

# 2021 BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN JOINT DECLARATION OF THE 39TH ASEAN MINISTERS ON ENERGY MEETING ON ENERGY SECURITY AND ENERGY TRANSITION

*Adopted on 15 September 2021*

The Thirty-Ninth ASEAN Ministers on Energy Meeting (hereinafter referred to as “AMEM”) was convened on 15 September 2021, via videoconference.

**ACKNOWLEDGING** the unprecedented impacts of the Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic on the global economy, including the energy sector, as well as the adverse effects the pandemic has had on the well-being and livelihood of the people;

**RECALLING** the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework (ACRF) and its Implementation Plan, adopted by the ASEAN Leaders at the 37th ASEAN Summit via videoconference on 12 November 2020, by which, under the Broad Strategy 5: Advancing Towards a More Sustainable and Resilient Future highlights the importance of sustainable energy and seizing the opportunities for ASEAN to promote green growth and boost the economy;

**UNDERSCORING** the importance of a resilient energy system that can contribute to all elements of energy security, including diversification of energy sources, security of supply, and regional energy connectivity, through enabling adaptation to changing conditions and recovery, restoration and rehabilitation from disruptions and emergencies;

**INSPIRED** by and united under One Vision, One Identity and One Community, and Brunei Darussalam’s ASEAN Chairmanship 2021 theme: “We Care, We Prepare, We Prosper”, with a view to care for the people and each other’s well-being, prepare for future opportunities and challenges, and prosper together as a unified region, in pursuing the goal of energy security to maintain and protect energy services against disruptions that drive energy transition in ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all;

**GUIDED** by the purposes and principles in the ASEAN Charter, the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and the ASEAN Economic Community Blueprint 2025 to promote sustainable energy security and energy transition in an inclusive and just manner to foster economic growth and sustainable development for the benefit of present and future generations, and to place the well-being, livelihood and welfare of the peoples at the center of the ASEAN Community building process;

**RECALLING ALSO** the historic inauguration of the ASEAN Economic Ministers Meeting on Energy Cooperation (AEMMEC), a precursor to the AMEM, in Bali, Indonesia on 29 – 30 September 1980 as a significant milestone for the evolution and consolidation of ASEAN energy cooperation in contributing towards the advancement of ASEAN Community building, particularly the ASEAN Economic Community;

**ENCOURAGED** by the substantial achievements of the AMEM in the last four decades in forging regional economic cooperation and integration, with a view to enhance connectivity, and increase competitiveness and productivity that are vital to the effective operationalisation of the economic community;

**RECALLING FURTHER** the ASEAN Plan of Action for Energy Cooperation (APAEC) Phase II: 2021 – 2025, endorsed at the 38th ASEAN Ministers on Energy Meeting via videoconference on 19 November 2020, with the theme: “Enhancing Energy Connectivity and Market Integration in ASEAN to Achieve Energy Security, Accessibility, Affordability and Sustainability for All”, and the sub-theme: “Accelerating Energy Transition and Strengthening Energy Resilience through Greater Innovation and Cooperation”;

**NOTING WITH GREAT SATISFACTION** the notable progress and tangible results of the AMEM in supporting sustainable energy security and encouraging effective energy transition, in particular, through the work of the Specialised Energy Bodies (SEBs), comprising the Heads of ASEAN Power Utilities and Authorities (HAPUA) on ASEAN Power Grid (APG), the ASEAN Council on Petroleum (ASCOPE) on Trans-ASEAN Gas Pipeline (TAGP) and the ASEAN Forum on Coal (AFOC) on Coal and Clean Coal Technology (CCT); and the Sub-Sector Networks (SSNs) on Energy Efficiency and Conservation (EE&C), Renewable Energy (RE), Regional Energy Policy and Planning (REPP) and Nuclear Energy Cooperation (NEC);

**APPRECIATING** the role of the ASEAN Centre for Energy (ACE) since its establishment in 1999 in providing relevant information and expertise to ensure that the necessary energy policies and programmes are in harmony with the economic growth and the environmental sustainability of the region;

**DETERMINED** to enhance cooperation within ASEAN through the implementation of the bold and forward-looking APAEC that is relevant, contemporary and responsive to the challenges of the times in ensuring energy security, while transitioning towards a low-carbon energy system, based on national social and economic circumstances and needs, with diverse energy resources, demand dynamics, affordability to the people, appropriate technologies, financial resources and cultures;

**RECOGNISED** that with unique and diverse energy systems, energy transition in the region shall take a pragmatic approach, and that natural gas and renewable energy can play a key role in the transition towards lower-emission energy systems, including through the different possible national paths to achieve access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all;

**RECOGNISING** that the issues and challenges in ensuring energy security and accelerating an inclusive and just energy transition cuts across and goes beyond the energy sector, and needs to be addressed through concrete, collaborative, and parallel interventions with key enabling sectors and policy areas such as finance, investments and industrial policy, standards and conformance, transport, environment and climate;

**RECOGNISING ALSO** that the energy sector is crucial to urgently address our shared long-term climate goals and commitment to reduce emissions through the transformation of the energy system, in accordance with national planning and priorities, which includes enhancing energy efficiency and conservation, deploying energy renewables and increasing investments in advanced and cleaner energy technologies that can contribute to an environmentally sound, greener, affordable, and socially and economically sustainable development path;

**EMPHASISING** the need to strengthen cross-sectoral and cross-pillar coordination, in view of the complex and interconnected challenges of the ASEAN Community building process, including the close nexus between energy and climate that requires greater collaboration to pursue Sustainable Development Goal 7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all and Sustainable Development Goal 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and the 2015 Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change;

