

2018 JOINT COMMUNIQUE OF THE TENTH ASEAN LAW MINISTERS MEETING

Adopted in Vientiane, Lao PDR on 12 October 2018

1. The Tenth ASEAN Law Ministers Meeting (ALAWMM) was held on 12 October 2018 in Vientiane, Lao PDR.

2. The Ministers expressed appreciation to H.E. Dr. Bounthong Chitmany, Deputy Prime Minister of Lao PDR for officiating the Meeting and delivering his Opening Remarks. In his remarks, H.E. Dr. Bounthong Chitmany highlighted that as a member of ASEAN Community, Lao PDR is committed itself to cooperate with ASEAN Member States and continue to improve its domestic legal framework towards the regional and international integration and fulfillment of ASEAN Community Vision 2025. For recent development, Lao PDR has adopted Penal Code in 2017 and we also look forward to adopting our first Civil Code in 2019. As regards the Insolvency Law, Law on Arbitration, Law on the Judgment Enforcement and other laws, they are also in the process of revision in line with process of ASEAN Integration.

3. The Meeting was chaired by H.E. Mr. Saisy Santivong, Minister of Justice, Ministry of Justice, Lao People's Democratic Republic, and attended by H.E. Mrs. Zuraini Sharbawi, Solicitor-General, Attorney General's Chambers of Brunei Darussalam; H.E. Mr. Ang Vong Vathana, Minister of Justice, Ministry of Justice, Kingdom of Cambodia; H.E. Mr. Yasonna H. Laoly, Minister of Law and Human Rights, the Republic of Indonesia; H.E. Datuk Liew Vui Keong, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Law), Prime Minister's Department, Malaysia; H.E. Mr. Win Myint, Deputy Attorney General, Union Attorney General's Office, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar; H.E. Mr. Markk Llaneta Perete, Undersecretary, Department of Justice, the Republic of the Philippines; H.E. Mr. Lionel Yee Woon Chin, Deputy Attorney-General, Attorney-General's Chambers, the Republic of Singapore; H.E. ACM Prajin Juntong, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Justice, Ministry of Justice, the Kingdom of Thailand; H.E. Mr. Le Thanh Long, Minister of Justice, Ministry of Justice of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam; and H.E. Dr. AKP Mochtan, Deputy Secretary-General of ASEAN.

4. The Ministers expressed heartfelt condolences and sympathy to the victims and their families for the loss of lives and properties caused by the recent earthquake and tsunami in Sulawesi, Indonesia, typhoon Mangkhut in the Philippines, and the collapse of the Saddle dam in Attapeu Province in the Lao PDR, and natural disasters in other parts of ASEAN Member States.

5. The Ministers, while taking note of various developments in ASEAN, in particular the on-going efforts to realise the ASEAN Community 2025, reviewed its work progress since the 9th Meeting of ALAWMM which was held on 22 October 2015 in Bali, Indonesia. The Ministers noted with satisfaction the progress of the implementation of various ALAWMM's cooperation activities and initiatives, including proposals that are being considered or developed to strengthen law and legal cooperation in ASEAN, as well as to support a rules-based ASEAN.

6. The Ministers commended the work of the ASEAN Senior Law Officials' Meeting (ASLOM) and its Working Group on the Model ASEAN Extradition Treaty in finalising the text of the Model ASEAN Extradition Treaty.

7. The Ministers endorsed the Model ASEAN Extradition Treaty and gave the mandate to ASLOM to commence work on the ASEAN Extradition Treaty as a next step to strengthen ASEAN's resilience and capacity to combat transnational crimes, and enhance cooperation within ASEAN to ensure respect for the rule of law. In this connection, the Ministers tasked ASLOM to report its progress to ALAWMM at its next Meeting.

8. The Ministers further welcomed the decision of the 8th Senior Officials' Meeting on the Treaty on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters (MLAT) in April 2018 in Ha Noi, Viet Nam to elevate the MLAT to an ASEAN Treaty, and looked forward to the endorsement of the decision by the ASEAN Ministers/Attorneys General Meeting of the Central Authorities on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters.

9. The Ministers took note of the update on cooperation among the Judiciaries of the ASEAN Member States, in particular the establishment of the Council of ASEAN Chief Justices (CACJ) which provides a suitable cooperation mechanism among the Judiciaries of ASEAN Member States. Alongside the cooperation framework of the Executive and Legislatures within the ASEAN institutions, this will ensure the comprehensiveness in cooperation among ASEAN Member States in the realisation of the ASEAN Community. The Ministers also noted the interest of the CACJ Secretariat to develop a dialogue with the ASEAN Secretariat in exploring how the CACJ could fit into ASEAN's structure.

10. The Ministers were encouraged with ASEAN's achievements in the implementation of the ASEAN integration and community-building agenda, in particular the blueprints of the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and noted various challenges of cross-cutting issues that require to be addressed through effective and efficient cross-pillar and cross-sectoral coordination. To this end, the Ministers recalled their readiness to support the realisation of the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and agreed for ASLOM to develop appropriate avenues to closely coordinate and work with other ASEAN sectoral bodies and entities associated with ASEAN to support ASEAN common goals and objectives.

11. The Ministers noted that a number of ASEAN Dialogue Partners and External Parties have indicated their keen interest to work with ALAWMM to explore possible cooperation on issues of common concern and interest and agreed to engage with those Dialogue Partners and External Parties with an appropriate mechanism and criteria to be developed by ASLOM.

12. The Ministers, while taking note of the intensification of ASEAN Community building process and the importance of efficient and effective use of resources, noted a possibility of reviewing the frequency of ASLOM and ALAWMM Meetings.

13. The Ministers reviewed the work of ASLOM and endorsed the reports of the 17th ASLOM held on 15-16 May 2017 in Putrajaya, Malaysia, and the 18th ASLOM held on 9-10 October 2018 in Vientiane, Lao PDR.

14. The Ministers thanked Myanmar for offering to host the 19th ASLOM in 2020 and Malaysia for offering to host the 20th ASLOM and 11th ALAWMM in 2021.