

Speech by H.E Minister Nguyen Manh Hung At the Opening Ceremony of AMRI 16

- *Your Excellency Vo Thi Anh Xuan, Vice President of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam,*
- *Excellencies, Ministers, Heads of delegations of ASEAN Member States, dialogue partners and observers,*
- *Distinguished delegates,*
- *Ladies and gentlemen,*

Viet Nam is very honoured to host the 16th meeting of ASEAN Ministers Responsible for Information (AMRI). We warmly welcome all the delegates to Da Nang, the beautiful coastal city in Central Vietnam. This city reaches out to the sea. The sea is the symbol of cooperation and integration, which are the core values of ASEAN. Thanks to these values, ASEAN is becoming the Epicentrum of Growth. And we, ASEAN member states, are proud of that.

The information and media sector is undergoing revolutionary transformation and disruptive changes powered by digital technologies. Our future no longer lies on the extended line of the past. We have to create our new future with digital technologies. Besides taking innovative approaches, we also have to uphold the core missions of media, which are raising awareness, disseminating knowledge, empowering people, enabling growth, strengthening solidarity and understanding within ASEAN, and promoting ASEAN values to the world.

We are living in an information-overloaded world where people could be drowned by too much information. People are suffering from “information obesity” due to constant information consumption, whether facts or fake news. We spend no less than 6 hours per day consuming information. Information is growing overloaded, but knowledge and understanding are lessening. Very few people could understand what lies behind the flood of information. Even fewer could find wisdom and generate values from it.

In a world of Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, and Ambiguity (VUCA) today, too much information may lead to confusion and distrust. It is time for media to offer knowledge to enhance our adaptability, to help us use new technologies for development and cooperation purposes, to widespread positive energy and to foster the belief in a future of peace and prosperity for ASEAN and the world.

Earlier this month, the ASEAN Summit 2023 in Indonesia has adopted the Declaration on sustainable resilience, reaffirming the need to address fundamental challenges through knowledge and information sharing, technical assistance, resource mobilization, and implementation of capacity building initiatives.

The ASEAN Ministers Responsible for Information (AMRI) this year have agreed on the theme: “Media: From Information to Knowledge for a Resilient and Responsive ASEAN”. To recover faster and be more resilient after disasters, we must be empowered by new knowledge. To be more responsive to changes, we must quickly discover new knowledge from changes. Therefore, media sector has to evolve from simply providing information, to providing knowledge to people, to help them sustain in a VUCA world.

Social networks can generate and share information. New digital platforms should be able to generate and share useful knowledge. Social networks must become networks of information, knowledge and understanding. Digital technologies, especially Artificial Intelligent (AI), are now capable of generating knowledge and understanding from information. Yet, as leaders of information and media sector in ASEAN, we have to take the lead in this process.

Knowledge and understanding are the essence of human beings. Digital technologies are generating more information than ever. With the introduction of deep learning technology, now they can also generate knowledge and understanding of information, which are crucial to building a peaceful, prosperous and happy ASEAN. The AMRI Ministers can proudly declare the new missions of media: creating knowledge and understanding from information, thus empowering the people, for their well-being.

People are now inventing more and more powerful technologies, but they can be both destructive and productive. Therefore, the ethical and responsible use of technology as well as the social responsibility of media platforms need to be reiterated now more than ever. And this is the responsibility of the media sector in ASEAN.

Prior to this AMRI meeting, under the initiatives of Viet Nam, ASEAN Member States have conducted a forum to promote cooperation in digital transformation for media sector and a seminar on fake news.

Digital transformation for media is to bring media onto cyberspace. Media was important in the real world, and is now even more important in the digital realm. Media agencies in ASEAN have shared good practices of digital transformation and will jointly develop a guideline for media digital transformation in the region.

Knowledge of how to combat fake news is also becoming more important, as it helps strengthen trust in cyber space. Fake news or contents used to be produced by human. Now it can be produced by AI with high level of authenticity, thus further complicating our information environment. ASEAN Member States consider tackling fake news as a priority in our cooperation agenda. The AMRI meeting this year will also focus the discussion on how to improve effective regional collaboration in this area.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The information and media sector in ASEAN is assuming new missions and proactively opening new horizons for development to hand-in-hand build a peaceful and prosperous ASEAN Community. It is the transformation from information to knowledge and understanding. Leading this transformation and accomplishing this new mission will be valuable contributions of ASEAN to the information and media industry in the world.

With that spirit, I would like to express my appreciation and sincere thanks to Ministers and delegates from ASEAN Member States, dialogue partners and observers for coming to the beautiful city of Da Nang, and having discussion on challenges and opportunities of digital media, on the directions for media cooperation in ASEAN in the coming years.

Finally, I would like to wish Her Excellency Vice President Vo Thi Anh Xuan, Honorable Ministers and delegates good health, success and happiness.

I hope all the delegates will enjoy your stay in Da Nang.

May I wish the 16th AMRI a great success!

Thank you!