



**JOINT STATEMENT OF THE SEVENTH ASEAN PLUS THREE
MINISTERIAL MEETING ON SOCIAL WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT
(7th AMMSWD+3)**

**25 May 2023
Putrajaya, Malaysia via video conference**

The Seventh ASEAN Plus Three Ministerial Meeting on Social Welfare and Development was convened on 25 May 2023 via video conference. The Meeting was chaired by Malaysia and Japan under the theme “Accelerating the Implementation of ASEAN’s Commitments for Gender Equality through Gender Mainstreaming and Social Inclusion”.

We reaffirmed our commitment to promoting gender equality through gender mainstreaming and social inclusion in the ASEAN region pursuant to the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Blueprint 2025, as well as to implement the Regional Framework and Action Plan to Implement the ASEAN Declaration on Strengthening Social Protection (2015), Regional Plan of Action to Implement the Kuala Lumpur Declaration on Ageing: Empowering Older Persons in ASEAN (2021), ASEAN Enabling Masterplan 2025: Mainstreaming the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2018), ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on the Elimination of Violence Against Children (2015), Bohol Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Work Plan 2017-2020 (2016), Strategic Framework and Action Plan for Nutrition (2019), Ha Noi Declaration on Strengthening Social Work Towards Cohesive and Responsive ASEAN Community (2020), Culture of Prevention (CoP) Work Plan (2020), ASEAN Roadmap on Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour by 2025 (2020), ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework (2020), ASEAN Gender Mainstreaming Strategic Framework (2021), and the Bandar Seri Begawan Declaration on the Importance of the Family for Community Development and Nation-Building (2021).

We reiterated the commitment to further strengthening and deepening the ASEAN Plus Three cooperation process and underscored the mutually reinforcing and complementary nature of the ASEAN Plus Three with other ASEAN-led frameworks.

We noted the deliberations of the Seventeenth Meeting of the ASEAN Plus Three Senior Officials Meeting on Social Welfare and Development (17th SOMSWD+3) held on 24 March 2023 in Malaysia via video conference, and further noted the progress of ASEAN Plus Three cooperation on social welfare and development since the 6th AMMSWD held in 2019.

We recognised the valuable and continuing support of the ASEAN Plus Three Countries and look forward to deepening our partnership on promoting gender equality through gender mainstreaming and social inclusion of women, older persons/elderly, children, persons with disabilities, as guided by the goals and objectives of the Senior Officials Meeting on Social Welfare and Development (SOMSWD) Work Plan 2021-2025 and Its Results Framework and ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC) Work Plan 2021-2025. We appreciated the significant progress achieved under the ASEAN Plus Three Cooperation Work Plan (2018-2022), particularly in the areas of promoting women's empowerment and gender equality which paved the way for further progress of the cooperation among ASEAN Plus Three.

We reaffirmed our commitment in exploring opportunities to promote gender equality and women's empowerment through the Plan of Action to Implement the ASEAN-China Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity (2021-2025), the Revised Implementation Plan of the Vision Statement on ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation: Shared Vision, Shared Identity, Shared Future, and the ASEAN-Republic Korea Plan of Action to Implement the Joint Vision Statement for Peace, Prosperity and Partnership (2021-2025).

We further recognised the different sectors of societies that are uniquely affected by the various challenges in their environment given varying life risks and vulnerabilities which are exacerbated by the impact of COVID-19, and the urgency of tackling emerging issues affecting the social welfare and development of the ASEAN societies which require a re-evaluation of development priorities and strategies while offering the opportunity of "building back better" to the ASEAN Member States.

We commended the successful outcomes of the 19th ASEAN-Japan High Level Officials Meeting on Caring Societies held on 9-10 December 2021 and that of 20th on 9-10 March 2023, via video conference, which has proven to be an effective we believe that platform for sharing knowledge and enhancing capacities and understanding of cutting-edge policy issues related to social welfare, health, and labour.

We further commended the completion of the Establishment of ASEAN-Wide Research Networking on Ageing (ARNA), a project of Malaysia and funded by Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF) under SOMSWD Work Plan 2016-2020. This project is vital in establishing a common, cohesive and sustainable ASEAN research on issues pertaining to ageing.

We agreed to:

REAFFIRM our commitment to working together in order to intensify the regional cooperation on social welfare and development by accelerating the ASEAN commitments for gender equality through gender mainstreaming and social inclusion.

TASK the ASEAN Plus Three Senior Officials Meeting on Social Welfare and Development (SOMSWD+3) to support the implementation and report on the progress of relevant APT initiatives under the SOMSWD Work Plan 2021-2025 and Its Results Framework.