

2023 JOINT LEADERS' STATEMENT ON ASEAN-CANADA STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

Adopted in Jakarta, Indonesia on 6 September 2023

WE, the Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and Canada gathered in Jakarta, Indonesia on 6 September 2023 at the ASEAN-Canada Leaders' Summit; **RECALLING** the commitment made during the ASEAN-Canada Commemorative Summit on 12 November 2022 to establish an ASEAN-Canada Strategic Partnership;

EMPHASISING the importance of adhering to key principles, shared values and norms enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, the ASEAN Charter, the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC), and the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS);

RECOGNISING the long history of cooperation between ASEAN and Canada since the establishment of Dialogue Relations in 1977;

NOTING that both the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP) and Canada's Indo-Pacific Strategy share relevant fundamental principles in promoting an open, inclusive, transparent and rules-based regional architecture in the Indo-Pacific region, in which ASEAN is central;

ACKNOWLEDGING Canada's consistent support for ASEAN Centrality in the evolving regional architecture which underscores Canada's commitment to regional peace, security and prosperity and to ASEAN integration and ASEAN Community-building process;

REAFFIRMING our shared commitment to strengthen ASEAN-Canada Dialogue Relations for a strategic partnership that supports ASEAN and Canada to jointly address new challenges, including through cooperation in ASEAN-led mechanisms and international fora.

WE HEREBY DECLARE THE FOLLOWING:

1. Establish the ASEAN-Canada Strategic Partnership whereby ASEAN and Canada will closely collaborate in strategic areas of mutual interest.
2. Continue building on the Plan of Action to Implement the Joint Declaration on ASEAN-Canada Enhanced Partnership (2021-2025), and support the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and its Post-2025 Community Vision as well as the implementation of the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific.

POLITICAL-SECURITY COMMUNITY

3. Promote maritime security and safety, freedom of navigation and overflight, unimpeded commerce, mutual trust and confidence, the exercise of self-restraint, the non-use of force or the threat to use force, and the resolution of disputes by peaceful means, in accordance with universally recognised principles of international law, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), the relevant Standards and Recommended Practices of the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO), and the relevant instruments and conventions of the International Maritime Organisation (IMO).

4. Enhance cooperation in maintaining peace, security and stability, and addressing common traditional and non-traditional security challenges in the region, including transnational crimes, non-proliferation, cybersecurity, terrorism and violent extremism, trafficking in persons and people smuggling and maritime security, including through the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) capacity building programmes and the ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Transnational Crime (SOMTC) annual consultations with Canada.
5. Deepen cooperation in cybersecurity including through the ASEAN-Singapore Cybersecurity Centre of Excellence to support ASEAN in its critical transition towards the digital economy.

ECONOMIC COOPERATION

6. Strengthen economic ties, by encouraging investment and innovation partnership in key sectors and supporting capacity building and technical assistance aligned with ASEAN priorities, including women's economic empowerment, towards a stronger and more resilient ASEAN Economic Community for both ASEAN and Canada, as well as promoting, both private sector and state-owned enterprise engagement, including with Canadian pension funds subject to their own decision making process for strategic projects in ASEAN.
7. Enhance trade and investment ties through new initiatives including holding a trade event which would give Senior Economic Officials from both sides and business community the opportunity to engage with the Canadian private sector and industries.
8. Promote greater regional economic integration, development, and resilience, including through progress toward and timely conclusion of a commercially meaningful ASEAN-Canada Free Trade Agreement (ACAFTA), which will bring economic benefits to ASEAN and Canada and enhance our shared commitment to a rules-based trading system and achieving fair, open and free markets, as well as sustainable economic growth and development.
9. Support the participation of ASEAN Member States in negotiations toward ACAFTA.
10. Strengthen ASEAN's economic resilience and competitiveness and increase ASEAN Member States' ability to benefit fully from international trade and investment with Canada, including through the Canadian Trade and Investment Facility for Development and Expert Deployment Mechanism for Trade and Development.
11. Promote greater economic cooperation and innovation between ASEAN and Canada in the areas of business and investment engagement and networks to provide a modern, dynamic environment for ASEAN and Canadian businesses including through Canada's investment of CAD24 million in the Canadian Trade Gateway in Southeast Asia.
12. Work together to explore opportunities to advance the development and empowerment of Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) which are the backbone of our economy.
13. Support partnerships in Science, Technology and Innovation by striving to increase research and development (R&D) collaborations, and encourage new initiatives among research institutes, higher education institutes and enterprises to promote science, education technology, technology and innovation development in the region through capacity-building, technology transfer on voluntary and mutually agreed terms, and sharing of best practices on advanced and relevant technology and commercialisation. Canada and ASEAN will cooperate to identify and facilitate opportunities for our MSMEs to collaborate on innovation and business-oriented R&D partnerships in support of key areas of cooperation of the AOIP.

