



## **CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT OF THE 21<sup>ST</sup> ASEAN PLUS THREE SUMMIT**

**SINGAPORE, 15 NOVEMBER 2018**

1. The 21<sup>st</sup> ASEAN Plus Three (APT) Summit was held in Singapore on 15 November 2018. The Meeting was chaired by H.E. Lee Hsien Loong, Prime Minister of the Republic of Singapore, and attended by all Heads of State/Government of ASEAN Member States, the People's Republic of China, Japan and the Republic of Korea (ROK). The Secretaries-General of ASEAN and the Trilateral Cooperation Secretariat were also in attendance.

2. We noted with satisfaction the substantive progress in APT cooperation and reiterated our commitment to further strengthen and deepen functional cooperation under the APT process. The APT plays a key role in regional community-building efforts in East Asia, with ASEAN as the driving force.

3. We reaffirmed the importance of ASEAN Centrality in the evolving regional architecture and its ASEAN-led frameworks, including the APT. We recognised the mutually reinforcing and complementary nature of the APT framework with other regional fora such as the East Asia Summit and the ASEAN Regional Forum. We also shared the view that the APT should continue to support the implementation of the ASEAN Community Vision 2025, in order to achieve deeper regional integration in East Asia.

4. We welcomed the successful convening of the 7<sup>th</sup> Trilateral Summit among China, Japan and the ROK in Japan in May 2018. We acknowledged the vital role of trilateral cooperation in enhancing mutual trust, and boosting win-win functional cooperation in the region, thereby providing opportunities for a more robust APT cooperation process.

### **Review and Future Direction of APT Cooperation**

5. We noted with satisfaction the progress in the implementation of the APT Cooperation Work Plan 2018-2022, and looked forward to the timely and effective implementation of all measures under the Work Plan to enhance APT cooperation

over the next four years. We also underscored the importance of the effective utilisation and prudent management of the APT Cooperation Fund to implement activities under the Work Plan. In this connection, we expressed appreciation to all APT countries for their contribution to the replenishment of the Fund to support cooperation projects. We recalled the East Asia Vision Group (EAVG) II Report, including its recommendation to realise an East Asia Economic community (EAEC). We noted a suggestion for our Economic Ministers to explore the vision. We were pleased with the progress in the implementation of action plans of the EAVG II selected recommendations, which would pave the way towards greater APT integration. We looked forward to further progress on the outstanding action plans to implement the EAVG II recommendations.

6. We acknowledged the importance of the APT in maintaining and enhancing peace, security, stability and development in East Asia. We agreed to deepen and strengthen political and security dialogue and cooperation to address non-traditional security issues articulated in the APT Cooperation Work Plan 2018-2022, such as trafficking in persons, cybercrime, and illicit drug trafficking. We also looked forward to enhancing cooperation in maritime security and safety, countering terrorism and violent extremism, and promoting moderation.

7. We welcomed the growing trade between ASEAN and the Plus Three countries, and emphasised the need to promote trade liberalisation in the region and ensure mutually beneficial partnerships. We reaffirmed our support for an open, inclusive, and rules-based multilateral trading system that will support regional economic integration amidst uncertainties in the global trade environment. In this regard, we welcomed the substantial progress made in the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) negotiations in 2018. We noted with satisfaction that the RCEP negotiations have advanced to the final stage, and we expressed our determination to conclude a modern, comprehensive, high quality, and mutually beneficial RCEP in 2019. We also expressed our commitment to uphold a global trade environment that is open, mutually beneficial, rules-based and inclusive through the RCEP. We also committed to contribute to the World Trade Organization (WTO) to make it more relevant and adaptive to a changing world, and strengthen its effectiveness. We encouraged constructive engagement on issues relating to e-commerce in the WTO and other relevant international fora, that will promote the development of the digital economy and trade.

8. We welcomed the strong trade and investment relations between ASEAN and the Plus Three countries. In 2017, trade between ASEAN and the Plus Three countries amounted to USD 813.6 billion or 31.6 per cent of ASEAN's total trade. foreign direct investment (FDI) flows from the Plus Three countries into ASEAN were valued at USD 29.9 billion, accounting for 21.8 per cent of total FDI inflows to ASEAN. There was a suggestion to explore the possibility of using an East Asian common trading currency to facilitate trade in the region.

9. We reaffirmed our commitment to enhancing economic cooperation and encouraged closer collaboration on ASEAN's priorities and projects through the APT Economic Cooperation Work Programme 2019-2020. In this connection, we also welcomed the launch of the Joint Study on "10+3 Cooperation for Improvement of Supply Chain Connectivity", which would be a useful reference in deepening cooperation on supply chains among APT countries, facilitating regional trade, promoting investment and overall international competitiveness, and supporting economic development.

