



CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT OF THE 15TH ASEAN PLUS THREE FOREIGN MINISTERS' MEETING

9 August 2014, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar

1. The 15th Meeting of the Foreign Ministers of ASEAN and the People's Republic of China, Japan and the Republic of Korea (ROK) was held in Nay Pyi Taw, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, on 9 August 2014. The Meeting was chaired by H.E. U Wunna Maung Lwin, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.
2. The Ministers welcomed with satisfaction the substantive progress and achievements of the ASEAN Plus Three cooperation since the process began in 1997. The Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to further strengthening, broadening and deepening the ASEAN Plus Three cooperation in line with the Second Joint Statement on East Asia Cooperation and the ASEAN Plus Three Leaders' Joint Statement on the Commemoration of the 15th Anniversary of the ASEAN Plus Three cooperation and the recommendations of the East Asia Vision Group II.
3. The Ministers reiterated that the ASEAN Plus Three cooperation would serve as a main vehicle towards the long-term goal of building an East Asian community, with ASEAN as the major driving force. The Ministers reiterated the importance of ASEAN's central role in the evolving regional architecture and recognised the mutually reinforcing and complementary roles of the ASEAN Plus Three and other regional processes such as the ASEAN Plus Ones, East Asia Summit (EAS), ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and ADMM-Plus in moving towards the deeper regional integration of the East Asian community building process.

4. The Ministers reiterated the importance of implementation of the Roadmap for an ASEAN Community (2009-2015), strengthening of ASEAN Secretariat and formulating the ASEAN Community Post-2015 Vision as well as implementation of the Bali Declaration on ASEAN Community in a Global Community of Nations (Bali Concord III) and its Plan of Action (2013-2017). The Ministers reaffirmed the commitment to implementing them with the support of ASEAN's Dialogue Partners and other external partners, including within the framework of the ASEAN Plus Three.

5. The Ministers noted with satisfaction the progress made by APT cooperation through the implementation of the APT Cooperation Work Plan (2007-2017). As a follow-up to the recommendations of the Mid-Term Review of the Work Plan, the Ministers encouraged timely and effective implementation of the APT Cooperation Work Plan which had been revised with the new timeframe of 2013-2017. The Ministers underscored the importance of effective utilisation of the APT Cooperation Fund to further implement activities under the framework of the revised ASEAN Plus Three Cooperation Work Plan.

6. The Ministers appreciated the important contribution of East Asia Vision Group (EAVG II) in reviewing the APT cooperation over the past 15 years and helping to find out ways and means to promote the APT cooperation in a more consolidated and meaningful context. The Ministers noted that the Committee of Permanent Representatives to ASEAN (CPR) and the Ambassadors of the Plus Three countries had undertaken a general assessment of the EAVG-II Report and were currently identifying recommendations that were considered feasible and should be given priority for implementation. The Ministers further noted that the next step would be to establish action plans that would make up part of the final report to be submitted to the 18th APT Summit in 2015.

7. The Ministers welcomed Indonesia's efforts to propose a Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation in the wider Indo-Pacific region developed from the spirit of the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in the Southeast Asia (TAC) and the 2011 Declaration of the East Asia Summit on the Principles for Mutually Beneficial Relations (EAS Bali Principles). In this regard, they welcomed Indonesia's intention to host the 3rd EAS Workshop to further deliberate on the Indo-Pacific Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation.

Political and security cooperation

8. The Ministers reaffirmed the importance of APT cooperation in maintaining peace, security and stability which were indispensable conditions for development in the East Asia region. They hence concurred to further strengthen political-security cooperation, to deal with emerging challenges in both traditional and non-traditional security dimensions, inter alia the threat of terrorism, disaster management, pandemic diseases, transnational and cyber security and maritime security. The Ministers underscored the need to promote common values and norms such as good governance, democracy, rule of law and human security, as well as the promotion and protection of human rights through policy dialogue and capacity building activities.

Trade and investment

9. The Ministers expressed satisfaction over ASEAN's robust trade with the Plus Three countries in spite of the uncertainties of the global economy. The Ministers shared the view to continue strengthening regional cooperation in the areas of trade and investment facilitation. In this connection, the Ministers noted China's proposal for hosting an East Asia Investment Summit during the ASEAN and related summits in November this year.

10. The Ministers exchanged views on the importance of promoting Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) development and highlighted their aspiration that the ASEAN Plus One Free Trade Agreements with the Plus Three Countries would significantly contribute to enhancing the sustainability of the SMEs in the region, particularly in the CLMV countries.