14. Enhance cooperation in key sectors such as, Industry 4.0, Cybersecurity, digital trade, 5G, Internet of Things (IoT) and other emerging technologies, aiming to connect ASEAN and Canadian companies, including MSMEs and the ASEAN's digital transformation agenda, including the Bandar Seri Begawan Roadmap for mutual benefits.
15. Strengthen ASEAN-Canada cooperation on food security to promote trade and investment; refraining from imposing restrictive measures that are inconsistent with the WTO Agreement, to prevent disruption to food trade.
16. Advance technical cooperation by sharing best practices and capacity building in research and development on agricultural product and agro-food innovation as well as support infrastructure development in the agricultural sector to support long-term, reliable trade relationships and a stronger supply chain. Look forward to the establishment of Canada's first Indo-Pacific Agriculture and Agri-food Office which will enable and amplify engagements with stakeholders, regulatory counterparts, and policy decision makers to deepen partnerships with ASEAN Member States and advance mutual trade objectives in the agriculture sector.
17. Work together to build new clean energy supply chains and promote clean energy technologies by exploring Canadian cleantech demonstration projects and sector discussions.
18. Support the implementation of connectivity agenda in ASEAN including through Canada's CAD 750 million recapitalisation of FinDev Canada, its development finance institution (DFI), to encourage and enable the financing of high-quality, sustainable infrastructure projects which could help contribute to achieving the objectives of the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity 2025 (MPAC 2025) and its successor documents as well as Connectivity as one of the areas of cooperation of the AOIP.

SOCIO-CULTURAL COOPERATION

19. Continue investing in human capital development and strengthening our people-to-people linkages by promoting opportunities for all our peoples, particularly youth and the most vulnerable, including through increased funding for the Canada-ASEAN Scholarships and Educational Exchanges for Development (SEED) program which gives eligible students from ASEAN Member States the opportunity to undertake funded study and research at Canadian post-secondary institutions. Canada will expand the SEED Program with a further CAD14 million investment including its operations to facilitate ASEAN Member States students' contributions to the sustainable development of the region.
20. Strengthen efforts in advancing the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda globally, including through sharing of information and best practices, enhancing security-related cooperation in the context of WPS within the ASEAN-led mechanisms, launching of a regional WPS initiative; the Elsie Initiative for Women in Peace Operations and regionally, the 'Empowering Women for Sustainable Peace' initiative and cooperation with UN Women and the ASEAN Institute for Peace and Reconciliation, as well as through a CAD8.5 million initiative to support ASEAN-led efforts to advance the WPS agenda in ASEAN, including the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on WPS such as the ASEAN-led WPS module development and training for the ASEAN officials.
21. Welcome Canada's commitment to host a series of WPS dialogues in 2023, to support the implementation of the WPS agenda in ASEAN and meaningfully engaging women for an inclusive and sustainable approach to peace.

22. Continue to work together to strengthen health-security in the region through collaboration between ASEAN and Canada, including through the existing Mitigation of Biological Threats Programme to respond to all manner of biological threats, whether natural, accidental or deliberate in origin. Canada will seek to bolster health-security capabilities by building on existing support to the ASEAN Emergency Operations Center (EOC) Network and the ASEAN BioDiaspora Virtual Centre, as well as through the new ASEAN Centre for Public Health Emergencies and Emerging Diseases (ACPHEED).
23. Work together to support Canada's engagement in the region to enhance ties with ASEAN countries across all three ASEAN pillars. Canada will also expand its diplomatic footprint in the region with additional positions in diplomatic missions in ASEAN Member States to improve capacity to engage with ASEAN and deliver programs and services.
24. Enhance cooperation on research and development on fisheries, and fishing activity, including protecting fish stocks, advancing ecosystem conservation, and reducing the use of plastic fish aggregating devices, through technical assistance and support related to these activities, as well as explore possible cooperation to promote responsible fishing practices and to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and welcome Canada's new Shared Ocean Fund to support such initiatives.

