

2025 ASEAN FOREIGN MINISTERS' DECISION ON ENHANCING ASEAN RELATIONS WITH EXTERNAL PARTIES

Issued in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on 9 July 2025

1. **Reaffirming** the role of the ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting in ensuring consistency and coherence in the conduct of ASEAN's external relations.
2. **Recalling** the ASEAN Foreign Ministers' decision under Paragraph 79 of the Joint Communiqué of the 54th ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting, held on 2 August 2021, to commence a comprehensive review of the moratorium on new Dialogue Partnerships, in conjunction with the development of the ASEAN Community Vision Post-2025.
3. **Upholding** ASEAN Centrality and **ensuring** its role as the primary driver in managing relationships with external partners amidst today's evolving geopolitical and geoeconomic landscape. To this end, ASEAN should seek to transform existing partnerships that may be overly focused on the quantity of broad cooperation activities into ones that genuinely serve ASEAN's priorities and interests— emphasizing both practical outcomes and strategic value in its external engagements.
4. **Acknowledging** that, in addition to strengthening existing partnerships, ASEAN should ensure that new external engagements are pursued through cooperation frameworks that are broadly supported and aligned with the ASEAN 2045: Our Shared Future.
5. **Ensuring** that such engagements complement existing ASEAN mechanisms and sectoral bodies, and are consistent with ASEAN's principles and decision-making processes, as set out in the ASEAN Charter, the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC), and the Guidelines for ASEAN's External Relations, while also taking into account other relevant guidelines of ASEAN Sectoral Bodies, including the ADMM-Plus Experts' Working Groups Observership Protocol, as well as the Non-Paper on Possible Areas of Cooperation under the Framework of the TAC.
6. Therefore, the ASEAN Foreign Ministers reaffirmed the need to strengthen existing external engagements including through leveraging the role and functions of ASEAN organs and mechanisms, and proactively explore new engagements aligned with ASEAN's principles and purposes, and consistent with ASEAN's established rules, procedures, and protocols, including through pursuing the implementation of the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP) and enhancing engagements with the High Contracting Parties to the TAC. Towards this end, we agreed:
 - (a) To task the ASEAN SOM to continue the review of ASEAN's Dialogue Partnerships, including the moratorium on new Dialogue Partners.
 - (b) To task the ASEAN Secretariat to prepare a comprehensive Assessment Paper on ASEAN's Formal Partnerships, incorporating relevant elements from applicable existing guidelines from ASEAN mechanisms and sectoral bodies, which will serve as a key input in guiding the evolution of ASEAN's external partnerships in line with the region's long-term strategic planning and priorities.
 - (c) That in undertaking this comprehensive review, the ASEAN Community Vision (ACV)

2045 and its Strategic Plans should serve as primary reference documents in shaping ASEAN's future external engagements to ensure that partnerships meaningfully support ASEAN's strategic long-term goals.

- (d) That the review should be action-oriented, with a view to strengthening ASEAN's external relations in the evolving regional architecture, enhancing coherence across all three pillars of the ASEAN Community and Connectivity, and ensuring that all engagements are ASEAN-driven, relevant, strategic, mutually beneficial, and responsive to current and emerging challenges while ensuring ASEAN Centrality, and adhering to existing ASEAN processes and procedures.
- (e) That the review would look into optimizing ASEAN's mechanisms, resources, and facilities in managing and expanding ASEAN Relations with External Parties, with a view to enhance ASEAN Centrality and unity.
- (f) For the ASEAN SOM to report the outcomes of the review to the ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting, upon its completion.

Done at the 58th ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting on 9 July 2025 in Kuala Lumpur.