

JOINT MEDIA STATEMENT

Fourteenth Conference of the ASEAN Ministers Responsible for Information and Fifth Conference of ASEAN Plus Three Ministers Responsible for Information

“Inclusive and Informed Digital ASEAN”

Singapore, 10 May 2018

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1. Singapore hosted the Fourteenth Conference of the ASEAN Ministers Responsible for Information (14th AMRI) and the Fifth Conference of ASEAN Plus Three Ministers Responsible for Information (5th AMRI+3) in Singapore on 10 May 2018.
2. With the theme, “Inclusive and Informed Digital ASEAN”, the focus of the 14th AMRI was to build a strong ASEAN community through information and media, nurture a digitally inclusive and literate ASEAN, combat fake news and promote stronger cooperation with dialogue partners.
3. The Conferences were preceded by the 16th Meeting of the ASEAN Senior Officials Responsible for Information (SOMRI) on 8 May 2018, as well as its meetings with the Plus Three Countries and Japan on 9 May 2018.

Opening Ceremony

4. The Opening Ceremony commenced with Welcome Remarks by the Minister for Communications and Information of Singapore, H.E. S. Iswaran, who expressed that it was an honour for Singapore to host 14th AMRI and Related Meetings. This was followed by the Keynote Address delivered by the Guest of Honour, H.E. Heng Swee Keat, Minister for Finance of Singapore. Minister Heng highlighted the need for ASEAN to come together to prepare our citizens for the opportunities and challenges brought about by technological advances. He also emphasised the need to nurture ASEAN citizens with the skills to discern between facts and fake news, and to practise responsible behaviour when interacting online and exercising discretion when dealing with the vast amount of online information. Minister Heng also reiterated that ASEAN could better ride on opportunities brought about by the digital wave by improving digital literacy among its citizens.
5. The ASEAN Anthem “The ASEAN Way” was played during the Opening Ceremony.
6. The chairmanship of the ASEAN Ministers Responsible for Information (AMRI) was handed over from the Philippines to Singapore.
7. The Conference was chaired by H.E. S. Iswaran, Minister for Communications and Information of Singapore with H.E. Kobsak Pootrakool, Minister Attached to the Prime Minister's Office of Thailand as Vice Chair. Minister Iswaran shared his hopes

for the development of a Digital ASEAN that is inclusive and where multi-stakeholder groups can come together to help citizens to be better prepared for the digital future. Minister Iswaran also noted that an inclusive and informed Digital ASEAN reinforces this year's chairmanship theme of building collective resilience and promoting innovation among member countries. The list of Ministers from all ASEAN Member States (AMS) and the Plus Three Countries appears as **ANNEX 1**.

Building a Strong ASEAN Community through Information and Media

8. The Ministers commended the various initiatives that were put in place by the information and media sector to celebrate ASEAN's Golden Jubilee in 2017 and noted that these projects have helped to raise the awareness of ASEAN and contributed to strengthening a sense of shared identity and community within ASEAN.

ASEAN Communication Master Plan 2 for 2018-2025

9. The Ministers were pleased with the progress made by the ASEAN information and media sector in implementing the ASEAN Communication Master Plan (ACMP). The ACMP has guided communication initiatives in ASEAN Member States to raise awareness of the work of all the three ASEAN Community Pillars i.e. ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC), ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) and ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC), thus enhancing the understanding of ASEAN and its community building process among a range of stakeholders in the ASEAN region.

10. The Ministers endorsed the ASEAN Communication Master Plan for 2018–2025 (ACMP-II) which would be surfaced to the ASEAN Community Council for adoption. Under the overarching theme of “ASEAN: A Community of Opportunities for All”, the ACMP-II will support ASEAN's efforts in implementing all three ASEAN Community Blueprints to communicate the character of ASEAN as “people-oriented and people-centred”.

Updates from the Three SOMRI Working Groups

11. The Ministers commended the work of the three SOMRI Working Groups (WGs), namely the Working Group on ASEAN Digital Broadcasting (WG-ADB), the Working Group on Content and Production (WG-CP) and the Working Group on Information, Media and Training (WG-IMT). The three WGs have accelerated the progress on digital broadcasting as well as contributed to creating quality content, building capacity of media personnel and promoting media literacy within ASEAN.

Progress of Analogue Switch-Off

12. The Ministers noted the progress of Analogue Switch-Off (ASO) by the respective AMS and acknowledged the need for AMS to strive towards meeting the 2015-2020 ASO timeline that was agreed at the 10th AMRI in Lao PDR in 2009 and at the 13th ASEAN Telecommunications and Information Technology Ministers Meeting (TELMIN) in Singapore in 2013. The Ministers approved the ASEAN-wide Technical Guide on Baseline Receiver Specifications for mobile and portable devices which would facilitate the adoption of digital TV in the region. The approved Technical Guide appears as **ANNEX 2**.

