

JOINT MEDIA STATEMENT
17th CONFERENCE OF THE ASEAN MINISTERS RESPONSIBLE FOR
INFORMATION AND 8th CONFERENCE OF THE ASEAN PLUS THREE
MINISTERS RESPONSIBLE FOR INFORMATION

“MAJU - Media Advancing Joint Understanding: Transforming Media’s Role in Advancing Cooperation and Mutual Understanding in ASEAN”

7 May 2025, Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam

1. The 17th Conference of the ASEAN Ministers Responsible for Information (AMRI) and the 8th Conference of the AMRI Plus Three were hosted by Brunei Darussalam on 7 May 2025, in Bandar Seri Begawan.
2. The theme of the 17th AMRI was “MAJU - Media Advancing Joint Understanding: Transforming Media’s Role in Advancing Cooperation and Mutual Understanding in ASEAN.”
3. The Meeting was preceded by the 22nd Meeting of the Senior Officials Responsible for Information (SOMRI) and its meeting with the Plus Three Countries, and Japan on 5-6 May 2025.

Opening Session

4. The ASEAN Anthem “The ASEAN Way” was played during the Opening Session. The Opening Session commenced with remarks by H.E. Pehin Datu Lailaraja Major General (R) Dato Paduka Seri Awang Haji Halbi bin Haji Mohd Yussof, Minister at the Prime Minister’s Office and Minister of Defence II of Brunei Darussalam, followed by remarks from His Royal Highness Prince Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah ibni His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu’izzaddin Waddaulah, the Crown Prince and Senior Minister at the Prime Minister’s Office of Brunei Darussalam and H.E San Lwin, Deputy Secretary-General of ASEAN for ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC), representing the Secretary-General of ASEAN.
5. The Meeting was chaired by H.E. Pehin Datu Lailaraja Major General (R) Dato Paduka Seri Awang Haji Halbi bin Haji Mohd Yussof, Minister at the Prime Minister’s Office and Minister of Defence II of Brunei Darussalam, with H.E. Mr NETH Pheaktra, Minister for Information of Cambodia as Vice Chair. The Meeting was attended by all ASEAN Member States, Timor-Leste, China, Japan, the Republic of Korea and the ASEAN Secretariat.
6. H.E. Pehin Datu Lailaraja Major General (R) Dato Paduka Seri Awang Haji Halbi bin Haji Mohd Yussof, Minister at the Prime Minister’s Office and Minister of Defence II of Brunei Darussalam highlighted the important role of the media and information sector in supporting the ASEAN’s sustainable development goals and addressing contemporary global and geopolitical challenges. H.E. further urged the sector to remain cohesive and resolute in strengthening its capacity to become

resilient and responsive to challenges and opportunities arising from digital transformation and external economic threats. His full remarks appear in **ANNEX 1**.

Transforming Media's Role in Advancing Cooperation and Mutual Understanding in ASEAN

7. The information and media sector has been central to ASEAN's efforts in promoting mutual understanding and deepening regional cooperation as well as conveying the ASEAN narratives and promoting ASEAN public diplomacy. Since the inauguration of the AMRI in 1989, the sector has served as a critical platform for amplifying ASEAN awareness and fostering a shared ASEAN Identity, as well as facilitating constructive dialogues among ASEAN Member States on strengthening cooperation to support and develop the regional information and media eco-system. As ASEAN progresses towards its Post-2025 Vision, the Meeting underscored the need for the sector to enhance cooperation in adapting to changing media consumption trends and the evolving digital landscape for strategic investment in the long-term transformation of media through the theme **"MAJU - Media Advancing Joint Understanding: Transforming Media's Role in Advancing Cooperation and Mutual Understanding in ASEAN."**

8. The Meeting noted the relevance of the theme considering the ongoing societal and technological changes. In particular, the Meeting emphasised the responsibility of the information and media sector to actively foster ASEAN Identity and strengthen regional solidarity by empowering citizens with timely, credible, accurate, inclusive, and culturally sensitive content. Such efforts, it was emphasised, would promote regional cohesion and help bridge diverse communities across ASEAN.

9. Recognising that younger generations, particularly Gen Z and Gen Alpha, are at the forefront of digital trends and content consumption, the Meeting encouraged the ASEAN's information sector to explore innovative approaches such as the use of short-form videos, interactive media, and social networking services to engage the netizens. The Meeting further underscored the need to position ASEAN's narratives as not only informative but also relevant and appealing to the digital habits of today's youth.