11. The Ministers underscored the importance of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) in strengthening ASEAN Centrality in the emerging regional economic architecture and the interests of ASEAN Plus Three. The Ministers underscored that RCEP supported and contributed to economic integration, equitable economic development and the strengthening of economic cooperation among the participating countries. The Ministers welcomed the holding of a series of negotiations on RCEP since May 2013 and welcomed the successful conclusion of the fourth round of RCEP negotiations in Nanning, China from 31st March to 4th April 2014 and the fifth round of RCEP negotiations in Singapore from 23 to 27 June 2014. The Ministers supported RCEP negotiations in accordance with the Joint Declaration on the Launch of Negotiations for RCEP and the Guiding Principles and Objectives for Negotiating RCEP.

Financial cooperation

12. The Ministers welcomed the entry into force of the amended Chiang Mai Initiative Multilateralisation (CMIM) Agreement. They were pleased with the progress made to ensure that the CMIM is operationally ready, including the completion of the revision of the Operational Guidelines of the amended CMIM Agreement. They noted the work done to develop the first full set of indicators of the "Economic Review and Policy Dialogue (ERPD) Matrix", which consisted of various economic and financial indicators of all the ASEAN Plus Three members. The Ministers also welcomed the agreement of the ASEAN Plus Three Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors (AFMGM+3) at their 17th Meeting to endorse the "Guidelines for further cooperation with the International Monetary Fund" which would help to enhance the CMIM's effectiveness.

13. The Ministers stressed the importance of transforming the ASEAN Plus Three Macroeconomic Research Office (AMRO) into an international organisation. In this regard, they welcomed AMRO's continued efforts to improve the quality of its surveillance reports. The Ministers reaffirmed commitments to exert their best efforts to complete their respective domestic processes as soon as possible to ensure the prompt signature and entry into force of the AMRO Agreement.

14. The Ministers recognised the progress made in the Asian Bond Markets Initiative (ABMI), especially in the ASEAN+3 Multi-currency Bond Issuance Framework (AMBIF), the Credit Guarantee and Investment Facility (CGIF) and the Cross-border Settlement Infrastructure Forum (CSIF). The Ministers welcomed the Summit on the Asian Credit System held on 23 June 2014 in Beijing, China. The Ministers also noted China's Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) initiative.

Tourism

15. Recognising tourism was an important instrument for the promotion of people-to-people connectivity, the Ministers looked forward to the signing of the Memorandum of Cooperation (MOC) on ASEAN Plus Three Tourism Cooperation in 2015. The Ministers welcomed the APT Tourism Ministers' decision on establishment of the APT e-Tourism Working Group to implement the Work Plan. The Ministers noted the outcomes of the 13th Meeting of APT Tourism Ministers on 20 January 2014 in Kuching, Malaysia, and 24th and

25th APT National Tourism Organizations' (NTOs) Meetings on 18 January and 17 May 2014 respectively.

16. The Ministers welcomed the ASEAN-Korea Centre's proposal for holding the ASEAN Culture and Tourism Fair (ACTF) 2014 from 25 September to 1 October in Busan and Incheon, the Republic of Korea.

Food security and agriculture

17. The Ministers underscored the importance of ensuring food security and appropriate food safety, which played an important role in an emerging and resilient ASEAN Community. The Ministers looked forward to sharing new technologies in food security and also looked into enhancing the ASEAN Plus Three Emergency Rice Reserve (APTERR). The Ministers were pleased with the relief the APTERR provided in response to the impact of typhoon Haiyan in 2013 in Philippines. The Ministers noted holding of the 2nd APTERR Council Meeting on 29 May 2014. The Ministers welcomed the implementation of APT Comprehensive Strategy on Food Security and Bio-energy Development (APTCS-FSBD) and looked forward to the successful outcomes of the East Asia Modern Agriculture Workshop which will be held from 26 August to 7 September 2014 in Heilongjiang province, China.

Energy cooperation

18. The Ministers reaffirmed their support to achieving greater energy security, following the outcomes of the 10th APT Energy Ministers' Meeting on 25 September 2013, in Bali, Indonesia. The Ministers agreed to balance energy security with economic competitiveness and environmental sustainability through strengthening regional commitments to the ASEAN Plus Three energy cooperation. The Ministers acknowledged the importance of stakeholder cooperation to enhance eco-friendly energy options for the region. Recognising that many countries, including ASEAN Plus Three countries choose coal-fired-power generation due to its affordability and availability as base load electricity, the Ministers acknowledged the importance of promoting higher efficiency coal-fired power generation as a pragmatic measure in addressing climate change.