Framework on Co-Production in the Audio-Visual Sector

13. The Ministers agreed that long-term projects in the information and media sector, notably the ASEAN Quiz (since 2002), ASEAN Television News: Integrates, Informs, Inspires and Voice of ASEAN - Beyond Boundaries (formerly ASEAN in Action, since 1994) have allowed AMS to enhance their mutual understanding of one another and contributed to a greater sense of belonging and community building. The Ministers also welcomed and adopted the Framework for Co-Production on Audio-Visual Sector for ASEAN which would encourage content producers in the region to collaborate and co-create unique and compelling ASEAN content for the region and beyond. The adopted Framework appears as **ANNEX 3**.

ASEAN Committee on Culture and Information (COCI)

14. The Ministers lauded the initiatives of the ASEAN Committee on Culture and Information (COCI) to expand its platforms and projects to encompass other stakeholders and players in the digital media field such as bloggers, photo-journalists and online content producers. These initiatives included Dream ASEAN, ASEAN Bloggers Exchange Programme, ASEAN Print Media Workshop, and ASEAN Online Content Producers Workshop, etc.

15. Noting that a key objective of AMRI is to raise the public's awareness of ASEAN, the Ministers agreed on the importance to continue monitoring the level of ASEAN awareness on a regular basis.

16. In view of the Declaration on Culture of Prevention (CoP) for a Peaceful, Inclusive, Resilient, Healthy and Harmonious Society that was adopted by the ASEAN Leaders at the 31st ASEAN Summit on 13 November 2017 in Manila, the Ministers tasked the SOMRI to support the implementation of CoP initiatives.

Nurturing a Digitally Literate ASEAN

17. Acknowledging that the digital revolution would bring about rapid development and shifts in the information and media landscape, the Ministers agreed on the need for ASEAN to prepare its people to seize the opportunities and manage any challenges brought about by the digital revolution. The Ministers emphasized the importance of promoting digital literacy, including both media and information literacy, within ASEAN. The Ministers adopted the Core Values on Digital Literacy for ASEAN which would help raise literacy levels and build the capability of the ASEAN Community to consume and produce content across all platforms confidently, safely and responsibly. The adopted Core Values appears as **ANNEX 4**.

Combating Fake News

18. Noting that the issue of fake news, especially on social media platforms, is a growing challenge globally, the Ministers agreed that there was a need for ASEAN to collaborate and exchange best practices in combatting fake news and mitigating its harmful effects. The Ministers endorsed the Framework and Joint Declaration to Minimise the Harmful Effect of Fake News which would provide a common frame of

reference for AMS to strengthen cooperation, share ideas, and propose viable solutions to address the proliferation of fake news and its negative impact, for the benefit of the people of ASEAN. The endorsed Framework appears as **ANNEX 5**.

Cooperation with Dialogue Partners

19. The Ministers exchanged views on the progress of ASEAN cooperation with the three Dialogue Partners in the field of information and media.

20. The ASEAN Plus Three Ministers adopted a new Work Plan on Enhancing ASEAN Plus Three Cooperation Through Information and Media (2018-2023).

21. The ASEAN Ministers appreciated China's efforts in using broadcasting and publications to foster friendly ASEAN-China ties and good-neighbourly relations, as well as the initiatives of China to cooperate with ASEAN through mutual visits and promotion of exchange of films and TV programmes through the ASEAN-China Cooperation Fund. The Ministers endorsed the new ASEAN-China Work Plan on Enhancing ASEAN-China Cooperation through Information and Media (2018-2020). The Ministers welcomed the initiatives of China to further strengthen the cooperation with ASEAN media via joint interviews, training of media personnel, and sharing of new media technologies and experience in their applications.

22. The Ministers welcomed the initiatives of Japan on information and broadcasting, especially on next generation broadcasting technologies, media and information literacy and capacity building programmes for media personnel. The Ministers noted the discussions of the 2nd Meeting of ASEAN-Japan Senior Officials Responsible for Information and the cooperation projects for 2018–2019. The Ministers appreciated the financial support from Japan to implement the cooperation projects through the Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund.

23. The Ministers noted the proposals from the Republic of Korea on ways through which ASEAN and the ROK could collaborate to further advance media and information exchange through joint coverage and news programmes.

Closing and Acknowledgment

24. The Ministers agreed to convene the 15th AMRI and its Related Meetings with Dialogue Partners in Thailand in 2020.

25. The Ministers expressed their sincere thanks and appreciation to the Government and people of Singapore for the warm hospitality and excellent arrangements made for the 14th AMRI, 16th SOMRI and Related Meetings. The Conference was held in the traditional spirit of ASEAN solidarity and cordiality.

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