

# Bangkok Declaration on Promoting an ASEAN-EU Global Partnership for Shared Strategic Goals

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Press releases

## Bangkok Declaration on Promoting an ASEAN-EU Global Partnership for Shared Strategic Goals at the 21st ASEAN-EU Ministerial Meeting (AEMM)

Bangkok, Kingdom of Thailand, 13-14 October 2016

**Reaffirming** the importance of close and cordial cooperation and partnership between the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the European Union (EU), rooted in a shared commitment to foster rules-based approaches to promote security and prosperity for their citizens and to address global challenges effectively, advancing the interests of the peoples and citizens of ASEAN Member States and EU Member States, and in promoting global peace, progress and prosperity;

**Looking forward** to the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of ASEAN-EU Dialogue Relations in 2017, and recognizing that the relationship has contributed to strengthening the connectivity and links between the two regions as well as to promoting the interests of ASEAN and the EU in all dimensions;

**Emphasising** the importance of the shared values and common interests that bind the two regions in a long-standing partnership as “partners in integration”, such as the principles of mutual respect for the independence, sovereignty, equality for all states, and including other principles of the UN Charter, international law and the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia;

**Welcoming** the significant progress in the implementation of the Bandar Seri Begawan Plan of Action to Strengthen the ASEAN-EU Enhanced Partnership (2013-2017) and underscoring the importance of its continued implementation;

**Welcoming** the EU’s support for ASEAN integration as well as ASEAN’s efforts in realizing “ASEAN 2025: Forging Ahead Together” for a politically cohesive, economically integrated, socially responsible and a truly rules-based, people-oriented, and people-centred ASEAN;

**Welcoming** the progress made towards the upgrading of ASEAN-EU relations, including by establishing a dedicated EU Mission to ASEAN;

**Recognising** the growing common challenges and threats facing both ASEAN and the EU, coming from within and outside the two regions, including both traditional and non-traditional challenges, and consequently, emphasising the importance of closer cooperation between ASEAN and the EU, as part of the collective global endeavor to confront these challenges;

**Reaffirming** the commitment to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and to working together on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);

**Recalling** the decision of the 20<sup>th</sup> ASEAN-EU Ministerial Meeting in Brussels in 2014 for ASEAN and the EU to work towards elevating their partnership to a strategic level and to developing a roadmap towards that common goal;

### *ASEAN and the EU hereby:*

1. Resolve to accelerate efforts in working towards a strategic partnership between ASEAN and the EU by strengthening cooperation both in traditional areas of dialogue and cooperation including trade, connectivity, development cooperation, energy, research and on political and security issues; stressing that a future ASEAN-EU Strategic Partnership must be based on substantive action from both sides and concrete

