

PLAN OF ACTION TO IMPLEMENT THE ASEAN-INDIA PARTNERSHIP FOR PEACE, PROGRESS AND SHARED PROSPERITY (2021-2025)

This Plan of Action (POA) guides the implementation of ASEAN-India Strategic Partnership towards achieving the goals and objectives of the ASEAN-India Partnership for Peace, Progress and Shared Prosperity on 30 November 2004 in Vientiane, Lao PDR; the Vision Statement of the ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit on 20 December 2012 in New Delhi, India; and the Delhi Declaration of the ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit to Mark the 25th Anniversary of ASEAN-India Dialogue Relations on 25 January 2018 in New Delhi, India; as well as builds upon the achievements made under the previous POAs for 2010-2015 and 2016-2020 in all areas of common interest.

Through the implementation of this POA, ASEAN and India will also work towards supporting the ASEAN Community building and integration process, including the ASEAN 2025: Forging Ahead Together, for a politically cohesive, economically integrated, socially responsible and a truly people-oriented, people-centered and rules-based ASEAN, narrowing the development gap and enhancing ASEAN Connectivity. Both sides will also further promote cooperation in addressing common and emerging challenges and enhance coordination in other international fora on issues of common concern to contribute to overall peace, stability and prosperity. The ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP), adopted at the 34th ASEAN Summit in Bangkok, can serve as a guiding principle in promoting cooperation between ASEAN and India through the existing ASEAN-led mechanisms in the four key areas outlined in the Outlook, namely (i) maritime cooperation, (ii) connectivity, (iii) UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030, and (iv) economic and other possible areas of cooperation to contribute to peace, prosperity and development in the region.

ASEAN and India hereby will endeavour to pursue all cooperation in conformity with their obligations under international law and in accordance with their respective domestic laws, regulations and policies.

1. Political and Security Cooperation

Political Cooperation

1. Strengthen the existing mechanisms for consultation and cooperation between ASEAN and India including the ASEAN-India Summit, the ASEAN Post Ministerial Conference with India (PMC+1), ASEAN-India Senior Officials' Meeting and ASEAN-India Joint Cooperation Committee Meeting;

2. Deepen dialogue and cooperation through ASEAN-led mechanisms including the East Asia Summit (EAS), ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), and the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM-Plus);
3. Work closely to further strengthening the EAS, with ASEAN as the driving force, as a premier Leaders-led forum for dialogue and-cooperation on broad strategic, political and economic issues of common interest and concern with the aim of promoting peace, stability and economic prosperity in the region;
4. Further promote and substantiate comprehensively the ASEAN-India Strategic Partnership;
5. Continue regular engagement among EAS Ambassadors in Jakarta on the implementation of Leaders' decisions as well as exchange information on regional development cooperation initiatives and security policies and initiatives;
6. Underline the value of inter-Parliamentary dialogue and cooperation, including two-way visits between Indian and ASEAN parliaments and engagement with the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA);
7. Continue to support ASEAN Centrality in the regional architecture, as well as further promote shared values and norms, including those enshrined in the ASEAN Charter, the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC), the EAS Declaration on the Principles for Mutually Beneficial Relations (Bali Principles), towards the development of a more rules-based and norms-based regional architecture as well as to contribute towards maintaining and promoting peace and stability in the region and beyond;
8. Continue to promote the Delhi Dialogue as a complementary platform to discuss ways to intensify and broaden India's engagement with ASEAN;
9. Promote collaboration and coordination in other multilateral frameworks and fora, including the United Nations and other bodies within the UN System, Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM), on issues of common interest and concern and to strengthen the multilateral system and, where appropriate, carry out consultations between ASEAN and India at the margins of these fora;

Security Cooperation

10. Continue India's active participation at and co-chairing of joint exercises and activities in the frameworks of the EAS, ARF, and the ADMM-Plus;
11. Promote dialogue and strengthen practical defence cooperation to address the challenges facing the region through the ADMM-Plus in the areas of maritime security, military medicine, counter-terrorism, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, peacekeeping operations, humanitarian mine action and cybersecurity;
12. Strengthen cooperation through the ARF including in the areas of preventive diplomacy, disaster relief, maritime security, peacekeeping operations, defence dialogue, counter-terrorism and transnational crime, security of and in the use of ICTs as well as non-proliferation and disarmament, and support ASEAN's central and active role in the ARF processes;
13. Promote cooperation in addressing humanitarian aspects of land mines and other explosive remnants of war issues in the region through the ASEAN Regional Mine Action Center (ARMAC), including technical and financial support where appropriate to the Centre;

