



THE NINETEENTH MEETING OF ASEAN TOURISM MINISTERS **21 January 2016, Manila, the Philippines**

JOINT MEDIA STATEMENT

1. The Nineteenth Meeting of ASEAN Tourism Ministers (19th M-ATM) was held on 21 January 2016 in Manila, the Philippines, in conjunction with the ASEAN Tourism Forum 2016 (ATF). H.E. Mr. Ramon R. Jimenez, Jr., Secretary of Tourism of Philippines, chaired the Meeting and H.E. Mr. S. Iswaran, Minister for Trade and Industry (Industry) of Singapore was the Vice-Chairperson. The 19th M-ATM Meeting was preceded by the Forty-Third Meeting of ASEAN National Tourism Organisations (NTOs) and meetings with dialogue partners.

2. The Ministers expressed their deepest sympathies and condolences to the Government and people Indonesia, concerning the recent terrorist attack in Jakarta on 14 January 2016. The Ministers also jointly expressed their appreciation for Indonesia rapid response to this attack so that it will not impact the tourism activities and promotion in Jakarta and the rest of the country.

3. The preliminary figure indicated that ASEAN Member States received 98 million international visitors, posting a growth of 7.3 per cent from 2014. Intra-ASEAN travel maintained its position as the major share of tourists, making up 42 per cent of total international arrivals in 2015.

ASEAN Community

4. The Ministers were pleased with the contribution of tourism sector to the establishment of ASEAN Community through the successful implementation of the ASEAN Tourism Strategic Plan (ATSP) 2011-2015, with 91% of the measures of the ATSP 2011-2015 covering joint marketing and promotion, product development, improving quality tourism services and human resources having been implemented. With greater intra-ASEAN mobility contributed by enhanced connectivity within the region, the Ministers were pleased to note that ASEAN tourism cooperation has been able to contribute to the promotion of deeper social and cultural understanding among ASEAN people. The Ministers tasked the senior officials to complete the remaining measures in 2016.

Post-2015 ASEAN Tourism Strategic Plan

5. Building on the momentum of the ATSP 2011-2015, the Ministers agreed to the important role of ASEAN tourism in making greater contribution towards the realisation of ASEAN integration goals laid out in the *ASEAN 2025: Forging Ahead Together* adopted by the ASEAN Leaders at the 27th ASEAN Summit in November 2015. In this context, the Ministers adopted the new ATSP 2016-2025 with the following vision:

“By 2025, ASEAN will be a quality tourism destination offering a unique, diverse ASEAN experience, and will be committed to responsible, sustainable, inclusive and balanced tourism development, so as to contribute significantly to the socio-economic well-being of ASEAN people.”

6. To work towards the above vision, the Ministers emphasised the necessity to complete and continue existing initiatives and achievements, such as: marketing of ASEAN as a single destination, implementation of tourism standards, implementation of the Mutual Recognition Arrangement on Tourism Professionals (MRA-TP), adopting new and innovative approaches to destination and product development, mainstreaming existing sub-regional tourism initiatives and working with other agencies to ensure the integration and development of ASEAN tourism. The implementation of ATSP 2016-2025 will continue to be supervised by the ASEAN NTOs with the assistance of the four newly restructured subsidiary Committees: the ASEAN Tourism Competitiveness Committee, the ASEAN Sustainable and Inclusive Tourism Committee, the ASEAN Tourism Resourcing, Monitoring and Evaluation Committee, and the ASEAN Tourism Professional Monitoring Committee.

Visit ASEAN@50

7. In line with the establishment of the ASEAN Community in 2016 and to commemorate of the 50th Anniversary of ASEAN in 2017, the Ministers agreed to develop “Visit ASEAN@50”, an ASEAN tourism campaign to jointly promote and showcase ASEAN as a single tourism destination. Visit ASEAN@50 will feature iconic ASEAN tourism products, events and experiences, particularly those reflecting the richness of cultural, heritage and natural environment, as well as the warm hospitality extended by the people of ASEAN. The target audience of this joint effort would be ASEAN’s key source markets, such as: Intra-ASEAN, Asia and Pacific, Middle East and Europe, through ASEAN tourism packages and Visit ASEAN@50 calendar of events activities carried out by ASEAN Member States at international and national levels.

Fostering Tourism Human Resource Development

8. The Ministers were pleased to note that all ASEAN Member States signed the Agreement on the Establishment of the Regional Secretariat for the Implementation of the MRA-TP on 30 December 2015. The Secretariat, which will be stationed in Jakarta, will promote the implementation of the MRA-TP by providing support for its operations and management as well as implementation of related projects and activities at the regional level, including formulating, updating and providing recommendations on necessary mechanisms to enable its smooth implementation. The Ministers encouraged all Member States to submit their respective instruments of ratification for this Agreement and tasked senior officials to undertake intensive preparation in realising the physical establishment of the Secretariat within 2016 and the successful implementation of the MRA-TP. The Ministers welcomed the Project to support the transition phase in establishing the Regional Secretariat.

9. The Ministers noted the progress in developing the ASEAN Tourism Professionals Registration System (ATPRS) to facilitate the registration of tourism professionals and MRA related stakeholders, and serve as a matchmaking mechanism between tourism professionals and their potential employers. The Ministers also noted the implementation progress of the project on the Toolbox Development for Travel Agencies and Tour

Operations. The Ministers thanked the Government of Australia for the continued support on realising the operationalization of the MRA-TP through establishment of its infrastructures through the ASEAN-Australia Development Cooperation Programme II.

