

## IV. FUNCTIONAL COOPERATION

### CULTURE AND INFORMATION

#### JOINT PRESS STATEMENT OF THE INAUGURAL MEETING OF THE ASEAN MINISTERS OF CULTURE AND ARTS

**Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 13-14 October 2003**

1. The Inaugural Meeting of ASEAN Ministers Responsible for Culture and Arts (AMCA) was held on 13 and 14 of October 2003, in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The objectives of AMCA Meeting include strengthening ASEAN cooperation in the field of culture and arts in order to further enhance mutual understanding and solidarity among the peoples of ASEAN as well as furthering regional development.
2. This Inaugural Meeting represents an immediate and concrete step towards realizing the objectives of the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community, one of three pillars of the Declaration of ASEAN Concord II (Bali Concord II) issued at the ASEAN Summit in Bali, Indonesia on 7-8 October 2003. In the Declaration, the ASEAN Summit, called upon the Community to "nurture talent and promote interaction among ASEAN scholars, writers, artists and media practitioners to help preserve and promote ASEAN's diverse cultural heritage while fostering regional identity as well as cultivating people's awareness of ASEAN".
3. The Inaugural Meeting of ASEAN +3 Ministers Responsible for Culture and Arts (AMCA+3) was also held back to back with AMCA. The objective of AMCA +3 is to lay down the basic framework and operational guidelines of ASEAN's cooperation with its Plus 3 Dialogue Partners (People's Republic of China, Japan and the Republic of Korea) in the field of culture and the arts.
4. The AMCA Meeting agreed that some of the areas of regional cooperation in the cultural context could include human resource development to ensure the skills and values in the field of culture and the arts are preserved and sustained.
5. Another area is in the development of small and medium-size culture enterprise and industry (SMCE). The Meeting noted that the cultural entrepreneurs need to continuously learn new set of skills in order to make the transition to a market based economy. This would include the development and refinement of cultural products in the various disciplines ranging from the performing arts to architecture and to business incubators. The AMCA Ministers agreed that the officials from Member Countries would consult their respective relevant authorities on the possibility of liberalizing the trading of ASEAN cultural products.
6. The Meeting also agreed that the ASEAN Festival of Arts could be held in conjunction with the AMCA Meeting. The ASEAN Festival of Arts is envisaged to promote and enhance tourism in the ASEAN region and the individual member countries. It is also envisaged to foster closer relationship between the ASEAN member countries.
7. To mark the Inaugural Meeting of AMCA, Malaysia is hosting the 1st ASEAN Festival of Arts in Kuala Lumpur, Seremban and Shah Alam from 12 – 18 October 2003. With a theme on dance, the Festival would involve dancers and musicians from all ten ASEAN Member Countries and the Republic of Korea.
8. The Meeting agreed that the next AMCA Meeting will be held in early October / November 2004 in Thailand.