Maritime Cooperation

14. Promote maritime security and safety, freedom of navigation and overflight, unimpeded commerce, mutual trust and confidence, exercise of self-restraint, the non-use of force or of the threat to use force, and the resolution of disputes by peaceful means, in accordance with universally recognised principles of international law, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), the relevant Standards and Recommended Practices of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), and the relevant instruments and conventions of the International Maritime Organization (IMO);
15. Explore cooperation, where appropriate, to promote common principles, objectives and elements between the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP) adopted at the 34th ASEAN Summit in Bangkok and the Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI) announced by India at the 14th East Asia Summit in Bangkok;
16. Promote maritime cooperation, including maritime security, counter piracy, maritime safety and search and rescue (SAR) cooperation, and information sharing, through appropriate mechanisms under the ASEAN-India framework and other appropriate

ASEAN-led mechanisms, including EAS, ADMM-Plus, ARF, Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum and where appropriate, promote technical cooperation, capacity building and development, exchange of experience and sharing of knowledge and expertise;

Transnational Crime and Counter-Terrorism

17. Enhance cooperation to support the implementation of the ASEAN Plan of Action in Combating Transnational Crime (2016-2025), continue to convene regular ASEAN Plus India Senior Officials' Meeting on Transnational Crime (SOMTC + India) Consultation and explore the possibility of the development of an ASEAN-India work programme on transnational crime;
18. Enhance cooperation on mutually agreed areas of transnational crime, including through the implementation of relevant documents;
19. Explore possible cooperation between ASEAN and India in the area of cybercrime;
20. Deepen cooperation in combating international terrorism and addressing the rise of radicalisation and violent extremism by supporting the implementation of the ASEAN Convention on Counter-Terrorism, the ASEAN Comprehensive Plan of Action on Counter-Terrorism and the ASEAN Plan of Action to Prevent and Counter the Rise of Radicalisation and Violent Extremism (2018-2025), the 2003 ASEAN-India Joint Declaration for Cooperation to Combat International Terrorism, and other relevant EAS and ARF statements;
21. Convene the ASEAN Senior Officials on Drug Matters (ASOD) + India Consultations on a regular basis and support ASEAN's efforts in the implementation of ASEAN Work Plan on Securing Communities Against Illicit Drugs 2016-2025;

2. Economic Cooperation

Trade and Investment

22. Continue efforts to make the ASEAN-India Free Trade Area (AIFTA) more user-friendly, simple, and trade facilitative for businesses through initiating a review of the ASEAN-India Trade in Goods Agreement under the Framework Agreement on Comprehensive Economic Cooperation between ASEAN and India as mutually agreed by ASEAN and India Economic Ministers;

23. Work towards the ratification by all parties of the ASEAN-India Investment Agreement to facilitate further economic integration between ASEAN and India;
24. Enhance economic cooperation through capacity building and technical assistance programmes, workshops and seminars as well as outreach activities that support the implementation, facilitation and utilisation of the ASEAN-India FTA;
25. Enhance cooperation on capacity building and economic development to support ASEAN regional economic integration efforts;
26. Enhance private sector engagement and business-to-business relations, including through the ASEAN-India Business Council and the ASEAN-India Business Summit in order to further strengthen business networks and opportunities;
27. Promote and facilitate cross-border investment flows into ASEAN Member States and India through information sharing and exchange of best practices on relevant investment-related topics;
28. Promote MSME development through capacity building, technical cooperation mechanisms, and business matching activities in order to further integrate MSMEs in the global and regional value chains;

Finance

29. Explore strengthening cooperation to improve on financial infrastructure development and capital market development with view to promoting sustainable growth;
30. Support regional financial development and integration through initiatives that promote greater financial inclusion and stronger financial stability;

Energy

31. Support the implementation of the ASEAN Plan of Action on Energy Cooperation (APAEC) 2016-2025;
32. Explore cooperation, including through the private sector, to promote energy security through regional power integration and the development of renewable and alternative energy sources as well as promotion of clean energy technologies and

energy efficiency and conservation practices;

33. Promote best practices on energy regulatory frameworks and technical standards, consistent with the APAEC, including technology transfer and capacity building support for the programme area to realize multilateral power trade in the ASEAN Power Grid and greater integration of renewables into the grid;

Transport

34. Forge closer cooperation to enhance transportation infrastructure, networks and operations, including air, maritime, road and rail to improve ASEAN-India trade and tourism-related transport connectivity, including through supporting the implementation of the Kuala Lumpur Transport Strategic Plan (ASEAN Transport Strategic Plan) 2016-2025;
35. Deepen cooperation on technical, economic and regulatory matters of aviation, including the convening of ASEAN-India Working Group Meeting on Regional Air Services Arrangement;
36. Promote maritime transport cooperation between ASEAN and India, and encourage potential private sector participation in the development of seaports, maritime logistics network and maritime services in order to create greater efficient linkages;