Quality Tourism

10. Through the ASEAN Green Hotel Award Ceremony, the Ministers were pleased to note that 89 hotels in the region have complied with the new ASEAN Green Hotel Standard to promote sustainable tourism practices in the region through adoption of environmental-friendly and energy conservation initiatives in their establishments in line with ASEAN tourism initiative on Tourism and Climate Change Monitoring System and Work Plan.

11. In providing an opportunity to promote ASEAN Homestay and understanding of the basic requirements of a quality visitor experience, and establish a minimum standard across all ASEAN Member States, the first ASEAN Homestay Award Ceremony was convened on 22 January 2016 in Manila, the Philippines. In this Ceremony, the Ministers awarded 31 ASEAN Homestay Standard certificates to homestay organisations and providers that will enhance local quality of life to generate income, support local culture, arts and crafts business, encourage restoration of local and historic sites, and foster nature conservation efforts through community education.

12. The Ministers encouraged all Member States to carry out awareness programmes for the other ASEAN tourism standards and their certification process, including spa services, public toilet, clean tourist city and community-based tourism standards. In this concept, the ASEAN Community Based Tourism Award Ceremony will be held in 2017 and ASEAN Clean Tourist City Award Ceremony will be held in 2018.

Promoting ASEAN Tourism

13. The Ministers were pleased with the good progress made in promoting and marketing ASEAN tourism through websites, events, social media marketing, public relations and partnerships with the private sector and ASEAN centres. The Ministers noted the continued enhancement of the ASEAN Tourism website (www.aseantourism.travel) and “ASEAN for ASEAN” activities carried out by respective Member States.

14. The Ministers were pleased with the outcomes of the activities undertaken by the ASEAN Promotional Chapters for Tourism (APCTs) in Sydney and Mumbai in 2015 to promote ASEAN tourism through ASEAN cuisine, marketing campaign with travel industry partner, and networking event with local wholesalers/industry. The Ministers expressed appreciation to the ASEAN-China Centre, ASEAN-Japan Centre and ASEAN-Korea Centre for their support in promoting ASEAN tourism in Chinese, Japanese and Korean markets such as, promotion thru media, on-line promotion and service through official websites, participation in major tourism events including exhibitions and meetings, and technical workshops.

15. The Ministers adopted the updated ASEAN Crisis Communication Manual (ACCM), which will serve as an effective tool to uphold the credibility of the organizations and/or destinations through the provision of accurate and timely information to key stakeholders.

Developing ASEAN Tourism Product

16. The Ministers welcomed the finalisation of the ASEAN Ecotourism Strategic Plan, which identified heritage trails and transboundary parks that could be promoted together as ASEAN tour packages linked with air networks as part of the implementation of ASEAN

Open Skies. The Ministers noted that the Guideline of Culture & Heritage Travel Pattern in ASEAN had been finalised and its first training was conducted on 4-5 December 2015 in Jakarta.

17. The Ministers were pleased with the result of the implementation of the ASEAN Cruise 2015 Work Plan among others, the participation of ASEAN at Cruise Shipping Miami (now known as Seatrade Cruise Global) through the co-location of Southeast Asian countries, advertorial spread in Seatrade Cruise Review magazine, and the monthly e-Newsletter, ASEAN Cruise News, to strengthen regional trade capability and outreach to the global cruise industry. In further promoting the region as a choice cruise destination, the Ministers adopted the new branding: *Cruise Southeast Asia, feel the warmth*. This new branding, inspired by the waves, highlights the vibrant diversity, the culture and warmth of the people of Southeast Asia, as well as the close relationships between ASEAN Member States.

18. The Ministers noted the updates on River Based Tourism Development assisted by UNWTO.

ASEAN Tourism Forum

19. The Ministers noted that the ASEAN Tourism Forum (ATF) 2016 held on 18-22 January 2016 in Manila, Philippines, with the theme of “One Community For Sustainability” was attended by 457 buyers and 1000 exhibitors with 467 booths as well as 83 international and 100 local media. The Ministers expressed their appreciation to CNN International as the Official International Cable and Satellite Media Partner of ATF 2016.

20. The Ministers noted that the ATF 2017 will be convened on 16-20 January 2017 in Singapore, with the theme of “Shaping our Tourism Journey Together”. The Ministers also noted that Thailand agreed to host ATF in 2018.

21. The Ministers expressed their sincere appreciation to the Government and People of the Philippines for the warm hospitality and the excellent arrangements made for the Meetings.

LIST OF MINISTERS

The Meeting was attended by:

- (i) Mr. Wardi Haji Mohammad Ali, Deputy Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Primary Resources and Tourism, Brunei Darussalam, representing H.E. Dato Paduka Hj Ali Hj Apong, Minister of Primary Resources and Tourism, Brunei Darussalam;
- (ii) H.E. Dr. Thong Khon, Minister of Tourism, Cambodia;
- (iii) H.E. Dr. Arief Yahya, Minister of Tourism, Indonesia;
- (iv) H.E. Mr. Chaleune Warintrasak, Vice Minister of Information, Culture and Tourism, Lao PDR;
- (i) H.E. Datuk Mas Ermieyati Samsudin, Deputy Minister of Tourism and Culture, Malaysia;
- (ii) H.E. U Ye Myint Aung, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the Republic of the Philippines, Myanmar;
- (iii) H.E. Mr. Ramon R. Jimenez, Jr. Secretary of Tourism, Philippines;

- (iv) H.E. Mr. S. Iswaran, Minister for Trade and Industry (Industry), Singapore;
- (v) H.E. Ms. Kobkarn Wattanavrangkul, Minister for Tourism and Sports, Thailand;
- (vi) H.E. Ms. Dang Thi Bich Lien, Vice Minister of Culture, Sports and Tourism of Viet Nam; and
- (vii) H.E. Mr. Le Luong Minh, Secretary-General of ASEAN.
