

2023 JOINT MINISTERIAL STATEMENT OF THE 29TH ASEAN TRANSPORT MINISTERS MEETING

Issued in Luang Prabang, Lao PDR on 9 November 2023

1. The Twenty-Ninth ASEAN Transport Ministers (ATM) Meeting was held on 9 November 2023, in Luang Prabang, Lao PDR. H.E. Mr. Ngampasong Muongmany, Minister of Public Works and Transport of Lao PDR, chaired the Meeting, and H.E. Mr. Loke Siew Fook, Minister of Transport of Malaysia, was the Vice-Chairman. The Twenty-Ninth ATM Meeting was preceded by the Fifty-Sixth ASEAN Senior Transport Officials Meeting (STOM) and their consultations with Dialogue Partners held on 7-8 November 2023.

FURTHER STRENGTHENING THE ASEAN SINGLE AVIATION MARKET

2. The Meeting adopted the ASEAN Sustainable Aviation Action Plan (ASAAP) and its Work Plan 2023-2024, which aims to drive sustainable aviation growth in ASEAN, starting from the area of Sustainable Aviation Fuels. This demonstrates ASEAN's strong commitment to support the International Civil Aviation Organization's long-term global aspirational goal for international aviation of net-zero carbon emissions by 2050.
3. The Meeting adopted the ASEAN Air Navigation Service Master Plan (Third Edition) with a view to achieving the objectives of the Seamless Air Traffic Management in the areas of safety, interoperability, harmonisation, environment, capacity and efficiency, as well as enhancing the Seamless ASEAN Sky which in turn supports the establishment of the ASEAN Single Aviation Market. The Meeting encouraged all ASEAN Member States to continue working closely for the successful implementation of the ASEAN Air Navigation Service Master Plan (Third Edition).
4. Following the signing of the Mutual Recognition Arrangement on Flight Crew Licensing (MRA on FCL) overarching framework agreement and the adoption of the Implementing Protocol-1 (IP1): Qualification of Flight Simulation Training Devices and IP2: Aviation Training Organisations, the Meeting adopted IP3: Safety Oversight Capabilities of National Aviation Administration that was developed in October 2023. The Meeting noted that ASEAN is now another step closer to the implementation of the MRA on FCL.
5. The Meeting welcomed the commencement of deliberation on the Protocol 5: Own Stopover Rights between Any Points within the Territory of any other ASEAN Member State of the ASEAN Multilateral Agreement on the Full Liberalisation of Passenger Air Services, and looked forward to the signing of this Protocol 5 in 2024 to bolster a more efficient and competitive air transport market within ASEAN.

IMPROVING ELECTRIC VEHICLE INFRASTRUCTURE IN THE REGION

6. With the aim of increasing the adoption of Electric Vehicle (EV) and decarbonising land transport sector in the region, the Meeting adopted Policy Recommendations to Improve Electric Vehicle (EV) Infrastructure and Charging Stations in ASEAN, which provides guidance for the development of charging infrastructure for EV and its supporting infrastructure, including the electrical grid and EV Supply Equipment. The Meeting looked forward to the support and collaboration from the relevant sectors, such as Energy and Automotive Standards, to implement these policy recommendations.

ENHANCING LAND TRANSPORT CONNECTIVITY

7. The Meeting tasked the Senior Transport Officials to work towards the finalisation of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on the Development of ASEAN Highway Network (AHN), which would cover the updated list of ASEAN Highway routes and provide flexibility to enable future modifications of ASEAN Highway routes and network as well as its design standards by ASEAN Member States. The Meeting requested ASEAN Member States to dedicate utmost efforts in upgrading their designated highway roads as aligned with the Kuala Lumpur Transport Strategic Plan 2016-2025.

INCREASING FACILITATION OF CROSS-BORDER AND MULTIMODAL TRANSPORT OF GOODS

8. The Meeting welcomed full ratification of Protocol 6 (Railways Border and Interchange Stations) of the ASEAN Framework Agreement on Facilitation of Goods in Transit (AFAFGIT), which completes the ratification of all AFAFGIT Protocols across all ASEAN Member States.
9. The Meeting was pleased to note the positive progress in the continuous implementation of the AFAFGIT through the ASEAN Customs Transit System (ACTS) in six (6) Participating Member States as well as the ongoing pilot implementation of the ASEAN Framework Agreement on Multimodal Transport (AFAMT) in four (4) ASEAN Member States, namely Indonesia, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam.