10. Amidst growing globalisation and technological advancements, the Meeting expressed concern over the erosion of cultural identity and the increasing risk of social polarisation. It was agreed that the ASEAN's information and media sector must remain proactive in promoting the values of tolerance, diversity, and mutual understanding. The Meeting reaffirmed the importance of partnerships, both within ASEAN and with Dialogue Partners, to strengthen efforts in building resilient, inclusive and a people-centred, people-oriented environment.

Bandar Seri Begawan Declaration to Reaffirm the ASEAN Ministers Responsible for Information's Commitment to Strategic Progress in Media and Information

11. The Meeting endorsed the "Bandar Seri Begawan Declaration to Reaffirm the ASEAN Ministers Responsible for Information's Commitment to Strategic Progress in

Media and Information,” which reaffirms AMRI’s ongoing commitment to strengthen cooperation and advance the role of the information and media sector in the ASEAN Community beyond 2025. Furthermore, the Meeting recalled AMRI’s foundational objectives since its establishment in 1989, recognising the sector’s continued vital contribution to ASEAN’s development and its transversal role in supporting cross-cutting regional priorities.

12. The Meeting noted that the Declaration provides strategic direction for enhancing the sector’s capacity to address not only emerging challenges in the digital era, including disinformation, the impacts of digital transformation, but also the empowerment of youth as key drivers of innovation in media and communication and promoting the Creative Economy across the region.

Kuala Lumpur Declaration on Safe and Responsible Use of Social Media Platforms for ASEAN

13. The Meeting supported the “Kuala Lumpur Declaration on Safe and Responsible Use of Social Media Platforms for ASEAN,” which underlines ASEAN’s commitment to fostering a safe, inclusive, and responsible digital environment across the region. The Meeting reaffirmed the importance of promoting a resilient and people-centred ASEAN Community by addressing the challenges posed by the misuse of social media, including the spread of disinformation, hate speech, and online exploitation.

14. The Meeting recognised the role of the ASEAN’s information sector in fostering collaborative engagement with key stakeholders, including social media platforms, to promote the development and implementation of effective measures to address harmful online content while safeguarding freedom of expression. The Meeting further noted the ongoing development of the “Guidelines for Safe and Responsible Use of Social Media Platforms for ASEAN” that will propose pragmatic ways to promote online safety and cyber wellness.

ASEAN Strategic Plan for Media and Information (2016-2025) and Development of New Work Plan

15. The Meeting commended the substantive progress in the implementation of the ASEAN Strategic Plan for Information and Media (2016-2025), which has served as a key instrument in guiding ASEAN’s efforts to strengthen regional cooperation in the media and information sector, enhance ASEAN awareness, and promote regional identity and resilience. The Meeting further recognised the Strategic Plan’s contribution to supporting ASEAN’s priorities under the ASEAN Community Vision 2025, particularly in fostering a more informed and cohesive community.

16. The Meeting further acknowledged the ongoing development of the successor plan, the Work Plan for Information and Media (2026-2035), which is intended to be a forward-looking document that addresses the complex challenges of the fast-changing information and media landscape. The new Work Plan is expected to strengthen ASEAN’s ability to respond to emerging trends, including rapid digital transformation,

technological innovation, disinformation, and the growing demand for inclusive and accessible media content, as ASEAN moves towards its Post-2025 Vision.

ASEAN Communication Master Plan 2018-2025 (ACMP II) in Promoting A Community of Opportunities for All and the Development of the ACMP III (2026-2030)

17. The Meeting noted the continued progress in the implementation of the ASEAN Communication Master Plan (ACMP) II (2018-2025), which has served as a key instrument in amplifying ASEAN awareness and fostering ASEAN Identity across the region. The Meeting also recognised the role of ACMP II in supporting ASEAN's efforts to communicate the message, "ASEAN: A Community of Opportunities for All," and in enhancing public understanding of ASEAN's contributions to regional peace, stability, and prosperity.

18. The Meeting further acknowledged the ongoing development of the ACMP III (2026-2030), which is expected to build on the achievements of its predecessor and provide strategic communication guidance for ASEAN Community-Building. In this regard, the new ACMP III shall play a critical role in supporting the communication outreach to socialise awareness of the four Post-2025 Strategic Plans, namely, the Strategic Plan for ASEAN Political-Security Community, the Strategic Plan for ASEAN Economic Community, the Strategic Plan for ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community, and the Strategic Plan for Connectivity, to achieve the ASEAN Community Vision 2045.