10. We welcomed the efforts of the ASEAN-China Centre, ASEAN-Japan Centre and ASEAN-Korea Centre to promote trade, investment, tourism and education, the integration and development of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in the region, as well as people-to-people and cultural exchanges between ASEAN and the Plus Three countries.

11. We recognised the important role of the private sector in enhancing economic cooperation in East Asia. We commended the East Asia Business Council's work in providing private sector inputs to the RCEP negotiations, organising activities to enhance the capacity of MSMEs, and conducting a survey on business awareness on new technologies and their market environments, which was supported by the Japan External Trade Organization, and included contributions by other institutions such as the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade and the Korea International Trade Association.

12. We also recognised the potential presented by the ongoing digital revolution to improve the region's competitiveness and the livelihood of its people, while underscoring the need to prepare for its associated challenges. To this end, we called for greater APT cooperation to support the concrete application of technologies and smart solutions in our daily lives, such as through information and communications technology (ICT), e-commerce and smart cities. We also welcomed the establishment of the ASEAN Smart Cities Network (ASCN), and the ASEAN Leaders' adoption of a framework for smart city development in the region. We commended the ASCN cities for developing action plans with concrete projects that will improve their peoples' lives, and looked forward to forging mutually beneficial partnerships between the Plus Three countries and the network as it evolves over the coming years. We noted China's proposal to host an APT Young Scientists Forum in 2019.

13. We reaffirmed our commitment to safeguard the financial stability of the region amidst external risks and financial market volatility. We stressed the importance of strengthening financial system resilience as the region seeks to overcome structural challenges and build stronger foundations for economic growth. In this regard, we looked forward to the continued enhancement of the region's financial safety net, with the Chiang Mai Initiative Multilateralisation (CMIM) at its centre. We welcomed the

continued commitment by the APT Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors to strengthen the CMIM with the general agreement on the main contents of the first CMIM Periodic Review.

14. We noted with satisfaction the enhanced capacity of the APT Macroeconomic Research Office (AMRO) in macroeconomic surveillance and CMIM support. We encouraged AMRO to continue closely monitoring the regional financial situation, and to provide timely and high quality policy advice to help regional members manage various economic risks and vulnerabilities. We welcomed the conclusion of the Memoranda of Understanding between AMRO and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), between AMRO and the European Stability Mechanism (ESM), and between AMRO and the Asian Development Bank (ADB), all of which would deepen AMRO's partnerships with global financial institutions. We commended AMRO on becoming a Permanent Observer to the United Nations General Assembly, which would further broaden AMRO's engagement with other countries and international organisations. We noted AMRO's policy note titled "ASEAN Plus Three and External Risks: Sustaining Growth Through Cooperation", which provided a helpful overview of recent macroeconomic trends and possible policy responses.

15. We acknowledged the Asian Bond Markets Initiative (ABMI)'s significant contributions in developing local currency bond markets and facilitating regional financial integration. We welcomed the completion of the ADB's study on promoting local currency-denominated green bonds for infrastructure development, the approved increase of the Credit Guarantee and Investment Facility (CGIF)'s authorised capital from USD 700 million to USD 1.2 billion, and the General Principles for participation of non-APT countries as observers in the APT Bond Market Forum. We also welcomed the agreement to establish a regional catastrophe risk insurance pool for Lao PDR and Myanmar as the first product of the Southeast Asia Disaster Risk Insurance Facility (SEADRIF), with support from Japan, Singapore and the World Bank.

16. We underscored the need to continue implementing the nine strategic areas of cooperation under the APT Cooperation Strategy on Food, Agriculture and Forestry (APTCS) 2016-2025, including knowledge sharing, technology transfer and investment promotion to further deepen regional collaboration. We underlined the important role of the APT Emergency Rice Reserve (APTERR) Agreement as a mechanism to strengthen regional food security. In this regard, we welcomed the signing of the Protocol to amend the APTERR Agreement to extend annual contributions to the operational cost of APTERR for a further five-year period (2018-2022) and for the APTERR Council to decide on the annual contribution of APT countries to the operational cost for the subsequent five-year periods after 2022. We also welcomed the signing of the Memorandum of Cooperation for the Tier 1 implementation between Japan and the Philippines as the first trial for APTERR.

