



**Chairman's Statement
of the ASEAN Post Ministerial Conference (PMC) 10+1 Session with India**

12 September 2020, Viet Nam

1. The ASEAN Post Ministerial Conference (PMC) 10+1 Session with India was held on 12 September 2020. The Meeting was co-chaired by H.E. Mr. Don Pramudwinai, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Thailand, and H.E. Dr. Subrahmanyam Jaishankar, Minister of External Affairs of the Republic of India.
2. The Meeting noted with satisfaction the progress in the implementation of the Plan of Action to Implement the ASEAN-India Partnership for Peace, Progress and Shared Prosperity for the period of 2016-2020. The Meeting adopted a new Plan of Action to Implement the ASEAN-India Partnership for Peace, Progress and Shared Prosperity for the period of 2021-2025 to serve as an action-oriented document to further strengthen the ASEAN-India Strategic Partnership in the next five years.
3. The Meeting reiterated its support to the priorities of ASEAN this year in advancing a "Cohesive and Responsive" ASEAN under Viet Nam's Chairmanship and welcomed the *ASEAN Leaders' Vision Statement on a Cohesive and Responsive ASEAN: Rising Above Challenges and Sustaining Growth*, adopted at the 36th ASEAN Summit on 26 June 2020. The Meeting underlined the need to strengthen regional solidarity and maintain ASEAN Centrality to respond effectively to current and future challenges as well as harness opportunities including those brought about by the digital transformation and the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR).
4. The Meeting recognised the unprecedented challenges posed by the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic in the region and the world and underscored the importance of enhanced international cooperation in addressing the challenges of COVID-19 pandemic and other public health emergencies. The Meeting also highlighted, in particular, the need for joint collaboration on scientific research, development, and distribution of vaccines and medicine that are affordable and accessible to all, whilst building and maintaining resilient, open, and connected supply chains and supporting a sustained economic recovery. Towards this end, ASEAN Ministers looked forward to India's support to the COVID-19 ASEAN Response Fund, and the ASEAN Regional Reserves of Medical Supplies for Public Health Emergencies once it is established. The ASEAN Ministers also encouraged support from India for ASEAN's recovery from

the impact of COVID-19 and the development of the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework.

5. The Meetings reaffirmed the importance of the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC) as the key code of conduct governing inter-State relations in the region, underscored its relevance to the wider region and recognised its contribution to promoting regional peace, stability, and security.
6. The Meeting underscored the importance of maintaining ASEAN Centrality and unity in the evolving regional architecture and reiterated their commitment to supporting an ASEAN-centred regional architecture that is open, transparent, inclusive and rules-based, built upon ASEAN-led mechanisms, strengthening the efficiency of and promoting mutually-reinforcing synergy between the ASEAN-led mechanisms, including the ASEAN Plus One, East Asia Summit (EAS), ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), and ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM-Plus). The Meeting underscored the importance of multilateralism, regionalism and adherence to international law in contributing to global and regional peace, stability and prosperity.
7. ASEAN appreciated India's continued support for ASEAN Centrality and India's active engagement in ASEAN-led mechanisms, such as EAS, ARF, ADMM-Plus and EAMF, contributing to maintaining regional peace and stability. The Meeting emphasised the need to enhance ASEAN-India collaborative efforts in countering terrorism, violent extremism, and transnational crimes, as well as in strengthening cybersecurity. The Meeting also noted the importance of increasing cooperation in the maritime domain, through existing relevant ASEAN-led mechanisms, to address common challenges on maritime issues and promote maritime cooperation.
8. The ASEAN Ministers appreciated India's support for the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP) and welcomed opportunities to promote practical cooperation with India in the key areas identified in the AOIP, and in line with the objectives and principles of the AOIP and India's Indo-Pacific Ocean Initiative (IPOI), with a view to promoting mutual trust, mutual respect, and mutual benefit as well as to contributing to peace, stability and prosperity in the region.
9. The Meeting shared the commitment to further strengthening ASEAN-India trade and investment relations including through the full utilisation of the ASEAN-India Free Trade Area (AIFTA). The Meeting looked forward to the review of the ASEAN-India Trade in Goods Agreement (AITIGA), in accordance with the decision of the ASEAN and Indian Economic Ministers on this matter, to make AITIGA more user-friendly, simple, and trade facilitative for businesses. The Meeting noted the completion of the ratification of the ASEAN-Indian Trade in Services Agreement.
10. The Meeting encouraged the ASEAN-India Business Council to play a more important role in increasing private sector engagements to further promote business and economic cooperation including through digital transformation of MSMEs to prepare for the 4th Industrial Revolution (4IR) between ASEAN and India. The Meeting also noted ongoing efforts to enhance cooperation in other

economic sectors such as Information and Communication Technology (ICT), Science, Technology, and Innovation (STI), tourism, agriculture, finance and energy.