Updates from the SOMRI Working Groups (WGs) and the ASEAN Task Force on Fake News (TFFN)

19. The Meeting commended the continued efforts of the three SOMRI Working Groups (WGs) – the Working Group on ASEAN Digital Broadcasting (WG-ADB), the Working Group on Content and Production (WG-CP), and the Working Group on Information, Media and Training (WG-IMT) – in advancing ASEAN's information and media agenda. The Meeting noted that the three WGs have contributed to the development of digital broadcasting infrastructure, the creation of high-quality content, the strengthening of media capacity-building initiatives, and the promotion of media and information literacy across the region. The Meeting further acknowledged the work of the ASEAN Task Force on Fake News (TFFN) to mitigate the harmful effects of fake news, which remains a core and sustained undertaking of SOMRI. The Meeting recognised that combating false information can be done through content moderation and self-regulation, which can be achieved by collaborating with online platforms to update guidelines and standardise policies.

20. The Meeting further encouraged the three WGs and the TFFN to continue supporting ASEAN's strategic priorities by aligning their work with the ASEAN Community Vision beyond 2025. The Meeting underscored the need for the WGs and TFFN to remain responsive to emerging trends, including digital transformation, technological innovation, and evolving media consumption patterns. The Meeting emphasised that such efforts would ensure ASEAN's information and media sector remains a key enabler in advancing regional integration, strengthening social resilience, and promoting mutual understanding among ASEAN citizens.

ASEAN Committee on Culture and Information (COCI)

21. The Meeting acknowledged the substantial contributions of the ASEAN Committee on Culture and Information (COCI) in supporting ASEAN's media and information agenda through a range of initiatives aimed at fostering ASEAN awareness and a shared regional identity. The Meeting recognised COCI's longstanding commitment to enhancing people-to-people connectivity and promoting regional cultural understanding through its various projects and programmes. The Meeting also underscored COCI's important role in complementing the work of AMRI and SOMRI by advancing initiatives that contribute to the development of media and information capacities within ASEAN.

22. The Meeting welcomed COCI's ongoing efforts to address cross-cutting priorities in ASEAN, including through activities that strengthen regional resilience, promote social inclusion, and foster innovation in the information and media sector. The Meeting further encouraged COCI to align its future work with ASEAN's broader aspirations under the ASEAN Community Vision beyond 2025 and to continue to play a proactive role in advancing cooperation with other ASEAN sectoral bodies.

Cooperation with Dialogue Partners

23. The Meeting had a fruitful exchange of views on the progress of ASEAN's cooperation with Dialogue Partners in the field of information and media. The Meeting noted the conclusion of the Work Plan on Enhancing ASEAN Plus Three Cooperation Through Information and Media (2018-2025), which has served as a framework to deepen collaboration between ASEAN and the Plus Three Countries in the information sector. The Meeting looked forward to continued engagement and the development of a new work plan that captures new areas of cooperation to address the evolving challenges and opportunities brought by digital transformation and media innovation.

24. The Meeting welcomed the updates on ongoing and completed activities with Dialogue Partners, spoke highly of the fruitful outcomes and significant achievements made under the Work Plan on Enhancing ASEAN-China Cooperation Through Information and Media (2018-2025), and agreed to further expand cooperation areas and increase the level of collaboration. The Meeting also welcomed progress under the ASEAN-Japan cooperation, including the ongoing project on the Comprehensive Review of the ASEAN Strategic Plan for Information and Media (2016-2025) and the Development of a New Work Plan. The Meeting further noted the sustained collaboration of ASEAN-ROK in film production and capacity building.

25. The Meeting acknowledged the expanding cooperation under the information and media sector with new partners, including Norway, Pakistan, and Türkiye.

Closing and Acknowledgement

26. The Meeting agreed to convene the 18th AMRI and its related meetings in Cambodia in 2027.

27. The ASEAN Member States expressed their deep appreciation to the Government of Brunei Darussalam for the excellent arrangements made for the convening of the 17th AMRI and its related meetings. The Meetings were held in the traditional spirit of ASEAN solidarity and cordiality.

