. Datuk Leo Moggie, Minister of Energy, Telecommunications and Posts of Malaysia was preceded by ASEAN Senior Officials' Meeting on Energy (SOME) which was held from 27-28 June 1996.
2. The Meeting was attended by H.E. Pengiran Indera Wijaya Pengiran Dr. Haji Ismail Pengiran Haji Damit, Minister of Development of Brunei Darussalam; H.E. Mr. I.B. Sudjana, Minister of Mines and Energy of the Republic of Indonesia; H.E. Datuk Leo Moggie, Minister of Energy, Telecommunications and Posts of Malaysia; H.E. Dr. Francisco L. Viray, Secretary of Energy of the Republic of the Philippines; H.E. Mr. Goh Chee Wee, Minister of State for Trade and Industry of the Republic of Singapore; H.E. Dr. Prathes Sutabutr, Director General of the Department of Energy Development and Promotion on behalf of the Minister of Science and Technology and Environment of Thailand; H.E. Mr. Nguyen Duc Phan, Vice-Minister of Industry on behalf of the Minister of Industry of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, and their respective delegations. H.E. Dato' Ajit Singh, Secretary-General of ASEAN and his delegation were also in attendance.
3. The Ministers discussed various matters concerning developments on ASEAN energy cooperation. The main agenda items of the Meeting included, among others, review of the status of the implementation of energy cooperation projects under the ASEAN Medium-Term Programme of Action on Energy Cooperation (1995-1999) as well as projects funded by Dialogue Partners, the Long Term Financing of AEEMTRC Beyond Phase II, the draft Protocol Amending the Agreement on ASEAN Energy Cooperation and a proposal to establish an ASEAN Business Forum for energy cooperation.
4. The Ministers noted with satisfaction the Report of the Chairman of the Forum of the Heads of ASEAN Power Utilities/Authorities (HAPUA) and endorsed the focussed Programme of Action of the Forum, in particular the continuation of the ten cooperation projects in the electricity sub-sector.
5. The Ministers were briefed by the Minister of Mines and Energy of Indonesia on the developments in OPEC. The briefing underlined the major challenge faced by OPEC today in ensuring the stabilization of oil prices. The Ministers were informed of a new market situation, in which the increase in world oil demand in 1995 and 1996 would be met wholly by non-OPEC production. A rise in non-OPEC production can be expected to last long. As a residual supplier, OPEC's role has been made increasingly untenable. In this context, OPEC will obviously need cooperation from the non-OPEC producers and other players in the oil market in the strategic issue of maintaining the future price path.
6. The Ministers noted that ASCOPE continued to progress and intensify the implementation of cooperation projects in the field of petroleum and natural gas in ASEAN. The Ministers also noted that since November 1995 Petro-Vietnam had participated in several ASCOPE activities as an Observer. In this regard the Ministers look forward to Vietnam becoming a full-fledged member of ASCOPE towards the end of this year. The Ministers noted with satisfaction that the aims and purposes of ASCOPE as the institution for human resources development and dissemination of the state of the art petroleum technologies in the Region had been given added value with the implementation of an extensive 1995/96 programme, which put high priority on the protection of the environment. The Ministers noted that the Sixth ASCOPE Conference and Exhibition will be held in

Jakarta, Indonesia in 1997 with the theme ASCOPE – Challenges and Opportunities in the Twenty-First Century.

7. The Ministers expressed their appreciation on the work and achievements of the Senior Officials on Energy during 1995-1996 in bringing progress to and in strengthening the foundations of ASEAN Energy Cooperation. The Ministers adopted the following recommendations proposed by SOME:
 - a. Transformation of the ASEAN-EC Energy Management Training and Research Centre (AEEMTRC) into an ASEAN energy centre and the Senior Officials to convene soon a Special Meeting to assess requirements and decide on the details of the modalities for funding of the proposed centre;
 - b. Signing of the Protocol for the Amendment of the ASEAN Energy Cooperation Agreement 1986, which would allow new members to participate in the work of the AMEM and SOME;
 - c. Updating the 1985 Study on the ASEAN Coal Analysis Study and to source the funding for its implementation;
 - d. Adoption of the 1997/98 Work Plans of respectively, the Coal Sub-Sector Network (CSN) and the New and Renewable Sources of Energy (NRSE) Sub-Sector Network (NRSESN) of the ASEAN Energy Cooperation;
 - e. Request Malaysia to lead a task force to prepare the Terms of Reference and modalities of the proposed Business Forum for ASEAN Energy Cooperation as a mechanism to facilitate private sector involvement in ASEAN energy development.
8. The Ministers noted the completion of the Study on the Masterplan on Natural Gas Development and Utilisation in the ASEAN Region, which was in line with the stipulation in the Bangkok Summit Declaration of 1995 pertaining to energy. The Ministers agreed that Member Countries study the findings of the Masterplan and its implications for their respective national plans. The Ministers also agreed that the private sector be encouraged to participate in the linking of the proposed Trans-ASEAN Gas Pipe System which has been found to be feasible.
9. The Ministers were briefed on the proposal on the participation of ASEAN+3 in the development of energy related projects in the Mekong River Basin. The Ministers requested Malaysia to coordinate the submission of ASEAN energy sectors' views pertaining to the development of energy related projects in the Mekong River Basin. The Ministers also took note that two ASEAN Member Countries are parties to the Mekong River Commission (MRC), which coordinates development activities in the Lower Mekong River Basin.
10. The Ministers agreed to endorse the Protocol Amending the ASEAN Energy Cooperation for signature of the ASEAN Foreign Ministers in July 1996.
11. The Ministers agreed to convene the Fifteenth AMEM in the Philippines in 1997. The date of the Meeting would be decided upon consultations with Member Countries.
12. The Meeting was held in the traditional spirit of ASEAN solidarity and cordiality.