17. We were pleased to note the implementation of various initiatives of the APT Centre for the Gifted in Science (ACGS), including the 11<sup>th</sup> ACGS Board of Directors Meeting in the ROK on 23 November 2017, the 9<sup>th</sup> APT Student Camp and Teacher Workshop in the ROK from 5 to 12 January 2018, and the 7<sup>th</sup> APT Junior Science Odyssey in Malaysia from 29 July to 4 August 2018.

18. We were pleased to note the progress in the implementation of the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity (MPAC) 2025 and looked forward to the continued support of APT countries, particularly in the development of sustainable and quality infrastructure in accordance with international standards. We underscored the importance of exploring links and synergies between MPAC 2025 and the Plus Three countries' connectivity strategies at the appropriate time.

19. We acknowledged the efforts made to implement the priority areas of APT health cooperation, which includes universal health coverage, utilising ICT for healthcare, non-communicable diseases, traditional and complementary medicine, active ageing, human resources for health, responding to communicable and emerging health threats and food safety, as well as issues related to antimicrobial resistance, ending all forms of malnutrition, and disaster health management. Recognising that antimicrobial resistance affects healthcare systems and adversely impacts global economies, we adopted the APT Leaders' Statement on Cooperation against Antimicrobial Resistance. We noted Japan's expansion of the target areas under the Asia Health and Wellbeing Initiative. We welcomed ASEAN's effort to establish the ASEAN Centre for Active Ageing and Innovation in Thailand in 2019.

20. We called for the development of collaborative projects to protect and conserve the environment, promote sustainable use of natural resources, address the impact of climate change and the issue of marine plastic debris, and forge closer cooperation on poverty alleviation. In this regard, we welcomed the APT Marine Plastic Debris Cooperative Action Initiative to enhance cooperation on combatting marine plastic debris. We reaffirmed our commitment to advancing complementarities between the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to improve the living standards of people in the APT countries. We also recognised the importance of APT cooperation in supporting ASEAN's implementation of the ASEAN Plan of Action for Energy Cooperation 2016-2025.

21. We expressed support for Singapore's designation of 2018 as the Year of Climate Action. We welcomed Singapore's successful convening of the Special ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Climate Action (SAMCA) and the Expanded SAMCA (E-SAMCA) on 10 July 2018, where ASEAN and the Plus Three countries exchanged views on their respective climate action plans, reaffirmed their commitment to the Paris Agreement, and discussed ways to increase regional action to address climate change.

We welcomed the submission of the Chair's Summary of the SAMCA and E-SAMCA by Singapore as input to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) 2018 Talanoa Dialogue. We also welcomed the outcomes of the ASEAN Climate Change Partnership Conference, organised under the ambit of the ASEAN Working Group on Climate Change, that was held in the Philippines on 26 June 2018 to promote multi-stakeholder and cross-sectoral collaboration in addressing climate change among ASEAN Member States, relevant sectoral bodies, and Dialogue Partners. We also noted the ASEAN-Japan Climate Change Action Agenda proposed by Japan at the E-SAMCA.

22. We commended the efforts of the APT Senior Officials Meeting on Youth to engage youth from APT countries and establish effective communication through various annual youth exchanges and community immersions. We also noted with satisfaction that at the 4<sup>th</sup> APT Education Ministers Meeting, which was held on the sidelines of the 10<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Education Ministers Meeting in Nay Pyi Taw from 29 October to 1 November 2018, the Ministers welcomed the progress in developing the APT Plan of Action on Education 2018-2025, made at a workshop held in Tokyo in October 2018.

23. We reaffirmed the need for the greater promotion of student mobility with quality assurance, and welcomed the approval of the APT Guidelines on Transcripts and Supplemental Documents for Academic Records of Exchange Students by the 4<sup>th</sup> APT Education Ministers Meeting, with the aim of facilitating smooth recognition of exchange students' academic records abroad, and thus promoting student exchanges supported by quality assurance mechanisms.

24. We noted the convening of the "Seminar on Migrant Workers' Contribution to an East Asia Economic Community" in Siem Reap, Cambodia from 6 to 7 April 2018 to address the challenges faced by migrant workers in East Asia. We also noted the Conference on Sharing Best Practices on Harnessing Industry Involvement in Development of Higher Level Qualifications held in Manila, the Philippines from 7 to 8 November 2018 as part of the implementation of the EAVG II recommendations. We also underscored the importance of continued cooperation on various aspects relating to labour, including emerging issues associated with the Future of Work and green jobs.