Food, Agriculture and Forestry

37. Promote networking and cooperation between government authorities concerned, together with agriculture and food experts, scientists and laboratories, and agriculture and food-related academic institutions, farmers including farmers' organisations and communities, and traders of ASEAN and India;
38. Promote responsible fishing practices and to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, particularly in order to sustain fisheries resources and promote inland fisheries and aquaculture best practices to ensure food security, eradicate poverty and to optimise the benefit of to the people and economies in the region;
39. Promote investment, capacity building, research and development, technology and innovation, sustainable management, and sharing of information, experience and best practices in the food, agriculture, forestry and fisheries sectors as well as in coastal management;

40. Support the implementation of the Multi-sectoral Framework on Climate Change: Agriculture and Forestry Towards Food and Nutrition Security and Achievements of Sustainable Development Goals (MSFCC), including through deeper cooperation in capacity building and sharing of information, experience and best practices;

Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

41. Promote further ICT cooperation through relevant mechanisms, including capacity building and knowledge sharing, in areas such as e-commerce, Artificial Intelligence, Fourth Industrial Revolution, Internet of Things (IoT) & 5G, ICT in Disaster Management, Creating smart societies through ICT, Cyber Forensics, Next Generation Transmission Technologies, Future Trends in Mobile Communication, Advanced Satellite Communication and Regulatory and Policy issues;
42. Strengthen cooperation, capacity building, and policy coordination on cybersecurity, including in personal data protection and support the implementation of the ASEAN Cybersecurity Cooperation Strategy by engaging relevant ASEAN mechanisms and institutions;
43. Promote sustainable and inclusive economic growth and prosperity through increasing digital trade, entrepreneurship, preparing MSMEs for digital transformation and developing a digital-ready workforce equipped for the Fourth Industrial Revolution;

Tourism

44. Enhance consultations between ASEAN and India to promote tourism cooperation, such as in the areas of joint marketing and promotion, sharing of best practices and expertise related to human resource development, practicing sustainable and responsible tourism, tourism information exchange, crisis communications, tourism investment, joint promotion in the areas of niche markets and promotion of tourism standards;
45. Enhance engagement between private sectors from ASEAN and India, through the participation in the annual ASEAN Tourism Forum (ATF), ASEAN TRAVEX, professional international travel marts held in ASEAN Member States and India, in order to create more opportunities for joint promotion of integrated tourism markets and joint investment;

46. Strengthen ASEAN-India capacity building programmes in the tourism sector through seminars, workshops, trainings and language courses for tourism professionals;

Science, Technology and Innovation

47. Strengthen cooperation and cross-sectoral collaboration in science and technology, including but not limited to joint research and development projects, and support implementation of the ASEAN Plan of Action on Science, Technology and Innovation (APASTI) 2016-2025, such as in the areas of health, environmental management, climate change adaptation and mitigation measures, agricultural technologies, alternative energy, biodiversity, food processing, advanced materials for development of value-added products, and space technology and applications;
48. Promote cooperation in biotechnology including through capacity building and joint research and development for mutual benefit;
49. Encourage more programmes and projects under the ASEAN-India Science and Technology Development Fund;

3. Socio-Cultural Cooperation

Disaster Management and Emergency Response

50. Strengthen cooperation to support the implementation of the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) Work Programme for 2021-2025, and support the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on disaster management (AHA Centre);
51. Encourage cooperation with India on disaster management and humanitarian assistance under the ambit of the ASEAN-India framework, particularly on sharing of experiences and best practices in the areas of disaster prevention and mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery;
52. Encourage regular consultations between the ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management (ACDM) and India to facilitate synergy among multilateral cooperation mechanisms on disaster management;

Environment, Climate Change and Biodiversity

53. Promote the exchange of knowledge and experience on environmental management, climate change and biodiversity through the exchange of experts, joint research activities, and the provision of training courses, and provide technical and financial assistance and capacity building for ASEAN Member States, as well as relevant ASEAN sectoral bodies and institutions and action plans, including, where applicable, through the ASEAN-India Green Fund;
54. Provide support for conservation and sustainable management of ASEAN's terrestrial and aquatic environment with focus on restoration of degraded and fragile ecosystems;
55. Promote strengthening of networking and cooperation between relevant stakeholders as well as exchange of knowledge and capacity building to build a clean and green ASEAN Community through sustainable use of natural resources, chemicals and waste management protection of the environment, development of environmentally sustainable cities which addresses issues including urban biodiversity;
56. Support the implementation of the Bangkok Declaration on Combating Marine Debris in ASEAN Region, the ASEAN Framework of Action on Marine Debris, and the 2018 EAS Leaders' Statement on Combatting Marine Plastic Debris;
57. Provide support for conservation and sustainable management of land and forests, including ASEAN's effort to implement relevant ASEAN agreements, such as the ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution, through initiatives and actions in strengthening national capability and regional cooperation;