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**CLOSED SESSION
AGENDA ITEM 4
“MINISTERIAL DISCUSSION”**

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENT FOR
YANG BERTAMBAH
PEHIN DATU LAILARAJA MAJOR GENERAL (R) DATO PADUKA
SERI AWANG HAJI HALBI BIN HAJI MOHD YUSSOF
MINISTER AT THE PRIME MINISTER’S OFFICE
AND MINISTER OF DEFENCE II**

**AS CHAIR OF
THE 17TH CONFERENCE OF THE ASEAN MINISTERS
RESPONSIBLE FOR INFORMATION (AMRI)**

**7TH MAY 2025
BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, BRUNEI DARUSSALAM**

Honourable Colleagues,

His Excellency San Lwin

ASEAN Deputy Secretary-General for the ASCC, representing the ASEAN Secretary-General

Distinguished Delegates,

1. We gather today under an agenda that calls upon us to reflect deeply, to share our insights, and to chart a course for the 17th AMRI, a course that navigates the ever-shifting currents of our information landscape.

2. The very nature of the information sector demands agility. It is not merely evolving; it is expanding, stretching the boundaries of our responsibilities. We find ourselves compelled to align our work with the relentless march of technological advancement, the fluctuating tides of consumer behavior, and the profound shifts within our societies. This convergence has undeniably reshaped the contours of news media and communications, leaving an indelible mark on national and regional practices. From refining the rule of law to empowering journalists, from fostering conducive business environments to ensuring inclusive and safe information exchange, our work resonates across diverse spheres.

3. Throughout our collective journey, we have demonstrated an unwavering commitment to our shared priorities. This dedication is etched in the initiatives, frameworks, and declarations we have forged. The

ASEAN Communication Master Plan and the ASEAN Strategic Plan for Information and Media stand as testaments to our collaborative spirit. Declarations such as the 'Core Values on Digital Literacy for ASEAN,' the 'Framework and Joint Declaration to Minimise the Harmful Effects of Fake News,' the 'Framework for Promoting Accessibility for All in ASEAN Digital Broadcasting,' and the 'AMRI Vision Statement ASEAN 2035: Toward A Transformative, Responsive and Resilient Information and Media Sector' illuminate our path forward.

4. Building upon these milestones, Brunei Darussalam, in its capacity as Chair of the AMRI and SOMRI from 2025 until 2026, has chosen the **theme MAJU – Media Advancing Joint Understanding: Transforming media's role in advancing cooperation and mutual understanding in ASEAN.** MAJU, meaning "Moving Forward" in Malay, encapsulates our aspiration to reaffirm the commitment of the 1st AMRI, while addressing contemporary global and geopolitical challenges. We recognize the pivotal role of information and media in supporting ASEAN's sustainable development goals, encompassing health, gender equality, youth empowerment, disaster resilience, and the protection of children and youth from online exploitation and extremism.

5. In an era of unprecedented globalization, technology has become a double-edged sword, utilized for both constructive and destructive purposes. The ease with which misinformation and propaganda can spread poses a significant challenge to regional political stability and social cohesion. This is not merely an information sector concern; it resonates

across the ASEAN Digital Senior Officials Meeting and the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime.

6. To mitigate these challenges, Brunei Darussalam identifies four crucial areas for media's future development:

- First: Effectiveness. It demands that we understand the evolving media landscape, embracing personalization, interactivity, and mobile-first strategies.
- Second: Sustainability. We need to address the environmental, social, and economic impact of the media industry.
- Third: Innovation, where embracing of new media models, such as streaming, social media, and social gaming are necessary.
- And fourth: Funding. It is equally important that we explore diverse avenues, including investment, while demonstrating the impact of our work.

7. I now direct your attention to the proposed outcome documents for the 17th AMRI, including the Bandar Seri Begawan Declaration and the Kuala Lumpur Declaration. Speaking on behalf of Brunei Darussalam, I express our support for the latter's elevation to the 47th ASEAN Summit and in return, seek your endorsement for the BSB Declaration.

8. In addition, recognizing the heightened social awareness of our youth, I encourage your support towards the proposal to implement a

comprehensive regional study on evolving youth trends and their impact on the media landscape. I believe this study will guide our efforts in strategically placing our resources on the right infrastructure and capacity development, ensuring the enduring quality and effectiveness of our content and how we convey it.

9. Along with other things in today's digital world, media and information relies heavily on infrastructure. Therefore, any threats to economic stability including the recent imposing of high tariffs will affect our progress as supply chains will be disrupted. This will also force us to redirect our resources. With global institutions weakening, it is more apparent than ever for ASEAN to be cohesive and resolute in strengthening our own capacity, maintaining our comparative advantage, while preserving our relations with external partners through peaceful negotiations.

10. With that, let us continue our collaborative journey, navigating these extraordinary times with wisdom and foresight. I eagerly anticipate hearing your valuable perspectives.

Thank you.