



## **CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT OF THE 4<sup>TH</sup> ASEAN-UNITED STATES SUMMIT**

**8 September 2016, Vientiane, Lao PDR**

### ***Turning Vision into Reality for a Dynamic ASEAN Community***

The 4<sup>th</sup> ASEAN-United States Summit was held on 8 September 2016 in Vientiane, Lao PDR. The Meeting was chaired by H.E. Thongloun SISOULITH, Prime Minister of Lao PDR. The Meeting was attended by all Heads of State/Government of ASEAN Member States and the Honourable Barack Obama, President of the United States of America. The Secretary-General of ASEAN was also in attendance.

2. We, Heads of State/Government of ASEAN and the United States, had a positive and wide-ranging discussion on strengthening ASEAN-United States relations as well as a productive exchange of views on regional and global issues of common concern.

3. We acknowledged the significant progress made in ASEAN-United States Dialogue Relations, particularly with the elevation of relations to a strategic partnership at the 3<sup>rd</sup> ASEAN-United States Summit in Kuala Lumpur in November 2015 and the successful convening of the ASEAN-United States Special Leaders' Summit in Sunnylands, California in February 2016. We reaffirmed the key principles that guide our cooperation, as outlined in the Joint Statement of the U.S.-ASEAN Special Leader's Summit: Sunnylands Declaration.

4. The ASEAN Leaders also appreciated the United States' continued support to ASEAN Community Building, unity and central role in the evolving rules-based regional architecture that promotes regional peace, stability and prosperity through ASEAN-led mechanisms such as the East Asia Summit (EAS), Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum (EAMF), ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and the ASEAN-Defense Ministers' Meeting-Plus. We also looked forward with anticipation to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Informal ASEAN-U.S. Defense Ministers' Meeting in Hawaii at the end of September. We emphasized the importance of peaceful resolution of disputes, including full respect for legal and diplomatic processes, without resorting to the threat or use of force, in international relations.

5. We noted with satisfaction the progress made in the implementation of the Plan of Action to Implement the ASEAN-United States Strategic Partnership (2016-2020) which was adopted last year and looked forward to the implementation of the remaining measures in the Plan of Action to realise the full potential of the strategic partnership. We also reiterated the goals of the ASEAN Political-Security Blueprint 2025 in promoting regional peace and stability.

6. The ASEAN Leaders appreciated the United States' support and contribution to ASEAN Community building and regional integration efforts, particularly on the implementation of the "ASEAN 2025: Forging Ahead Together", which was reinforced with the launch of the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity (MPAC) 2025 and the Initiative of ASEAN Integration (IAI Work Plan III) in Vientiane on 6 September 2016.

7. We reaffirmed our commitment to continue enhancing Political-Security cooperation through increased collaboration and engagement to combat traditional and non-traditional security challenges such as non-proliferation, terrorism, violent extremism, drug trafficking, wildlife trafficking, maritime security, illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, cybercrime, cybersecurity, trafficking in persons, irregular migration, epidemic, natural disaster and climate change.

8. We reiterated our commitment to promote disarmament, non-proliferation, and the peaceful use of nuclear energy and reaffirmed the commitment to engage the Nuclear Weapon States (NWS) and intensify the ongoing efforts of the States Parties to the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon Free Zone (SEANWFZ) Treaty and the Nuclear Weapon States to resolve all outstanding issues.

9. We welcomed the upcoming launch of USAID's five-year regional countering trafficking in persons effort focused on preventing vulnerable people from becoming victims of trafficking and improving access to support services. We pledged to work together to support further implementation of ASEAN Convention against Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, and the ASEAN Plan of Action Against Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children. We also welcomed the adoption of the East Asia Summit Statement on Strengthening Responses to Migrants in Crisis and Trafficking in Persons.

10. We committed to strengthening cooperation in the global fight against wildlife and timber trafficking. We also noted the launch of USAID's new, five-year counter wildlife trafficking effort to reduce demand for wildlife and wildlife products and strengthen regional law enforcement and coordination.

11. We stressed our shared commitment to promote security and stability in cyberspace consistent with norms of responsible state behaviour.

12. We pledged to continue working together to advance ASEAN-United States economic cooperation through the increase of trade and investment; generation of employment opportunities; the promotion of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs); fostering of innovation; and facilitation of the ASEAN-United States business communities in line with and in support of the ASEAN Economic Community Blueprint 2025. We appreciated the United States' support towards the realisation of an innovative, entrepreneurial and sustainable ASEAN Economic Community.