CROSS-PILLAR ISSUES

25. Welcome the establishment of an ASEAN-Canada Plan of Action Trust Fund to support the objectives of all three ASEAN Community pillars with an initial contribution of CAD1 million and note Canada's intention to increase its contribution by CAD10.7 million.
26. Support the ASEAN Smart Cities Network (ASCN) and explore collaboration between the ASCN and the Canada Smart City Challenge.
27. Promote a sustainable and resilient future of the region, including through pursuing complementarities and shared priorities in the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development with particular emphasis on eradicating poverty, promoting the conservation of natural resources and the environment, promoting peace and prosperity through equitable development and sustainable economic growth, including in the fields of energy resilience; clean and just energy transition and renewable energy deployment; decarbonization of the transportation sector; climate change mitigation and adaptation; health security; sustainable management of water and natural resources; food security; sustainable agriculture, fisheries, forestry, and land management.
28. Promote cooperation and exchange of experience, best practices and research on environmental protection, water resource management, chemical and waste management, innovative solutions and clean technologies. Enable a long-term cooperation between ASEAN and Canada on climate change, for global and regional harmonisation of climate actions, including through collaboration with the ASEAN Centre for Climate Change (ACCC) when it is established, in the focus areas of climate change adaptation and mitigation, climate finance and technology transfer. Further promote cooperation to combat marine pollution to contribute to the implementation of the ASEAN Regional Action Plan for Combating Marine Debris in the ASEAN Member States (2021-2025) and the ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on Blue Economy.

29. Strengthen cross-pillar and multi-sectoral collaboration on the protection and conservation of nature and biodiversity with the support of the ASEAN Center for Biodiversity (ACB) to contribute to the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, in particular to advance biodiversity as part of Nature-based Solutions (NbS) and Ecosystem-based Approaches (EbA), to address climate change and prevent future pandemics by investing in natural capital.
30. Enhance cooperation on capacity building, technology transfer, and R&D for sustainable forest management and wildland fire prevention, monitoring and management, especially working closely with the ASEAN Coordinating Centre on Transboundary Haze Pollution Control (ACC THPC), the ASEAN Specialised Meteorological Centre (ASMC), as well as other relevant ASEAN centres and entities.
31. Commit to strengthen ASEAN capacity and effectiveness, by supporting human resource development in ASEAN and increasing engagement, as well as exchanging best practices with ASEAN institutions, particularly the ASEAN Institute for Peace and Reconciliation (ASEAN-IPR), the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on disaster management (AHA Centre), the ASEAN Regional Mine Action Centre (ARMAC), ASEAN Centre for Sustainable Development Studies and Dialogue (ACSDSD), and with Canadian public service expertise.
32. Commit to consolidate ASEAN-Canada partnership and strategic engagement through more frequent and meaningful dialogues at various levels. We welcome Canada's support for ASEAN-led mechanisms and note its interest in joining the East Asia Summit (EAS), the ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting Plus and the observership program of the ADMM-Plus Experts' Working Groups Maritime Security, and on Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief, subject to these mechanisms' respective enlargement processes.
33. Support Timor-Leste in fulfilling the Roadmap for Timor-Leste's Membership in ASEAN.
34. Strengthen Canada's support for ASEAN's increased engagement with international fora, including the United Nations and G20, and in its role as G7 chair in 2025 and explore collaboration with ASEAN in its next phase of its Community Vision.
35. As we adopt this Joint Statement, we tasked our relevant officials to implement the above initiatives to complement the programmes and goals identified in the Plan of Action to Implement the Joint Declaration on ASEAN-Canada Enhanced Partnership (2021-2025) as well as in the ASEAN-Canada 45th Anniversary Commemorative Summit Joint Statement, based on mutual respect, mutual trust and mutual benefit, with a view to strengthen our Strategic Partnership.