MOVING TOWARDS MARITIME SUPPLY CHAIN RESILIENCE

10. The Meeting adopted the Guidelines on Smart Ports, which was developed to measure and analyse Smart Port Performance Index (SPPI) scores for 14 ASEAN Network Ports. The Guidelines would be a useful reference for government officials, port authorities and terminal operators in ASEAN Member States to identify gaps in current port digitalisation levels and develop targeted plans to promote the development of more smart ports in the region in moving forward.
11. To support the implementation of ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework (ACRF) initiatives for maritime transport, the Meeting adopted the Recommendations to Strengthen Regional Preparedness for Future Crisis, which consist of recommendations and lessons learnt during COVID-19 pandemic to (i) promote continuity of port terminal operations, and (ii) facilitate crew change and repatriation. The Meeting welcomed these practical recommendations as it would serve as a future reference for ASEAN Member States to strengthen regional preparedness in the maritime transport sector to better handle future crisis.

BUILDING CLOSER COOPERATION WITH DIALOGUE PARTNERS

12. The Meeting commended the successful conclusion of Air Services Agreement (ASA) negotiations with New Zealand. The Meeting looked forward to the signing of the ASEAN-New Zealand ASA in 2024 which will enhance air connectivity between ASEAN and New Zealand, and facilitate greater ease of movement of people and goods, and contribute to the sustainable socio-economic development.
13. With regard to ongoing ASA negotiations with other Dialogue Partners, namely Japan, and ROK, the Meeting urged the relevant working groups to continue working towards the successful conclusion of a more liberal and mutually beneficial ASAs with a view to enhancing air connectivity between ASEAN and the Dialogue Partners.

14. With the EU, the Meeting noted with satisfaction the successful completion of the ASEAN Regional Integration Support by the EU (ARISE) Plus Programme, and the ongoing implementation of activities under the Enhanced Regional EU-ASEAN Dialogue Instrument (E-READI) which advanced various ASEAN transport initiatives as well as contributed to the ASEAN economic integration agenda. The Meeting looked forward to the launch of EU-ASEAN Sustainable Connectivity Package to further enhance partnership between ASEAN and the EU. The Meeting was pleased to note that the inaugural ASEAN-EU Pro Tem Joint Committee Meeting was held in conjunction with the 48th ASEAN Air Transport Working Group meeting in Oct 2023, providing a regular platform to coordinate and discuss issues relating to the implementation of the ASEAN-EU Comprehensive Air Transport Agreement (CATA) and other ASEAN-EU aviation cooperation matters.
15. With Japan, the Meeting noted with satisfaction the progress of ASEAN-Japan cooperation through the implementation of the ASEAN-Japan Transport Partnership (AJTP) Work Plan for 2022-2023 and its three (3) deliverables, namely: (i) GNSS Implementation Plan Training in ASEAN, (ii) Development of Guideline for Capacity/Performance Evaluation of Container Terminals in the ASEAN region, (iii) Development of VTS Operators' Capacity. The Meeting also welcomed the five (5) new initiatives planned for 2024, namely: (i) GNSS Implementation Plan Training in ASEAN 2.0, (ii) Development of Guideline for realizing Carbon Neutral Ports in the ASEAN region, (iii) Regional Action Plan on Port Security 2024, (iv) Development of VTS Operators Capacity (2024-2026), and (v) Joint Research on Pavement Maintenance and Management Technology for ASEAN Cross-Border Corridors. The Meeting commended the adoption of the New Action Plan of AJTP 2024-2033 (Luang Prabang Action Plan) by the 21st ATM+Japan which aims to bolster ASEAN-Japan transport cooperation in the next decade.
16. With China, the Meeting welcomed the entry into force of the Protocol 3 of ASEAN-China Air Transport Agreement on the Expansion of Fifth Freedom Traffic Rights between Contracting Parties. The Meeting also noted with satisfaction the steady progress of the implementation of maritime transport activities this year under the 2021-2025 Revised Strategic Plan for ASEAN-China Transport Cooperation and looked forward to the successful implementation of new activities under this Strategic Plan in 2024.
17. With ROK, the Meeting was pleased to note progress of implementation of the projects and activities under the ASEAN-ROK Transport Cooperation Roadmap 2022-2025, and welcomed the completion of the Study on "Building a Comprehensive Strategy for ASEAN Smart Mobility", which would support the development of an ASEAN Smart Mobility Strategy.
18. With the United States, the Meeting was pleased to note the progress of initiatives under the ASEAN-U.S. Transport Cooperation, in particular for the Study on "ASEAN Electric Vehicle (EV) Infrastructure Market Analysis", which provides recommendations to support adoption of EV and decarbonisation of land transport sector in the region. The Meeting looked forward to the implementation of remaining activities in the areas of air, land, maritime, sustainable transport and transport facilitation under the ASEAN-U.S. Transport Cooperation Work Plan 2022-2025.

THE THIRTIETH ATM MEETING

19. The Meeting agreed to convene the Thirtieth ATM Meeting in Malaysia, in 2024.
20. The delegates from ASEAN Member States and the ASEAN Secretariat expressed their sincere appreciation to the Government and people of the Lao PDR for the excellent arrangements made for the Meeting.