- results;
2. Affirm their readiness to strengthen ASEAN-EU relations and cooperation in all areas of mutual interest, and to this end, resolve to develop comprehensive, robust and forward-looking ASEAN-EU Plan of Action 2018-2022 to be adopted in 2017, and to implement any pending actions in the current Plan of Action;
  3. Agree to intensify engagement and dialogue between the two sides, including through the ASEAN-EU Ministerial Meeting (AEMM), the ASEAN Post Ministerial Conference with the EU (PMCC)+1, ASEAN-EU Trade Commissioners Consultation, the ASEAN-EU Senior Officials' Meeting, ASEAN-EU Senior Economic Officials' Meeting and the ASEAN-EU Joint Cooperation Committee, as well as encourage greater interaction between the two regions including through an ASEAN-EU Forum of Strategic Thinkers to be convened in Thailand and the ASEAN-EU Business Summit;
  4. Resolve to enhance political and security dialogue and cooperation between ASEAN and the EU with a view to strengthening regional capabilities in traditional and non-traditional security areas, and in this connection, welcome strengthened dialogue and cooperation on maritime security, counter-terrorism, cyber security, preventive diplomacy and mediation and crisis management between ASEAN and the EU including on the basis of the ASEAN-EU Senior Officials Meeting on Transnational Crimes (SOMTC) Work Plan, contributing positively towards deepening ASEAN-EU relations. Areas for future ASEAN-EU Maritime Security Cooperation would include information sharing on a voluntary basis, in particular on best practices for regional integration and operational experiences, inter-agency cooperation and the development of work plans;
  5. Reiterate its support for ASEAN centrality in the evolving regional architecture in East Asia. The EU appreciates ASEAN's role as the driving force, and its important contribution to, promoting dialogue and cooperation for peace, security, stability and prosperity in the Asia-Pacific region and beyond. ASEAN welcomes the interest of the EU in furthering engagement with the region through all ASEAN-led processes;
  6. Underline the importance of the respect for the rule of law, sovereignty and territorial integrity of States, maritime security and safety, freedom of navigation and overflight, peaceful resolution of disputes, in accordance with the universally recognized principles of international law, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and the relevant standards and recommended practices of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and the International Maritime Organisation (IMO);
  7. Welcome the renewed commitment of ASEAN Member States and China to ensure the full and effective implementation of the 2002 Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) in its entirety, and support the efforts of ASEAN Member States and China to work towards the early conclusion of an effective Code of Conduct in the South China Sea (COC);
  8. Reaffirm their commitment to preserve the Southeast Asia region free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction by strengthening cooperation on disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and promoting relevant international instruments; including the entry into force and universalisation of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, and reaffirm their commitment to fight against the illicit trade in conventional arms, including through the Arms Trade Treaty;
  9. Reaffirm their commitment to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms, the rule of law, gender equality, women's empowerment, and to promote mutual respect amongst the states and peoples including through the exchange of good practices, dialogues, seminars and other initiatives;
  10. Reaffirm their respect for diversity, tolerance and moderation, as part of the global culture of peace, and our rejection of violent extremism and terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, and to this end, resolve to strengthen our dialogue and cooperation to address these common threats to humanity and civilization, including through regional and multilateral initiatives;
  11. Support efforts to enhance strategic connectivity between and beyond ASEAN and the EU through more effective land, sea and air links between the two regions as well as between the peoples and citizens of ASEAN Member States and EU Member States including through the conclusion of an ASEAN-EU Comprehensive Air Transport Agreement (CATA);
  12. Promote the economic partnership between ASEAN and the EU with the aim to increase trade and investment between both regions and reaffirm their commitment to intensify work towards the timely resumption of region-to-region ASEAN-EU Free Trade Agreement negotiations and in this regard, noted the progress of the joint stock-taking exercise on the assessment of the progress of ASEAN integration, the status of bilateral FTAs between ASEAN Member States and the EU and how to ensure added value by building on these bilateral FTAs;
  13. Enhance economic cooperation among other, on standards, quality and conformity assessment, micro-small-medium sized enterprises (MSMEs), and science and technology through the ASEAN-EU Trade and Investment Work Programme;
  14. Strengthen people-to-people contacts and linkages involving, among others, youth, media, academics, think-tank institutions, parliamentarians and civil societies, and build and nurture friendship and understanding between ASEAN and the EU through, inter alia, interfaith dialogues and cultural exchanges;
  15. Promote cooperation on education as well as encourage mobility of students and academics between ASEAN and the EU higher education institutions, and explore possibilities for ASEAN-EU scholarships including through EU-funded programmes such as Erasmus+ and SHARE;
  16. Establish a dialogue between ASEAN and EU officials in 2017 in Thailand on sustainable development as a platform to promote cooperation towards the effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the 2015 Paris Agreement on Climate Change, and in this regard, encourage Parties that have not done so to ratify the Paris Agreement as soon as possible;
  17. Raise public awareness of the importance of the ASEAN-EU partnership, including enhancing access to information and activities related to ASEAN-EU Dialogue Relations for persons with disabilities, elderly, and children;
  18. Reaffirm their commitment to contribute towards narrowing the development gaps within and between ASEAN Member States and improve connectivity within the region, including by supporting the implementation of the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) Work Plan III and the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity 2025, as well as consider potential sub-regional connectivity projects in the Mekong sub-region and the Indonesia-Malaysia-Philippines – East ASEAN Growth Area (BIMP-EAGA) in future ASEAN-EU programming; and
  19. Celebrate the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ASEAN-EU Dialogue Relations through joint and individual programmes and activities in order to bring to

benefit of this partnership to the peoples and citizens of Southeast Asia and Europe.

*Endorsed at the 21<sup>st</sup> ASEAN-EU Ministerial Meeting held on 13-14 October 2016 in Bangkok, the Kingdom of Thailand*

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