

2021 CO-CHAIRS' STATEMENT ON THE SPECIAL ASEAN-CHINA FOREIGN MINISTERS' MEETING IN CELEBRATION OF THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DIALOGUE RELATIONS

Adopted in Chongqing, People's Republic of China on 7 June 2021

The Special ASEAN-China Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Celebration of the 30th Anniversary of the Dialogue Relations was held in Chongqing, People's Republic of China on 7 June 2021. H.E. Teodoro L. Locsin, Jr., Secretary of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Philippines, and H.E. Wang Yi, State Councilor and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, co-chaired the meeting.

We recalled the milestones and achievements of ASEAN-China Dialogue Relations over the course of three decades. We reaffirmed our commitment to further enhance and strengthen our wide-ranging and robust cooperation towards our mutual advancement and prosperity. This year's theme of Sustainable Development Cooperation is apt and fortuitous.

With the mutual support and assistance extended by ASEAN and China, together with the significant regional and national measures undertaken, we have mitigated the deleterious impacts of the pandemic. ASEAN greatly appreciates China's provision of vaccines, medical supplies and technical assistance to ASEAN and its Member States. In grappling with the challenges of the pandemic, we saw the wisdom of close collaboration on pandemic control and socio-economic recovery.

We reaffirmed that the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) is a milestone document that embodies the collective commitment to promote peace, stability, mutual trust and confidence in the region, in accordance with international law, including 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

We highlighted the maintained momentum of the negotiations on the Code of Conduct in the South China Sea (COC) through its step-by-step resumption, undertaken by several virtual meetings of our officials despite the challenges of the pandemic.

Taking stock of the extensive measures and efforts by ASEAN and China in addressing the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as in maintaining regional peace and stability, the Meeting discussed taking the following steps:

1. Advance ASEAN-China Strategic Partnership to new heights by forging closer cooperation;
2. Reaffirm the commitment to multilateralism founded on the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and based on international law, maintain an open and inclusive regional cooperation framework, support ASEAN Centrality in the evolving regional architecture, uphold multilateralism and jointly respond to regional and global challenges;
3. Enhance ASEAN-China public health cooperation, strengthen regional and global supply chains for medical supplies and equipment, capacity building, and information and policy exchanges;
4. Further expand vaccine cooperation and promote equitable access to and accelerate production and distribution of safe, effective, quality and affordable vaccines for all;
5. Promote comprehensive, balanced and sustainable recovery as well as resilient post-COVID-19 economic and social development, including through the support for the COVID-19 ASEAN Response Fund and ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework;

6. Strengthen exchanges and cooperation in areas such as climate change, environmental protection, biodiversity and resource conservation, marine debris, poverty alleviation and elimination, disaster prevention and mitigation, marine ecosystem conservation, and sustainable use of the ocean, seas and marine resources; and encourage partnership on blue economy;
7. Strengthen exchanges in the fields of culture, education, tourism, media, women and youth affairs, including through programs such as the ASEAN-China Young Leaders Scholarship Program;
8. Implement the ASEAN-China Joint Statement on Synergising the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity (MPAC) 2025 and the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), discuss the development and financing of ASEAN infrastructure projects, and work to enhance linkages in the region to enhance conducive business environment and to fuel sustainable and inclusive economic growth;
9. Promote the early entry into force of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Agreement as an important platform to further enhance economic cooperation and foster greater integration of regional and industrial supply chains to bolster recovery;
10. Support ASEAN's economic integration efforts, particularly in meeting the challenges of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) through enhanced partnership as close regional partners;
11. Explore possible cooperation on circular economy and study further other sustainable economic models as inspired by regional and national action plans such as the Bio-Circular-Green Economy and the Belt and Road Ecological and Environment Cooperation Plan;
12. Reaffirm our continued commitment to fully and effectively implement the 2002 Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea in its entirety, including strengthening practical maritime cooperation to build mutual trust and confidence, and emphasize the need to maintain and promote an environment conducive to the COC negotiations;
13. Enhance and promote maritime security, uphold the freedom of navigation in and overflight above the South China Sea, exercise self-restraint in the conduct of activities that would complicate or escalate disputes and affect peace and stability, and pursue the peaceful resolution of disputes, in accordance with universally recognised principles of international law, including the 1982 UNCLOS; and,
14. Strive to expedite the resumption of the textual negotiations of the COC through virtual platforms, with the understanding that physical meetings would remain the primary modality, towards the early conclusion of an effective and substantive COC that is in accordance with international law, including the 1982 UNCLOS.