13. We welcomed the performance of ASEAN-United States bilateral trade and investment. In 2015, merchandise trade between ASEAN-United States reached USD 212.8 billion and accounted for 9.3% of ASEAN total trade. ASEAN collectively

remains the United States' fourth-largest goods trading partner, and U.S. businesses are the largest cumulative source of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in ASEAN.

14. We welcomed the successful outcomes of the 3<sup>rd</sup> ASEAN Economic Ministers Roadshow to the United States in California in February this year. Focusing on the critical role for governments in creating policy and regulatory ecosystems that spur innovation and entrepreneurship, the Roadshow also generated increased awareness of the presence of ASEAN as a dynamic and competitive region and a vital trading partner for the United States.

15. We welcomed the implementation of the ASEAN-United States Connect Initiative as the new strategic framework for U.S. economic engagement in the ASEAN region through the upcoming operationalisation of the ASEAN- United States Connect Centre in Jakarta, Indonesia and the strategic Connect locations in Singapore and Bangkok, Thailand. We noted that the ASEAN-United States Connect will combine the expertise and resources of the U.S. government and the private sector to strengthen ASEAN-United States economic relations as well as to assist ASEAN in achieving the economic integration goals of the ASEAN Economic Community. We welcomed discussion of promoting the development of "Creative ASEAN" under connect to strengthen ASEAN's cooperation in science, technology, and innovation, Connect's focused support to achieving the objectives of the ASEAN-United States Energy Cooperation Work Plan 2016-2020, and the ASEAN-U.S. ICT Work Plan. We also welcomed Connect's launch of USAID's new Clean Power Asia program to increase supply of grid-connected renewable energy.

16. We noted the progress of the ASEAN-United States Trade and Investment Framework Arrangement and the ASEAN-United States Expanded Economic Engagement (E3) Initiatives, which would enhance ASEAN-United States economic relations. We welcomed the ministerial endorsement the two E3 initiatives texts, namely the ASEAN-United States Cooperation in Fostering Transparency and Good Regulatory Practices, and the ASEAN-United States Cooperation in Fostering International Investment.

17. We noted the progress of ASEAN's proposal to expand ASEAN-U.S Internship opportunities, which aim to enhance the capabilities of ASEAN young professionals by providing them with opportunities to work in United States companies and, at the same time, to enable United States companies to tap into ASEAN's talent pool. We therefore tasked officials to expedite work towards expanding these opportunities.

18. We underscored our joint support for the ASEAN Connectivity through Trade and Investment (ACTI) Programme. We were pleased to note the commencement of the exchange of live data of e-Form D through the ASEAN Single Window under the effective and continuous technical support of ACTI. We also welcomed the launch of the ASEAN SME Academy, which is a self-help and self-paced online learning tool for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) comprising practical best practices. The ASEAN SME Academy learning tool was a contribution by the U.S.-ASEAN Business Council through the U.S.-ASEAN Business Alliance for Competitive SMEs, as part of the ACTI Programme. We also discussed ways to promote the digital economy to create an online environment conducive to business development.

19. We noted that excess capacity in steel and other industries is a global challenge which requires collective responses. We noted the formation of the Global Forum on steel excess capacity, envisioned by the G20 and as a platform for information sharing and cooperation to be facilitated by the OECD Secretariat with the active participation of G20 members and interested OECD members. We considered ways to actively support the work of the Global Forum.

20. We highlighted the challenges posed by Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing and reaffirmed our commitment to strengthen cooperation through ASEAN-led mechanisms to prevent, deter and eliminate IUU Fishing. We noted the progress of the implementation of the Oceans and Fisheries Partnership to strengthen regional cooperation to combat fishing and seafood fraud, and to promote sustainable fisheries and conserve marine biodiversity and coral habitats in Southeast Asia. We underlined the importance of development of small-scale fisheries for rural livelihood and poverty alleviation.

21. We noted with satisfaction the progress made in ASEAN-United States socio-cultural cooperation, particularly in the promotion of economic empowerment of women, the promotion and protection of the rights of women and children, and linking social service agencies in the ASEAN region. In particular, our cooperation through the ASEAN-U.S. PROGRESS Program had led to a better understanding of the regional laws and policies on trafficking in persons and had raised key policy issues and ways forward.

