

# 2021 JOINT STATEMENT OF THE ASEAN MINISTERIAL DIALOGUE ON ACCELERATING ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

*Issued on 20 September 2021*

The first ASEAN Ministerial Dialogue on Accelerating Actions to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals was held on 20 September 2021 via video conference, and was convened by Cambodia, Indonesia, the Philippines, and the ASEAN Secretariat. The meeting was attended by ASEAN Member States and representatives of relevant ASEAN sectoral bodies.

**RECALLING** that the complementarities between the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development provided the impetus for the ASEAN Leaders to approve the development of the Complementarities Roadmap 2020-2025 and support the establishment of the ASEAN Centre for Sustainable Development Studies and Dialogue (ACSDSD) during the 35<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit in 2019;

**BUILDING** on the success of the ASEAN Forum for Minister Responsible for Development Planning on Implementing Sustainable Development Goals held in Bali, Indonesia during the IMF-WB Annual Meeting 2018 as well as the ASEAN Forums on SDGs with national Development Planning Agencies held on 8 July 2019 at the ASEAN Secretariat and on 12 October 2020 through video conference to bring about recommendations from development planning and SDG coordinating agencies as they discussed common challenges, exchanged good policy practices at the national level, and explored potential collaborations and ways of sustaining partnership at the regional level;

**RECOGNISING** the ASEAN region's achievements especially prior to COVID-19 pandemic in reducing absolute poverty and hunger, improving access to quality education and health, registering large strides in infrastructure, industrialization and innovation, and more importantly, the catch up work needed to achieve the SDGs in the areas of reducing inequality and climate action as the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) recently reported that "it is unequivocal that human influence has warmed the atmosphere, oceans and land", among others;

**RECOGNISING FURTHER** the negative impacts of COVID-19 pandemic on development including poverty, inequality within and among countries, unemployment, economic downturn, as well as other risks facing the region such as disasters, biodiversity loss and climate change, which require a recalibration of strategies and transformation of approaches in reaching sustainable development based on national and regional contexts;

**EMPHASISING** that the ASEAN region has entered the mid-point of implementing the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 parallel with the Decade of Action to Deliver the SDGs, both of which provide the opportunity for strategic, targeted, and impactful collective action that is inclusive and sustainable;

**UNDERSCORING** the critical and catalytic roles of national development agencies and/or coordinating agencies on SDGs implementation in ASEAN Member States to steer policy discourse, planning and implementation on sustainable development by linking and synergizing actions at the national level and regional initiatives at the ASEAN level;

**THEREFORE, THE DIALOGUE RESOLVES** to undertake measures that will sustain and elevate actions to realise the SDGs, strengthen our partnerships, and pursue collaborative initiatives to improve the lives of all peoples in the ASEAN region. The Dialogue endeavours to:

1. Ensure that national policies, development plans, and programmes are reviewed and recalibrated to reflect the changing landscape of achieving the SDGs because of the COVID-19 pandemic, and other mega trends affecting the ASEAN region such as climate change, biodiversity loss and environmental degradation, food insecurity, digitalisation, increasing social and gender inequalities within and among countries, rapid urbanisation, and varying demographic trends, among others;
2. Pursue sustainable and innovating ways and technology transfers to finance the SDGs as we build capacities, engage various stakeholders, ensure quality public expenditures, and promote private investments that impact the lives of the people;
3. Explore cooperation on strengthening SDG data systems and institutions, effective data coordination between and among government agencies, public outreach for evidence-based policy development and implementation, and public communication;
4. Convene the ASEAN Ministerial Dialogue on Accelerating Actions to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, when appropriate and mutually agreed, as a platform for national development agencies and/or coordinating agencies on achieving the SDGs to strengthen regional cooperation to develop a common regional agenda, build capacities and exchange knowledge aligned with priorities in the Decade of Action to achieve the SDGs;
5. Engage multiple stakeholders at various levels, including community-based and civil society organisations, private sector, philanthropies and the academics to strengthen the collaborative work and partnership as well as the science=technology-policy interface, on attaining the SDGs and ensure that no one is left behind.