

ASEAN-EU Plan of Action

(2018 – 2022)

This ASEAN-EU Plan of Action replaces the Bandar Seri Begawan Plan of Action to strengthen the ASEAN-EU Enhanced Partnership (2013-2017) and is adopted at the PMC+1 with the EU.

ASEAN and the EU shall pursue 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

1.1. Enhance strategic dialogue and deepen political and security cooperation

- (a) Convene biennial ASEAN-EU Ministerial Meetings (AEMM); Annual ASEAN Post Ministerial Conference with the EU (PMC)+1; supported by regular meetings of the ASEAN-EU Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM) and; ASEAN-EU Joint Cooperation Committee (JCC) Meeting;
- (b) Strengthen cooperation in regional and multilateral fora, including the United Nations and other bodies within the UN system, as well as with the Asia – Europe Meeting (ASEM) and the G20, and to develop joint positions where appropriate;
- (c) Enhance dialogue between the Committee of Permanent Representatives to ASEAN (CPR) and the EU Mission to ASEAN in Jakarta to support efforts in elevating the partnership to a strategic level; and
- (d) Encourage further exchanges between the Committee of Permanent Representatives to ASEAN (CPR) and the Committee of Permanent Representatives in the European Union (COREPER).

1.2. Enhance the ASEAN-EU cooperation in the ASEAN-led security architecture

- (a) Reiterate its support for ASEAN Centrality in the evolving regional architecture in East Asia;
- (b) Support the open, transparent and, inclusive ASEAN-led regional architecture and welcome the interest of the EU in furthering engagement with the region through all ASEAN-led processes;
- (c) Enhance dialogue and promote cooperation with the EU on defence and security matters, such as in the areas of maritime security, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, peacekeeping operations, military medicine and counter-terrorism;
- (d) Continue to support exchange of views between security and defence officials including with reference to the APSC Blueprint 2025 and the EU's Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy;

- (e) Enhance the role of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), with ASEAN as the primary driving force, and support the implementation of the ARF Work Plans; and
- (f) Cooperate in mediation, reconciliation, confidence-building, preventive diplomacy, conflict management, conflict prevention and peacebuilding initiatives in the region through workshops, seminars, exchange of best practices and other capacity building initiatives with relevant ASEAN platforms such as the ASEAN Institute for Peace and Reconciliation (AIPR), in accordance with its TOR.

1.3. Combat terrorism, transnational crimes, address other non-traditional security issues

- (a) Review the implementation of the ASEAN-EU Work Plan to Combat Terrorism and Transnational Crime (2014-2017) , and prepare for the next generation work plan that takes into account new mutually agreed priority areas;
- (b) Convene the ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Transnational Crime (SOMTC) – EU Consultations in the margins of the annual ASEAN SOMTC on a regular basis, in accordance with SOMTC processes to promote dialogue and cooperation on ways to tackle different aspects of transnational crime of mutual concerns;
- (c) Work together and exchange best practices in the implementation of the ASEAN Convention on Counter Terrorism and the ASEAN Comprehensive Plan of Action on Counter-Terrorism in countering terrorism and preventing violent extremism;
- (d) Promote cooperation on the implementation of the ASEAN Convention Against Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (ACTIP) and the ASEAN Plan of Action Against Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children as well as on issues related to people smuggling in ASEAN and the EU;
- (e) Promote cooperation on the implementation of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its Protocols thereto;
- (f) Promote interaction between national law enforcement agencies in ASEAN Member States and EUROPOL, aimed at strengthening the cooperation among them by providing mutual support as well as facilitating the exchange of best practices and expertise in the areas of mutually agreed interests;
- (g) Work together with a view of facilitating the implementation of the ASEAN Work Plan on Securing Communities Against Illicit Drugs (2016-2025);
- (h) Cooperate on issues related to cyber security, including in combating cybercrime;
- (i) Promote cooperation on migration and border management issues to develop a more efficient border management system in ASEAN Member States.