**SHARING THE BELIEF** that innovation is one of the main drivers of the energy transition process to facilitate research, development, demonstration and deployment (RDD&D) of cleaner, efficient and safe energy technology options, such as hydrogen, Carbon Capture, Utilisation and Storage (CCUS) and Battery Energy Storage (BES), and the need for these technologies to be technically and commercially viable, in delivering an affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy system;

**ACKNOWLEDGING** the important role of funding institutions, including the private sector, international financial institutions and donors, as well as standard-setting bodies in mobilising investments and financing into innovative energy technologies to advance the low-carbon energy transition agenda in the region, in view of fostering economic growth and sustainable development that serve the interest of the people;

**REAFFIRMING** our determination to maintain our proactive and outward-looking approach in our relations and cooperation with ASEAN Dialogue Partners (DPs) and International Organisations (IOs), as well as external partners, based on shared interests, constructive engagements and mutual benefits, with a view to effectively address global energy challenges in achieving sustainable economic development, while strengthening our unity, centrality and relevance in the region;

**COGNISANT** of the importance to complement the works of other actors across the ASEAN Sectoral Bodies in making our energy systems more adaptive and flexible that are capable of responding to and mitigating the effects of future emergencies and disasters;

**RECOGNISING** the need to promote and enhance people-to-people contacts and interaction within the ASEAN energy establishments, with a view to create an ASEAN sense of belonging that is in line with the goals of a people-centered and people-oriented Community;

**REAFFIRMING** our shared commitment and collective responsibility in ensuring current and future energy security, and accelerating the energy transition in the region;

**DO HEREBY DECLARE TO:**

1. **Take concrete actions** to develop robust policies and measures, and strengthen national, bilateral and multilateral energy programmes and projects that enhance energy resilience and improve energy security, in all of its aspects in the region, which form the foundation of an inclusive and just energy transition, in achieving access to, affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all, while taking into consideration national circumstances, priorities, policies and capacities, including our respective energy systems;
2. **Progress** as rapidly as possible energy efficiency and conservation initiatives in all economic sectors, in accordance with national policies, laws and regulations, and increase the use of renewable energy and alternative energy sources, taking into consideration national circumstances, in ensuring greater levels of energy security;
3. **Resolve** our common determination to maximise the benefits of low-carbon energy resources, including natural gas, as reliable sources of energy, through enhanced mechanisms of sharing information, knowledge, expertise, experience and best practices;
4. **Intensify** efforts on long-term energy and climate policy and planning to increase the rate of energy efficiency and conservation, expand renewable energy sources, and deploy advanced, cleaner and low-carbon energy technologies towards low greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and climate resilient development;

5. **Endeavour** in the future to explore an aspirational long term regional target towards lower-emission energy systems, in accordance with our common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, that can contribute to lowering GHG emissions;
6. **Reaffirm** AMEM's role as the highest ministerial energy consultative and cooperative mechanism among ASEAN energy establishments, and the role of the APAEC as the regional energy blueprint to strengthen energy resilience, through greater innovation and cooperation;
7. **Strengthen** the role of ACE in fulfilling its critical functions as catalyst, knowledge hub, and think tank to contribute towards ensuring energy security and accelerating the energy transition in the region;
8. **Intensify** AMEM's efforts to collaborate on sustainable development across relevant sectoral bodies and pillars within the ASEAN community in mobilising financial resources, enhancing participation in related value and supply chains, and creating green jobs, with a view to integrate the low carbon energy transition agenda and expand sustainable economic opportunities that will lead to the attainment of the long-term goal of transitioning to decarbonized energy systems in the region;
9. **Pursue** cross-sectoral collaboration to accelerate the development of cleaner, greener, low-carbon, and more sustainable transport fuels and vehicles by increasing electric mobility capabilities and the utilisation of alternative fuel sources such as natural gas, biofuels, hydrogen and fuel cell technologies;
10. **Further** enhance cooperation with other pillars under the ASEAN Community, ASEAN DPs, IOs, as well as external partners, to address sustainable economic development challenges, which include developing a sustainable finance ecosystem to support ASEAN's long-term energy security and energy transition agenda, and developing a regional taxonomy, taking into consideration ASEAN needs and international developments, to enhance the region's policies, frameworks, and capabilities in attracting and scaling up investments in energy infrastructure and technologies;
11. **Welcome** continued cooperation with the private sector, international financial institutions and donors, as well as standard-setting bodies, to facilitate and support the deployment and financing of innovative energy technologies in fostering economic growth, and leveraging the market potential to accelerate the energy transition in the region;
12. **Emphasise** the value of education and academia to promote research, development and innovation in sustainable energy technologies through the increase of international triple-helix cooperation amongst government, private sector and academia in facilitating access to upgraded technologies and improved infrastructure for supplying affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy system;
13. **Endeavor** to ensure that the energy sector continues to make effective and meaningful contributions towards enhancing ASEAN's preparedness and response to regional emergencies and disasters, including during the recovery phases, with a view to better protect the society, economy and the broader developmental agenda, as well as to enable a strategic, holistic, coordinated and cross-pillar response in mitigating impacts of emergencies and disasters that have or may affect the Southeast Asian region, in line with a Strategic and Holistic Initiative to Link ASEAN Responses to Emergencies and Disasters (ASEAN SHIELD);
14. **Uphold** ASEAN Centrality in our engagement with ASEAN DPs and IOs, as well as external partners;

15. **Undertake** appropriate measures and initiatives to increase the level of awareness within ASEAN energy establishments to promote ASEAN identity in support of an ASEAN Economic Community;

**ADOPTED** in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam, on this Fifteenth Day of September in the Year Two Thousand and Twenty-One