Environment, climate change and sustainable development

19. The Ministers encouraged the continued growth of cooperation on environmental issues, particularly in addressing issues relating to environmental protection and sustainable

development. The Ministers reaffirmed the importance of strengthening cooperation to effectively address the impacts of climate change. The Ministers reaffirmed their determination to work towards the adoption of a post-2020 framework to the UNFCCC applicable to all Parties. The Ministers noted the holding of the Second APT Youth Environment Forum under the theme "Youth and Sustainability" from 2 to 4 December 2013. In order to raise environmental awareness, the Ministers noted the holding of the ASEAN Plus Three Seminar on Green Productivity Improvement from 17 to 21 March 2014 in Pyin Oo Lwin, Myanmar.

Track 1.5 and Track 2 networking

20. The Ministers appreciated the important role of the East Asia Forum (EAF) as a 1.5 track network between government, business, and academic circles. They were pleased with the range of topics the EAF covered, including energy and food security issues, deepening economic cooperation, enhancing connectivity in East Asia, narrowing the development gap in rural and urban communities and enhancing people-to-people connectivity. The Ministers welcomed Brunei Darussalam's announcement to host the 12th EAF in Bandar Seri Begawan.

21. The Ministers noted greater involvement of the Network of East Asia Think-Tanks (NEAT) in supporting the APT cooperation process. The Ministers encouraged greater interaction between the APT SOM and NEAT to enable a clearer understanding of NEAT's policy recommendations in order to create long term benefits for the APT cooperation process. The Ministers welcomed the 20th NEAT held in Cambodia from 20 to 22 June 2014.

Poverty alleviation

22. The Ministers acknowledged the importance of forging closer cooperation in poverty alleviation. They underscored that rural development and poverty eradication were crucial to building a strong ASEAN community. In this regard, the Ministers noted the holding of 2nd ASEAN+3 Village Leaders Exchange Programme in China from 11 to 17 May 2014.

Labour and migrant workers

23. The Ministers acknowledged the importance of strengthening cooperation on issues relating to labour and migrant workers, particularly relating to the enhancement of a competitive labour force, which would lead to a harmonious, progressive and prosperous

workplace in the region. In this regard, the Ministers noted the holding of the ASEAN Plus Three Labor Ministers Meeting on 23 May 2014 in Nay Pyi Taw.

People-to-people links

24. The Ministers emphasised the importance of fostering long-term and mutually beneficial youth relationships through effective and practical youth cooperation activities in line with the guidance given by the APT Leaders. In this regard, the Ministers acknowledged the importance of three regular forums for sharing information and discussing youth cooperation, namely the APT Ministerial Meeting on Youth (AMMY+3), the APT Senior Officials Meetings on Youth (SOMY+3) and the APT Youth Caucus.

25. The Ministers reiterated the importance of APT cooperation in the areas of culture and the arts, especially with regard to the sharing of arts and culture policies, human resource development, preservation and protection of cultural heritage and the development of small and medium-sized cultural enterprises, including creative industry projects. The Ministers welcomed the outcomes of the Sixth ASEAN Plus Three Ministers Responsible for Culture and Arts (AMCA+3) held from 19 to 20 April 2014 in Hue, Viet Nam. The Ministers also welcomed the establishment of the East Asian Cultural Cities in Plus Three countries in 2014.

26. The Ministers expressed appreciation for Japan's international programme "Sport for Tomorrow", aimed at extending the values of sports and promoting the Olympic movement to more than 10 million people in over 100 countries, including ASEAN Plus Three countries.

Information and media

27. The Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to further promoting APT cooperation on information. In this regard, the Ministers encouraged the effective implementation of the Work Plan on Enhancing APT Cooperation through Information and Media (2012 – 2017). The Ministers noted the outcomes of the 3rd APT Ministers' Meeting Responsible for Information (AMRI+3) held in Nay Pyi Taw on 12 June 2014.

Education

28. The Ministers reaffirmed their commitments to strengthening cooperation to promote development in the education sector, work together to address common challenges related to education, and implement the APT Plan of Action on Education (2010-2017). In this regard,

the Ministers looked forward to the 2nd ASEAN Plus Three Education Ministers Meeting (2nd APTFMM), which would take place on 12 September 2014 in Vientiane. The Ministers welcomed the UNESCO World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), to be held in Japan in November 2014 and expected further promotion of ESD beyond 2014.

Science and technology

29. The Ministers underscored the importance of strengthening cooperation in science, technology and innovation to strengthen competitiveness and increase connectivity in the East Asian region. In this regard, the Ministers welcomed the 5th ASEAN COST+3 Teachers' Training and Students Camp Gifted in Science from 25 January to 1 February 2014 in Sweden, which was supported by the ROK. The Ministers looked forward to the convening of the 9th ASEAN Science and Technology Week in Indonesia, from 18-27 August 2014 with participation from ASEAN and the Plus Three countries under the theme, "innovations from the most dynamic region to earth". The Ministers welcomed Japan's new initiative to further promote the exchange of young people from ASEAN and the Plus Three countries in the field of science and technology.

