

2020 JOINT STATEMENT OF ASEAN YOUTH MINISTERS ON ENHANCING YOUTH COOPERATION FOR A COHESIVE AND RESPONSIVE ASEAN COMMUNITY

Adopted on 5 November 2020

WE, the Youth Ministers of ASEAN, namely, 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 and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, gathered virtually on the 3rd November 2020 for the ASEAN Youth Leaders' Conference on the occasion of the 37th ASEAN Summit.

Welcoming the commitment of ASEAN Leaders in the ASEAN Declaration on Human Resources Development for the Changing World of Work, among others, to cultivate lifelong learning culture in societies and raise awareness of youth, workers and employers on the importance of investing in skills development to adapt to the changing world of work, including education and training;

Recognising the commitment of ASEAN Leaders to involve the youth from across the ASEAN Member States in ASEAN Community building, and the efforts ASEAN Leaders have put into the development of ASEAN youth in recent years, including the adoption of ASEAN Youth Development Index;

Recalling the Joint Statement of the Eleventh ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Youth adopted in Vientiane, Lao PDR on 19 July 2019 that acknowledges the need to reorient ASEAN's Post-2020 strategies towards fostering future ready ASEAN youth through digital skills development and the institutionalisation of youth engagement mechanisms, particularly in the region's policy discourse;

Reiterating the ASEAN Youth Statement 2020, with particular focus on building a strong network of youth through active and responsible participation to maximise the effectiveness of volunteerism, entrepreneurship and other activities that relate to essential skills, perspectives and values to enable them to meaningfully contribute to society;

Cognisant of the accelerated digital transformation created by the COVID-19 pandemic and how ASEAN youth can play an important role in our journey towards recovery and embracing the new normal together, taking into consideration also that stability of global value chains are also important facets of society in the new normal, and should be tackled by and with the ASEAN youth; and

Mindful of the existing development gaps and challenges faced by students, young professionals and young entrepreneurs from across ASEAN Member States, including digital divides and lack of access to funding among others as reported by the World Economic Forum 2020 ASEAN Youth Survey on COVID-19 – *The True Test of ASEAN Youth's Resilience and Adaptability*.

TOGETHER, WE DECLARE OUR COMMITMENT to enhance ASEAN Youth cooperation and to foster a future-ready ASEAN Youth generation, which are among the purposes of the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 with the three ASEAN Blueprints and the Sustainable Development Goals to ensure the realisation of a people-oriented and people-centered ASEAN where all ASEAN youths are able to reach the fullest of their potentials, through the following:

1. Work hand in hand with the ASEAN Youth to overcome the difficulties and challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, and in the meantime, unleash the opportunities created by **the new normal** so the youth may continue to contribute in developing each nation and ASEAN as a whole, and to continue enhancing the cooperative spirit in the region.
2. Increase the **multilateral and bilateral dialogues, meetings, forums** among ASEAN youth agencies and organisations **at all levels**, in order to deepen the mutual understanding, build friendship bridges, and foster mutual cooperation among ASEAN youths.
3. Effectively implement the **ASEAN Work Plan on Youth 2021-2025**, which focuses on (1) Education, (2) Health and Well-being, (3) Employment and Opportunity, (4) Participation and Engagement, (5) ASEAN Awareness, Values and Identity; and other documents related to the ASEAN youth in order to build a community of politically cohesive, economically integrated, socially responsible, sustainability conscious and a truly people-oriented, people-centred and rules-based ASEAN.
4. Commit to focus on the following matters for youth development:
 - To nurture the potential of ASEAN youth through Youth Volunteerism specifically, through the **ASEAN Volunteers Project** and to make the **ASEAN Volunteer Forum and the ASEAN Volunteer Award** be a periodical event for ASEAN youth volunteers;
 - To nurture creativity and innovative mindsets among ASEAN youth through **Youth Entrepreneurship**;
 - To ensure inclusivity and sustainability in skills development among ASEAN Youth in preparation for the **Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR)**, which will create a generation of future-ready ASEAN youth who are equipped to create opportunities for themselves and for their fellow youth; and
 - To empower ASEAN Youth with an understanding of **a range of sustainable development issues**, including climate change and environmental sustainability.

WE PLEDGE to strengthen our networks and to actively and responsibly work towards maximising the above commitments as they will significantly contribute towards the sustainable development of every ASEAN Member State and the whole ASEAN region;

WE CONCUR that all youth development strategies should be geared towards instilling the necessary technical and 21st century skills to meet the demands of the future of work;

WE URGE the ASEAN Leaders to collectively support our efforts and the work of the ASEAN Ministers on Youth for youth development;

WE ENCOURAGE relevant ASEAN Sectoral Bodies in the three ASEAN Pillars to promote the implementation of this Joint Statement to create a cohesive and responsive ASEAN Community; and

WE LOOK FORWARD to the ASEAN Youth Development Index Phase II and the ASEAN Work Plan on Youth 2021-2025 as a holistic approach to prepare ASEAN youth for the challenges brought about by the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) in the post-pandemic era through transformative approaches in human resources development.

ADOPTED on the Fifth Day of November in the Year Two Thousand and Twenty, in a single original copy, in the English language.