Public Health

58. Promote sharing of information in the field of public health, medicine, health education and health promotion relevant to the health priorities of the ASEAN Health Sector under the clusters of promoting healthy lifestyles; responding to all hazards and emerging threats; strengthening health systems and access to care; and ensuring food safety;

Education, Youth, Culture and People-to-People Exchange

59. Continue to enhance cooperation in educational exchanges and sharing of knowledge, focusing on women, children and youth to promote greater awareness and appreciation of ASEAN-India relations and people-to-people ties;
60. Strengthen the promotion of women and youth participation in programmes or projects that contribute to human development, digital skills development, education, social protection, and addressing gender issues in local governance as well as in natural and human-induced disasters;
61. Continue to support ASEAN capacity building through Indian scholarship programmes, the exchange of teachers and lecturers, joint research and university partnerships, in collaboration with ASEAN University Network (AUN) and other regional higher education networks;
62. Further increase the number of fellowships for ASEAN students, to pursue higher education in India and provide scholarships in areas of mutual interests, including the performing and visual arts;
63. Further promote understanding of cultures of ASEAN and India through continuing media exchange programmes and people-to-people initiatives;
64. Continue to promote the study, as well as the documentation and dissemination of knowledge, about the civilisational links between ASEAN and India;

4. Cross-Pillar Cooperation

Initiative for ASEAN Integration and Narrowing the Development Gap

65. Continue to support ASEAN's efforts in narrowing the development gap within and between ASEAN Member States, through the implementation of IAI Work Plan IV (2021-2025) as well as alleviating poverty and promoting sustainable development in order to realise the ASEAN Community and regional integration;
66. Continue to support the CLMV Countries, in wider areas, among others, human resources development, rural household electrification programmes, information technology curriculum and IT teacher trainings, and further increase the number of fellowships and scholarships;

Connectivity

67. Enhance cooperation to strengthen the ASEAN Connectivity agenda, through the implementation of the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity (MPAC) 2025;
68. Continue to undertake consultations and dialogue, as necessary, between ASEAN and India on connectivity issues through the ASEAN Connectivity Coordinating Committee (ACCC) and other relevant ASEAN sectoral bodies, as appropriate;
69. Work closely to promote physical connectivity in the region by completing the missing links between South and Southeast Asia, including, but not limited to, expediting the completion of relevant sections of the India-Myanmar-Thailand trilateral highway and supporting steps to build an economic corridor along it and its extension to Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Viet Nam; and encouraging private sector participation in the development of roads and railways and relevant logistics networks;
70. Promote quality, sustainable and transparent infrastructure development of robust standards to achieve a seamlessly connected and integrated ASEAN and to ensure sustainable socio-economic growth and development;
71. Increase the supply of investment-ready infrastructure projects in ASEAN Member States by supporting project planning and preparation facilities, enhancing investment and business environments and providing targeted technical assistance and capacity building;
72. Facilitate access towards sustainable and innovative financing as well as supporting sustainable urbanisation to contribute to the implementation of MPAC 2025;

Smart Cities

73. Support and collaborate with the ASEAN Smart Cities Network (ASCN) in building communities that are resilient, innovative and well-connected through technological advancement;

ASEAN Institutional Strengthening

74. Support ASEAN's efforts to implement measures aimed to build capacity in the ASEAN Secretariat;

Sustainable Development Cooperation

75. Strengthen dialogue and cooperation on sustainable development to promote complementarities between the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development including through information sharing, exchange of best practices and capacity building in areas of poverty eradication, infrastructure and connectivity, sustainable management of natural resources, sustainable consumption and production and resilience;
76. Support ASEAN institutions and mechanisms that help facilitate sustainable development cooperation in the region, including but not limited to the ASEAN Centre for Sustainable Development Studies and Dialogue (ACSDDSD) in Thailand and the ASEAN Institute for Green Economy in Myanmar;

Implementation Mechanism

77. This Plan of Action may be implemented under appropriate funding support through the governments of ASEAN Member States and India, including the ASEAN-India Fund, the ASEAN-India Green Fund and the ASEAN-India Science and Technology Development Fund;
78. Regularly review the progress of implementation of the Plan of Action through the existing mechanisms of the ASEAN-India Dialogue Relations; and
79. Submit progress reports on the implementation of the Plan of Action to the annual ASEAN Post Ministerial Conference (PMC) + 1 session with India.

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