22. We pledged to continue working together to further enhance ASEAN-United States socio-cultural cooperation in areas of humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, fisheries and marine conservation, climate change and green financing, education, health, cultural exchanges, youth, and people-to-people connectivity, consistent with and in support of the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Blueprint 2025.

23. We stressed our shared commitment to global health and advancing global health security. In this regard, we welcomed the intention of all ASEAN Member States to support a Joint External Evaluation (JEE) of their national capabilities by 2017. We also encourage the positive consideration of the invitation from the Global Health Security Agenda Steering Group requesting ASEAN to join as an institutional advisor of GHSA.

24. We reaffirmed our commitment to enhance cooperation in disaster management and emergency response in line with the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response and its Work Programme. The ASEAN Leaders appreciated the United States' continued support to the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA Centre), especially in the coordination and mobilisation of humanitarian assistance, to strengthen the existing ASEAN mechanisms through exchange of expertise and knowledge. We encouraged U.S' support for the realisation of ASEAN Declaration on One ASEAN, One Response: ASEAN Responding to Disaster as One in the region and outside the region, which was signed by the ASEAN Leaders in Vientiane on 6 September 2016.

25. We recognised the engagement between the United States and ASEAN and the U.S higher education institutions, staff and students in the promotion of mutual understanding, including the Fulbright ASEAN-United States Visiting Scholars Initiative and other programmes, including the Connecting the Mekong through Education and Training (COMET).

26. We agreed to further nurture leadership and capacity building in youth and women and promote people-to-people connectivity through ongoing programmes such as the ASEAN Youth Volunteer Programme; the more than 90,000-strong Young Southeast Asian Leaders' Initiative (YSEALI); and the annual ASEAN-U.S. Women's Leadership Academy for YSEALI, launching this year. We also welcomed the launching of the inaugural YSEALI World of Food Innovation Challenge.

27. We noted with appreciation the third year of implementation of the ASEAN-United States Science and Technology Fellows Programme, which is expected to enhance the technical capacity of ASEAN member states in formulating science-based policies. We looked forward to the awarding of the ASEAN-United States Prize for Women in Science.

28. We reiterated our commitment to promote cooperation in climate change and environmental issues, particularly under the ASEAN-United States Joint Statement on Climate Change 2014 towards creating low-carbon economic growth; building more climate resilient societies; and strengthening ASEAN's capacity to mitigate and adapt to climate change. We welcomed the positive outcomes of the 21<sup>st</sup> Session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP21) as well as the adoption of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change in 2015. We emphasised the importance of taking the domestic steps necessary to join the agreement as soon as possible.

29. We reaffirmed our commitment to ASEAN's efforts to narrow the development gap among and between ASEAN Member States and enhance sub-regional integration through various initiatives including the Lower Mekong Initiative (LMI) and looked forward to the United States' support for the implementation of the IAI Work Plan III.

30. We reiterated the importance of maintaining peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula and expressed support for the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula in a peaceful manner. We shared serious concerns over the recent developments on the Korean peninsula, including the nuclear test on 6 January 2016 and subsequent launches using ballistic missile technology, including submarine-launch ballistic missile on 23 August 2016 by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), which are in violation of the relevant United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions. We called for the creation of an environment conducive to the resumption of the Six-Party Talks to make further progress in denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula in a peaceful manner. We urged the DPRK to comply with all relevant UNSC resolutions, including the UNSC Resolution 2270 and called on all parties to exert common efforts to maintain peace and security in the said region

31. We underlined the importance of maintaining peace, stability, safety, security, unimpeded lawful maritime commerce, freedom of navigation in and over-flight above the South China Sea. We underscored the importance of exercising self-restraint in the conduct of the activities, and for the states concerned to resolve disputes through peaceful means in accordance with international law, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). We also emphasized the importance of non-militarization. We stressed the need for ASEAN Member States and China to ensure the full and effective implementation of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) in its entirety, and work expeditiously towards the early conclusion of an effective Code of Conduct in the South China Sea (COC).

32. We emphasised the importance of strengthening our dialogue relations at the strategic level and looked forward to the 5<sup>th</sup> ASEAN-United States Summit to be held in the Republic of the Philippines and the commemoration of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ASEAN and the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ASEAN-United States Dialogue Relations next year.

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