



## **CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT OF THE 14<sup>TH</sup> ASEAN-INDIA SUMMIT**

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

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

The 14<sup>th</sup> ASEAN-India Summit was held on 8 September 2016 in Vientiane, Lao PDR. The Meeting was chaired by H.E. Thongloun SISOULITH, Prime Minister of the Lao PDR. The Summit was attended by all Heads of State/Government of ASEAN Member States and His Excellency Mr. Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of the Republic of India. The Secretary-General of ASEAN was also in attendance.

2. India commended ASEAN Member States on the establishment of the ASEAN Community and reiterated its support for ASEAN's efforts in the realization of the ASEAN Community Vision 2025. The ASEAN Leaders appreciated India's continued support for the ASEAN Unity and Centrality in the evolving regional architecture, including India's active participation and positive contribution to ASEAN-led mechanisms, namely the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), East Asia Summit (EAS), the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) and ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM Plus).

3. The ASEAN Leaders welcomed India's initiatives, namely the "Act East Policy" and "Make in India" and appreciated India's continued support for the ASEAN Community and ASEAN's efforts in building a region that is politically cohesive, economically integrated, socially responsible and truly rules based, people oriented and people-centered. The ASEAN and India Leaders agreed to continue enhancing the partnership between ASEAN and India that would bring about tangible benefits to both sides as well as contribute to the promotion of peace, stability, and prosperity in the region.

4. We were satisfied with the steady progress made in ASEAN-India Dialogue Relations over the past twenty-four years. We look forward to the commemoration of the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ASEAN-India Dialogue Relations in 2017 and welcomed the conduct of commemorative activities in India and in ASEAN member states throughout 2017, including a Commemorative Summit in India, Ministerial Meetings, Business Conclaves, Cultural Festivals and other activities to take the ASEAN-India partnership to our peoples.

5. We noted the good progress of implementation of the new Plan of Action to Implement the ASEAN-India Partnership for Peace, Progress and Shared Prosperity (2016-2020) and looked forward to the timely and full implementation of the POA with a view to strengthening the ASEAN-India Strategic Partnership and contribute towards the realization of the ASEAN Community Vision 2025. In this regard, we noted the list of priority areas for the period of 2016-2018, which would better help both sides to successfully implement the 2016-2020 Plan of Action.

6. ASEAN Leaders welcomed Prime Minister Modi's announcement of an additional contribution of US \$ 50 million to the ASEAN-India Fund.

7. Recognizing that terrorism remains significant threat to peace and stability in our region, we reiterated our strong commitment to combat terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, and stressed that there can be no justification for acts of terror on any grounds whatsoever. We express our determination to take concrete measures to step up cooperation and coordination among our law enforcement and security agencies.

8. We recognize the need to counter and prevent the spread of violent extremism and radicalism that leads to acts of terrorism. In addition, ASEAN and India support the early adoption of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism, currently under negotiation at the United Nations.

9. We agreed to cooperate towards addressing traditional and non-traditional security challenges, including in areas of deradicalization, prevention of violent extremism and cybercrime. ASEAN leaders looked forward to the convening of the first ASEAN-India Cyber Dialogue in New Delhi in late 2016.

10. We noted that the trade and investment performance between ASEAN and India has yet to reach its fullest potential. The total bilateral merchandise trade in 2015 amounted to US\$ 58.7 billion, or about 2.6 per cent of ASEAN's total trade. Investment flows were robust with FDI from India into ASEAN increasing by 98% to US\$ 1.2 billion in 2015. We welcomed the progress on the Parties' ratification of the ASEAN-India Trade in Services and Investment Agreements and encouraged the remaining parties to do so at the earliest. We reiterated the importance of implementing these Agreements by all Parties to further contribute towards elevating the ASEAN-India economic relations to a higher level.

11. We also recognised the vital importance of the planned review of the ASEAN-India Trade in Goods (AITIG) Agreement to ensure that the Agreement is trade-facilitative and remains relevant to the current global trading practices. In this regard, we hoped that the

review will contribute to further growth in ASEAN-India trade to meet the USD 100 billion target set in 2012.

12. We encouraged greater maritime cooperation between ASEAN and India, including but not limited to, the enhancement of maritime connectivity. We looked forward to enhanced maritime connectivity which would provide lower logistic costs, and motivate increased trade in goods and services between the two parties.

13. We noted with appreciation the increased activities conducted by the ASEAN-India Business Council (AIBC) over the past year and welcomed the successful organisation of the 4th AIBC Meeting held at the margins of the 48th ASEAN Economic Ministers and related meetings in August 2016 in Vientiane, Lao PDR. We encouraged the AIBC to continue its role in disseminating trade-related information on India and ASEAN Member States to the businesses, and foster engagement among business communities in the regions.

