

**The Seventh ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Drug Matters  
(7<sup>th</sup> AMMD)  
14 October 2021 via videoconference**

**Chairman's Statement**

1. The Seventh ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Drug Matters (7<sup>th</sup> AMMD) was held on 14 October 2021 via video conference, Phnom Penh, the Kingdom of Cambodia. His Excellency General Ke Kim Yan, Deputy Prime Minister and Chairman of the National Authority for Combating Drugs, on behalf of the Government of the Kingdom of Cambodia, was the Guest of Honour at the Opening Ceremony of the 7<sup>th</sup> AMMD, and officially opened the Meeting.
2. The 7<sup>th</sup> AMMD was chaired by His Excellency General Chuon Sovann, Vice-Chairman of the National Authority for Combating Drugs, Cambodia. The Meeting was attended by all ASEAN Member States and the Deputy Secretary-General of ASEAN.
3. The Meeting recognised significant achievements made over the past six AMMDs, which had strengthened ASEAN's resolve against illicit drug issues, and renewed the commitment towards the drug free ASEAN aspiration. The Meeting commended the ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Drug Matters (ASOD) and its working mechanisms, including the ASEAN Airport Interdiction Task Force (AAITF), the ASEAN Seaport Interdiction Task Force (ASITF), the ASEAN Narcotics Cooperation Center (ASEAN-NARCO) and the ASEAN Drug Monitoring Network (ADMN) for their efforts in promoting dialogue and facilitating information sharing on illicit drugs situation in the region.
4. The Meeting took note of the reports of the 41<sup>st</sup> and 42<sup>nd</sup> ASOD, and expressed appreciation to Indonesia and Lao PDR for their effective chairmanship in the successful convening of the 41<sup>st</sup> and 42<sup>nd</sup> ASOD via videoconference. This was a testament to ASEAN's resolve to continue the collective efforts to advance regional cooperation in combating illicit drugs.
5. The Meeting expressed concerns over the emerging trends of illicit drugs in the region during the COVID-19 pandemic, specifically (i) the changing trends and patterns, (ii) the on-going threats from the production and trafficking of illicit drugs in the region, particularly in the Golden Triangle; (iii) the continued expansion of the synthetic drug market with large shipments and record amount seizure of drugs; (iv) the smuggling of New Psychoactive Substances (NPS), non-controlled chemicals and the diversion of precursor chemicals for the production and trafficking of illicit drugs in the Golden Triangle; (v) the increasing trend of foreign drug syndicates to connect with local criminals to conduct illicit drug trafficking activities in the ASEAN Member States;

(vi) the increasing in Internet-enabled drug trafficking, (vii) the rise in the detection of drug users due to work and financial related stress caused by the impact of the pandemic; (viii) the high proportion of youth among drug users; and (ix) the growing number of young people displaying more liberal attitudes towards marijuana legalisation.

6. The Meeting reaffirmed the strong commitment to encourage ASEAN Member States to continue the effective and expeditious implementation of the proposed activities as guided by the ASEAN Work Plan on Securing Communities Against Illicit Drugs 2016-2025 (ASEAN Work Plan 2016-2025), as well as the ASEAN Cooperation Plan to Tackle Illicit Drug Production and Trafficking in the Golden Triangle 2020-2022 (ASEAN Cooperation Plan 2020 – 2022), among others, especially to further strengthen and enhance the effectiveness of precursor chemicals control mechanisms and the interception of their diversion into production sites in the Golden Triangle.

7. The Meeting reaffirmed ASEAN's strong commitment to take a holistic approach in addressing the drugs scourge in the region. The approach would include strengthening inter-agency coordination among relevant ministries, public institutions, the private sector and development partners as well as enhancing cross-sectoral and cross-pillar coordination among relevant ASEAN Sectoral Bodies.

8. The Meeting noted with satisfaction of the Report on the Mid-Term Review on ASEAN Work Plan on Securing Communities Against Illicit Drugs 2016-2025, led by ASOD-Indonesia, which would provide direction and guidance for further effective regional cooperation on drug control. The Meeting also noted the adoption of this Report at the Preparatory ASOD for the 7<sup>th</sup> AMMD. The Meeting called upon all ASEAN Member States to increase their efforts and cooperation to implement the unaddressed activities, assess the implementation of their national-level activities, and further enhance their implementation in the respective prioritized areas, in accordance with the recommendations made by this Report. In view of implementing the recommendations and maintaining the momentum of cooperation to combat illicit drugs in post-pandemic era, the Meeting also tasked ASOD to consider the resumption of all ASOD Working Groups including through virtual platforms.

9. The Meeting noted the result of the progress report on the Mid-Term Review of the implementation of the proposed activities provided in the ASEAN Cooperation Plan to Tackle Illicit Drug Production and Trafficking in the Golden Triangle 2020-2022, led by ASOD-Thailand.

10. The Meeting welcomed the launch of the 2020 ASEAN Drug Monitoring Report (ADM) and appreciated Thailand's unwavering commitment to continue leading this initiative amidst the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as other ASEAN Member States for their contribution to the ADM Report.

11. The Meeting reaffirmed ASEAN's commitment to support regional cooperation in realising a drug-free ASEAN, through a zero-tolerance approach towards illicit drug abuse, with strict adherence to the rule of law and observance of human rights while maintaining full respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of ASEAN Member States. The Meeting reaffirmed ASEAN's resolute stand against the legalisation and manufacturing of illicit drugs for non-medical and non-scientific use or measures to undermine international control over any type of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances without relevant, verifiable and reliable scientific evidence. The Meeting also urged the international community to uphold the provisions of the international drug control conventions.

12. The Meeting called on ASEAN Member States to maintain ASEAN unity and solidarity in their participation at the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) and related meetings.

13. The Meeting recognised the importance of engaging ASEAN Dialogue Partners and External Parties in pursuing the aspiration of a drug-free region. In view of maintaining the momentum of cooperation with Dialogue Partners to combat illicit drugs in post-pandemic era, the Meeting tasked ASOD to consider the resumption of its Consultations with relevant Dialogue Partners and deliver the concrete activities in the near future.

14. The Meeting welcomed the offer by Lao PDR to host the 8<sup>th</sup> AMMD in 2023.

15. The Meeting expressed appreciation to the Government of the Kingdom of Cambodia and the National Authority for Combating Drugs for the excellent arrangements made for the first-ever ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Drug Matters via videoconference.

16. The Meeting was held in the traditional spirit of ASEAN solidarity and cordiality, in keeping with ASEAN's journey towards a region of "One Vision, One Identity, One Community".

## **CAMBODIA**

**14 October 2021**