11. The Meeting welcomed India's continued support for the implementation of the Master Plan for ASEAN Connectivity (MPAC) 2025. The Meeting noted the completion of the study by Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA) commissioned by India on "The India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway and Its Possible Eastward Extension to Lao PDR, Cambodia, and Viet Nam: Challenges and Opportunities". The Meeting looked forward to timely completion of the India-Thailand-Myanmar Trilateral Highway as well as the commencement of the development of its extension to Lao PDR, Cambodia, and Viet Nam. The Meeting also looked forward to the conclusion of the ASEAN-India Air Transport Agreement (AI-ATA) and the ASEAN-India Maritime Transport Agreement (AI-MTA).
12. The Meeting also looked forward to the continued implementation of the projects on the establishment of Centre of Excellence in Software Development and Training (CESDT) in CLMV Countries, and ASEAN-India Space Cooperation Programme. The Meeting expressed appreciation for India's support for the ASEAN Smart Cities Network (ASCN) in building communities that are resilient, innovative and well-connected through technological advancement.
13. The Meeting underlined the importance of enhanced cooperation on digital connectivity. The Meeting valued India's continued support and contribution to the implementation of the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) Work Plan III to narrow the development gap within the region, including through, among others, the provision of scholarships for students from Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Viet Nam countries to pursue Master's/Post Graduate Diploma in Nalanda University for the batch 2018-2020 and the establishment of IT Training Centres in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Viet Nam.
14. The Meeting was pleased to note the enhancement of ASEAN-India cooperation on education, culture, and people-to-people contacts, among others, through scholarships programmes; students, youth and media exchanges; and conferences on cultural and civilizational links. The Meeting invited India to collaborate with the newly established ASEAN Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Council towards enhancing the human capital development in the region. The Ministers expressed satisfaction over the successful conduct of the 6th Roundtable of the ASEAN India Network of Think Tanks (6th AINTT) and noted the recommendations from the Roundtable. The Ministers also took note of India's initiative to organise virtually the second edition of the ASEAN-India Track 1.5 Dialogue on Cyber Issues on 12 October 2020 and an ASEAN-India Hackathon on 24-26 November 2020.
15. The Meeting looked forward to the further enhanced collaboration between ASEAN and India in addressing issues such as climate change, managing biodiversity issues, as well as enhancing ASEAN's capacity on disaster management. The Ministers supported cooperation in exchanging technologies and best practices to support the health and sustainability of water resources,

including through regional and sub-regional institutions. The Meeting also appreciated India's support and contribution to the implementation of IAI Work Plan III and narrowing the development gap within the region, and promoting sub-regional cooperation, including through the Mekong-Ganga Cooperation.

16. The Meeting exchanged views on regional and international issues of common interest and concern, including terrorism and violent extremism, cybersecurity, the South China Sea. The Meeting welcomed the strengthening of maritime cooperation and connectivity in the region. The Meeting discussed the situation in the South China Sea, during which concerns were expressed by some countries over recent developments in the South China Sea and underscored the importance of promoting and maintaining peace and stability, a rules-based order, freedom of navigation in and overflight above the South China Sea, and ensuring unimpeded lawful commerce in the South China Sea. The Meeting emphasised the importance of non-militarisation, self-restraint in the conduct of activities that would complicate or escalate disputes and affect peace and stability in the region as well as pursuing the peaceful resolution of disputes, including the full respect for diplomatic and legal processes, without resorting to the threat or use of force, in accordance with universally recognised principles of international law, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). The Meeting reaffirmed the importance of upholding international law, including the 1982 UNCLOS, which serves as the basis for determining maritime entitlements, sovereign rights, jurisdiction and legitimate interests over maritime zones, and sets out the legal framework within which all activities in the oceans and seas must be carried out. The Meeting encouraged all parties concerned to continue to engage in constructive discussions and work towards preserving regional peace and stability.

17. The Meeting underscored the importance of full and effective implementation of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) in its entirety. The Ministers noted the positive progress in the negotiations on the Code of Conduct in the South China Sea (COC) despite the challenging COVID-19 situation and looked forward to the early conclusion of an effective and substantive COC that is consistent with international law, including the 1982 UNCLOS and does not prejudice the legitimate rights and interests of all nations including those not party to these negotiations.