Public health

30. The Ministers noted the progress of APT cooperation in health and underscored the importance of cooperation on communicable and emerging infectious diseases including the initiatives on Field Epidemiology Training Network, Risk Communication, Partnership Laboratories, Animal Health and Human Health Collaboration. They also noted specific disease management interventions, including for malaria, rabies and dengue. The Ministers noted the importance of cooperation and networking on aging, universal health coverage, non-communicable diseases, and disaster medicine.

31. The Ministers noted the importance of the full implementation of the ASEAN Strategic Framework on Health Development (2010-2015) and the continued support of the Plus Three countries in its implementation. The Ministers looked forward to the successful convening of the ASEAN Health Ministers' Meeting and related meetings in Ha Noi, in September 2014. The Ministers welcomed the ASEAN Health Initiative, which would contribute to the improvement of health levels in ASEAN, proposed at the ASEAN-Japan Commemorative Summit Meeting in December 2013. The Ministers also welcomed the 11th

ASEAN and Japan High Level Officials Meeting on Caring Societies in which ASEAN plus three members engaged in discussions about "Active Aging".

Disaster management

32. The Ministers underscored the importance of closer cooperation in disaster management and building a disaster resilient society in the region in accordance with the ASEAN Declaration on Enhancing Cooperation in Disaster Management adopted at the 23rd ASEAN Summit in 2013. In this regard, the Ministers supported the full operationalization of the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA Center) and implementation of phase two of the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) Work Programme (2010-2015). The Ministers looked forward to the Third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction to be held in Sendai, Japan in March 2015.

33. The Ministers commended the massive search and rescue operation for the missing Malaysian airline MH370, hence reinforcing the need for continued regional collaboration and prompt actions in the future.

Connectivity

34. The Ministers stressed the importance of seamless connectivity in the East Asia region and looked forward to the effective implementation of the Leaders' Statement on ASEAN Plus Three Partnership on Connectivity adopted at the ASEAN Plus Three Commemorative Summit in 2012. In this regard, The Ministers welcomed China's hosting of the 3rd International Symposium of ASEAN Plus Three Connectivity Partnership in Beijing. The Ministers also welcomed China's initiative to establish an East Asia maritime cooperation platform in order to strengthen maritime connectivity in the region.

35. Noting that ASEAN Connectivity would contribute significantly to regional integration and development, the Ministers supported the implementation of ASEAN connectivity projects and agreed to further support the implementation of the IAI Work Plan II.

Regional and international issues

36. The Ministers highlighted the importance of maintaining peace and stability in the region. In this regard, they reaffirmed their commitment to resolve issues in the South China Sea in a peaceful manner. The Ministers expressed their support for the ASEAN's Six-point Principles on the South China Sea on 20 July 2012 as well as the ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Statement on the Current Developments in the South China Sea adopted on 10 May 2014.

37. The Ministers welcomed the commitment of ASEAN and China to fully and effectively implement the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties on the South China Sea (DOC). They called on all parties to work towards the early conclusion of the Code of Conduct in the South China Sea (COC).

38. The Ministers stressed the need to maintain peace, security and stability on the Korean Peninsula, and encouraged peaceful dialogue by creating necessary conditions for the early resumption of the Six-Party Talks. They reiterated their support for all efforts to bring about denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula in a peaceful manner. They reaffirmed the importance of fully complying with obligations in all relevant United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolutions and commitments under the 19 September 2005 Joint Statement of the Six-Party Talks.

39. The Ministers welcomed the reunion of separated families between the ROK and the DPRK that took place in February and expressed hope for more frequent and larger scale family reunions in future. They welcomed the convening of the 17th Asian Games in September in Incheon, ROK, where teams from both the ROK and the DPRK would participate. The Ministers also expressed their support for the Trust-building Process on the Korean Peninsula and the Northeast Asia Peace and Cooperation Initiative (NAPCI) as well as the Initiative for Peaceful Unification of the Korean Peninsula proposed by the President of the Republic of Korea. They also noted the meetings between Japan and the DPRK to address pending issues in accordance with the DPRK-Japan Pyongyang Declaration and expected concrete progress on the matter.

40. The Ministers reaffirmed the importance for the Chair of ASEAN to continue to be invited to participate in the G20 Summits on a regular basis.

Next meeting

41. The Ministers looked forward to the 16th ASEAN Plus Three Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in 2015.