25. We noted the progress in the implementation of the APT Cooperation on Civil Service Matters (ACCSM Plus Three) Work Plan 2016-2020. We welcomed initiatives supported by the APT Cooperation Fund that sought to strengthen the overall capabilities of the ASEAN Civil Services, including the Study Visit Programme on Public and Human Resources Management to the ROK from 2 to 6 April 2018, and the 6<sup>th</sup> APT Human Resource Development Forum in Jeju Island, ROK from 13 to 14 November 2018. We noted the successful convening of the Heads of Civil Service

Meeting for the 4<sup>th</sup> ACCSM Plus Three in Singapore on 25 October 2018, preceded by the ACCSM Plus Three Senior Officials' Meeting and the ACCSM Plus Three Forum on Good Governance, with the theme "Public Service Reform Transformation", on 23 and 24 October 2018 respectively.

26. We commended the work accomplished under the Work Plan on Enhancing APT Cooperation on Culture 2013-2017. We welcomed the adoption of the new Work Plan for 2019-2021 at the 8<sup>th</sup> Meeting of APT Ministers Responsible for Culture and Arts in Yogyakarta, Indonesia on 24 October 2018, and looked forward to the effective implementation of the new Work Plan to further enhance inter-cultural exchanges and understanding. In this regard, we welcomed the establishment of the APT Network of Culture Cities to develop city-level exchanges among the Culture Cities of East Asia and ASEAN City of Culture. We also welcomed the designation of the ASEAN Cultural Year 2019 at the 8<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the ASEAN Ministers Responsible for Culture and Arts and encouraged all ASEAN Member States and external partners to carry out cultural events during the ASEAN Cultural Year 2019.

27. On the information sector, we welcomed the adoption of the Work Plan on Enhancing APT Cooperation through Information and Media 2018-2023, which outlined future cooperation in the areas of human resource development, media networking and new media, during the 5<sup>th</sup> Conference of APT Ministers Responsible for Information in Singapore on 10 May 2018.

28. We acknowledged the important contribution of the East Asia Forum (EAF) to further deepen Track 1.5 cooperation in East Asia. We noted the outcomes of the 16<sup>th</sup> EAF held in Luang Prabang, Lao PDR from 29 to 30 August 2018, with the theme "Promoting Sustainable Development and Prosperity in East Asia". We recognised the contributions of the Network of East Asian Think-Tanks (NEAT), and the successful convening of the 28<sup>th</sup> NEAT Country Coordinators Meeting (CCM) on 8 May 2018, as well as the 29<sup>th</sup> NEAT CCM and 16<sup>th</sup> NEAT Annual Conference from 17 to 18 September 2018 in Yangon, Myanmar. We also noted NEAT Memorandum No.15.

29. We noted the successful convening of the 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of Deans and Directors of Diplomatic Training Institutions of APT countries held in China from 23 to 25 May 2018, with the theme "Innovation in Diplomatic Training: New Challenges, New Methods, New Modes". We also noted the Meeting's decision to hold a joint training course on crisis management in 2019, in conjunction with the 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting for APT Young Diplomats, that will build knowledge and enhance cooperation through the sharing of best practices.

30. We underscored the importance of strengthening cross-pillar cooperation in other areas such as tourism, energy security, minerals, disaster management and

emergency response, ending all forms of malnutrition, active ageing, protection and promotion of the rights and welfare of children, the elderly and persons with disabilities, social protection, gender equality and empowerment of women and girls, and rural development and poverty eradication.

### **Regional and International Issues**

31. We welcomed the Inter-Korean Summits held on 27 April 2018, 26 May 2018 and from 18 to 20 September 2018, as well as the Singapore Summit between the United States (US) and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) on 12 June 2018. We also welcomed the Panmunjom Declaration and the Pyongyang Joint Declaration signed between President Moon Jae-in of the ROK and Chairman of the State Affairs Commission of the DPRK Kim Jong Un, as well as the Joint Statement signed between US President Donald J Trump and Chairman Kim.

32. We urged all concerned parties to continue working towards the realisation of lasting peace and stability on a denuclearised Korean Peninsula, including through the full and expeditious implementation of the Panmunjom Declaration, the Pyongyang Joint Declaration and the Joint Statement by the US and DPRK leaders. We also called on the DPRK to fulfil its stated commitment to complete denuclearisation and its pledge to refrain from further nuclear and missile tests. We reiterated our commitment to the full implementation of all relevant United Nations Security Council Resolutions and noted international efforts to bring about complete denuclearisation. Some Leaders emphasised the importance of addressing issues of humanitarian concerns of the international community, including the resolution of the abductions issue.

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