

THE 20th MEETING OF ASEAN PLUS THREE (CHINA, JAPAN AND REPUBLIC OF KOREA) TOURISM MINISTERS

5 February 2021

JOINT MEDIA STATEMENT

1. The 20th Meeting of the ASEAN Plus Three (ASEAN, China, Japan, and the Republic of Korea) Tourism Ministers was held on 5 February 2021, in conjunction with the 24th Meeting of ASEAN Tourism Ministers (M-ATM), through video conferencing. The Meeting was co-chaired by H.E. Dr. Thong Khon, Minister of Tourism, Cambodia and H.E. Mr. Xu Zhang, Vice Minister, Ministry of Culture and Tourism of China. The Meeting was preceded by the 38th Meeting of ASEAN Plus Three (APT) National Tourism Organisations (NTOs) held on 3 February 2021.
2. The Ministers noted that international visitors to the APT region in 2020 had sharply declined by approximately 81.5 per cent when compared to 2019. The Ministers exchanged information and views on the COVID-19 impact and mitigation measures undertaken by the APT members and discussed strategic approaches to revitalise the APT tourism cooperation by focusing on recovery efforts and close collaboration in implementing mutually beneficial programmes and activities. In this regard, the Ministers endorsed the APT Tourism Cooperation Work Plan 2021-2025, which focuses on strengthening the APT tourism cooperation in the next 5 years and prioritises the recovery of tourism in the APT region. The Ministers tasked the APT NTOs to explore innovative ways to revitalise the tourism sector in the post-COVID-19 pandemic in collaboration with all stakeholders including the private sector and the ASEAN Centres in China, Japan and the Republic of Korea.
3. The Ministers expressed appreciation to the lead countries for their active roles, despite the challenges, in implementing the ASEAN Plus Three Tourism Cooperation Work Plan 2018-2020 activities throughout 2020, including among others, the dissemination of the directory of the ASEAN Green Hotel Standard and ASEAN MICE Venue Standard to ASEAN Plus Three Countries. The Ministers noted that due to the COVID-19 pandemic, several activities for 2020 had been postponed to 2021, including the ASEAN-China Tourism Investment Seminar.
4. Under the ASEAN-China tourism cooperation, the ASEAN Tourism Ministers applauded China for convening the ASEAN Culture and Tourism Online Exhibition at the 2020 China International Fair for Trade in Services; the 3rd ASEAN-China Belt and Road Culture and Tourism Exchange Week on 16-20 September 2020 in Guiyang, China; the 7th Sichuan International Tourism Expo on 25-28 September 2020 in Leshan, China; and the China International Travel Mart on 16-18 November 2020 in Shanghai, China. The Ministers encouraged ASEAN and China to continue working closely to implement the tourism cooperation plan to promote two-way economic growth for mutual benefits.
5. The ASEAN Tourism Ministers welcomed Japan's support in organising the Japan Association of Travel Agents (JATA) Online Seminar in May 2020; the Online Travel Mart in July, August and September 2020; the Tourism EXPO Japan 2020 on 29 October – 1 November 2020 in Okinawa, Japan; ASEAN-Japan Centre's the Training Programme on Interpretation on 9-12 February 2020 in Bagan, Myanmar; webinar series for tourism industry & consumers from June 2020 until December 2020; as well as the Online Training

Programme on Interpretation on 5, 6 and 9 October 2020, Webinar on Eco-Tourism in Japan on 25 November 2020 and the ASEAN Tourism Material Webinars in Japan in December 2020.

6. The ASEAN Tourism Ministers noted with appreciation the ROK's continued support and active participation in the ASEAN-ROK tourism cooperation activities, including the organisation of ASEAN-Korea Familiarisation Tour on 10-14 February 2020 in Jakarta, Balikpapan and Maratua Island, Indonesia; the development of ASEAN Travel Web Page on the ASEAN-Korea Centre's website to promote ASEAN tourism; the convening of the Online Seminar on ASEAN-Korea Tourism on 8 September 2020 in Seoul, ROK; the hosting of the Muslim-friendly Korea Online Festival in October 2020; the opening of the web page with the list of Korea's Muslim-Friendly Restaurants in the Malay language; and the ASEAN Week 2020 in November 2020 in Seoul, ROK.

7. The Ministers commended the vital roles played by the ASEAN-China Centre, ASEAN-Japan Centre and ASEAN-Korea Centre in promoting tourism, people-to-people and cultural exchanges between ASEAN and the Plus Three countries throughout 2020. The Ministers also encouraged all the Centres to support the ASEAN NTOs in implementing projects and activities that complement the APT Tourism Cooperation Work Plan 2021-2025, focusing on human resource development and other priorities which will strengthen the ASEAN Member States' capacity and capability to maintain competitiveness in the tourism industry.

LIST OF MINISTERS

The Meeting was attended by:

- (i) H.E. Dato Ali Apong, Minister of Primary Resources and Tourism, Brunei Darussalam;
- (ii) H.E. Dr. Thong Khon, Minister of Tourism, Cambodia;
- (iii) H.E. Mr. Xu Zhang, Vice Minister of Culture and Tourism, China;
- (iv) H.E. Mdm. Angela Tanoesoedibjo, Vice-Minister of Tourism and Creative Economy, Indonesia;
- (v) H.E. Mr. Jiro Hatoyama, Parliamentary Vice-Minister of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism of Japan;
- (vi) H.E. Mr. Jeong-bae Kim, 2nd Vice Minister of Culture, Sports and Tourism, the Republic of Korea;
- (vii) H.E. Mr. Ounethouang Khaophanh, Vice-Minister of Information, Culture and Tourism, Lao PDR;
- (viii) H.E. Dato' Sri Hajah Nancy Shukri, Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture, Malaysia;
- (ix) H.E. Mr. Maung Maung Kyaw, Director General, representing Union Minister for Hotels and Tourism, Myanmar;
- (x) H.E. Mdm. Bernadette Romulo-Puyat, Secretary of Tourism, Philippines;
- (xi) H.E. Mr. Alvin Tan, Minister of State, Ministry of Trade & Industry and Ministry of Community, Culture & Youth, Singapore;
- (xii) H.E. Mr. Phiphat Ratchakitprakarn, Minister of Tourism and Sports, Thailand;

- (xiii) H.E. Mr. Nguyen Trung Khanh, Chairman, Viet Nam National Administration of Tourism, representing H.E. Mr. Nguyen Ngoc Thien, Minister of Culture, Sports and Tourism of Viet Nam; and
- (xiv) H.E. Dato Lim Jock Hoi, Secretary-General of ASEAN.