14. We also looked forward to the signing of the ASEAN-India Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on establishing the ASEAN-India Centre and its early operationalisation which would serve as an important platform to promote cooperation in various areas such as trade, investment, tourism and people-to-people exchanges between ASEAN and India. We also welcomed the inauguration of the ASEAN Study Centre in Shillong, North Eastern Hill University, India on 8 August 2016 to facilitate ASEAN-India research projects and studies.

15. We noted the continuous endeavour in advancing the progress of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) negotiations. Considering the immense potential of the RCEP to stimulate global trade and growth, we urged all countries to intensify their efforts toward achieving a modern, comprehensive, high-quality and mutually beneficial agreement.

16. We noted the implementation of the Plan of Action (POA) on ASEAN-India Cooperation in Food, Agriculture and Forestry (2011-2015) and looked forward to the finalisation of the successor POA (2016-2020) to further enhance cooperation in food, agriculture and forestry in key areas of mutual interest, with the aim of enhancing productivity of agricultural products and meet the challenges of food security in the region.

17. We noted with appreciation the increase in the ASEAN-India Science and Technology Development Fund (AISTDF) from US\$ 1 million to US\$ 5 million in 2016 to further encourage and sustain the implementation of collaborative R&D and technology development programmes between ASEAN and India. We also expressed our appreciation to the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) in supporting the capacity

of ASEAN Member States in the development of space technology and its applications. ASEAN Leaders also welcomed Prime Minister Modi's commitment to establishing an ASEAN-India Innovation Platform and to build digital connectivity through the use of Gigabit-capable Passive Optical Network (GPON) technology and looked forward to the early and effective realization of these initiatives.

18. We welcomed the successful conclusion 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. The ASEAN Leaders further reiterated the shared commitment to address the adverse effects of climate change and appreciated India's support for ASEAN's effort through effective utilisation of the ASEAN-India Green Fund for the implementation of various activities in enhancing ASEAN Member States capacity in climate change adaptation.

19. We are pleased to look forward to further enhancement of ASEAN-India cooperation in disaster management and humanitarian assistance, including supporting ASEAN in the realisation of ASEAN Declaration on One ASEAN, One Response: ASEAN Responding to Disaster as One in the region and outside the region. The Leaders encouraged India to support ASEAN's efforts in disaster preparedness and risk reduction as envisioned in ASEAN Community Vision 2025 on Disaster Management. The Leaders also welcomed India's initiative to host an Asian Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Risk Reduction in November 2016.

20. We reaffirmed ASEAN-India connectivity as a priority cooperation area. We appreciated India's commitment of a USD 1 billion line of credit for digital and infrastructure connectivity projects and welcomed the efforts in developing the modalities and project proposals on utilizing the credit line. The Leaders of ASEAN welcomed India's support to the implementation of the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity 2025. We encouraged the early conclusion of the Agreement on Maritime Transport between ASEAN and India. We noted the ongoing efforts to enhance air connectivity between ASEAN and India, to support the growth of business and tourism, and looked forward to the convening of the first Meeting of the ASEAN-India Working Group on Regional Air Services Arrangement.

21. We also emphasized the importance of enhancing of people-to-people connectivity and cultural cooperation, including through enhanced exchanges activities involving, among others, diplomats, youth, media and intellectuals and Indian scholarship programmes for ASEAN students, as well as cooperation to preserve each other's fine traditions and heritages. We noted the effective implementation of the ASEAN-India Student Exchange Programme which helps strengthen people to people links and human resource development in the region and agreed to further cooperation in the area.

22. Leaders noted India's proposal to document civilizational ties by mapping Indian inscriptions along the Mekong River as well as documentation of shared cultural symbols.

23. Leaders appreciated India's gesture of designating ASEAN as the Guest of Honour for the fifth International Buddhist Conclave to be held in India from 2-6 October 2016, as well as inviting Tourism Ministers, 150 monks, scholars and media persons from ASEAN countries to the Conclave.

24. ASEAN Leaders expressed appreciation for India's strong support and commitment to the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) and agreed to further strengthen cooperation in other areas such as food and agriculture, trade facilitation, education, clean and renewable energy, tourism, health and well-being, SMEs development, and poverty alleviation. ASEAN Leaders also welcomed the signing of the MoUs between India and CLMV countries on the establishment of the Centres of Excellence in Software Development and Training, including most recently with Viet Nam on 3 September 2016 under the IAI-India cooperation framework. The Leaders of ASEAN also welcomed India's support for the implementation of the Initiative for ASEAN Integration Work Plan III (2016-2020) and capacity building initiatives.

25. We emphasized the importance of maintaining peace, security and stability, unimpeded commerce, freedom of navigation in and overflight above the South China Sea. We underscored the importance 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). In this regard, India urged all parties to show utmost respect for the 1982 UNCLOS, which establishes the international legal order of seas and oceans.

26. We looked forward to the commemoration of the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of ASEAN-India Dialogue Relations in 2017.

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