1.4. Enhance maritime security cooperation

- (a) Exchange of experience in maritime-related issues including at the ASEAN-EU High Level Dialogue on Maritime Security Cooperation and via the Co-Chairmanship of the ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Maritime Security (2017-

2020), as well as sharing knowledge and expertise in the sustainable joint management of marine resources;

- (b) Underline the importance of the respect for the rule of law, sovereignty and territorial integrity of States, maritime security and safety, freedom of navigation and overflight, peaceful resolution of disputes, in accordance with the universally recognized principles of international law, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and the relevant standards and recommended practices by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and the International Maritime Organisation (IMO);
- (c) Strengthen cooperation on maritime security such as in combatting sea piracy, armed robbery against ships, hijacking and arms smuggling, in accordance with relevant universally agreed principles of international law and the 1982 UNCLOS;
- (d) Strengthen cooperation in maritime safety and search and rescue (SAR), including by exchanging best practices on the implementation of the ASEAN Declaration on Cooperation in Search and Rescue of Persons and Vessels in Distress at Sea, through activities such as exchange of information, technological cooperation and exchange of visits of relevant ASEAN and EU officials; and
- (e) Encourage cooperation in addressing maritime-related issues in a comprehensive manner.

1.5. Promote disarmament and non-proliferation

- (a) Cooperate in the areas of disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction as well as arms control;
- (b) Cooperate in combating illegal transfer of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) in accordance with the UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects;
- (c) Explore efforts to regulate or improve the regulation of international trade in conventional arms;
- (d) Promote cooperation in mitigating risks associated with chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) materials building on the achievement of the EU CBRN Risk Mitigation Centre of Excellence (CoE) Initiative; and
- (e) Explore regional cooperation on dual use export control in accordance with respective laws and policies.

1.6. Promote peace-oriented values

- (a) Intensify cooperation on interfaith and inter-civilisation dialogues; and
- (b) Cooperate to promote moderation which calls for peace, mutual respect and understanding, sustainable and inclusive development, and social harmony as well as support the implementation of the Langkawi Declaration on the Global Movement of Moderate, in efforts to counter extremism in all its aspects.

1.7. Promote Cooperation on human rights and good governance

- (a) Enhance the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms in accordance with relevant international and regional human rights instruments to which all ASEAN and EU Member States are parties;
- (b) Continue to hold ASEAN-EU Policy Dialogues on Human Rights;
- (c) Strengthen the cooperation between the EU and the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) through training, regional dialogues, awareness raising activities, exchange of best practices and other capacity building initiatives to enhance the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms;
- (d) Promote cooperation between ASEAN and the EU to implement relevant UN conventions and instruments on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms which all ASEAN Member States are parties to, the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration (AHRD) and the Phnom Penh Statement on the Adoption of the AHRD;
- (e) Promote capacity building for and support ASEAN's efforts in strengthening democracy, good governance, rule of law, and judiciary systems, through sharing of experiences and best practices; and
- (f) Promote further cooperation in accordance with the respective domestic laws and policies on combating corruption through, inter alia, encouraging the implementation of the UN Convention Against Corruption. In this respect, also promote the sharing of best practices.

2. ECONOMIC COOPERATION

2.1. Expand trade, business and investment

- (a) Convene regular ASEAN Economic Ministers' (AEM)-EU Trade Commissioner Consultations, and regular meetings of the ASEAN-EU Senior Economic Officials (SEOM-EU);
- (b) Encourage further dialogue and cooperation in the field of economic policy and social policy, with a view to contributing to sustainable and inclusive growth, social cohesion, and labour market stability including decent work and core labour standards;
- (c) Intensify work towards the timely resumption of the ASEAN-EU Free Trade Agreement (FTA) negotiations, noting the status of bilateral FTAs between several ASEAN Member States and the EU;
- (d) Strengthen the capacity of ASEAN Member States in areas which could lead to facilitate a region-to-region FTA, as well as the ASEAN Customs Transit System to improve customs clearance and transit in ASEAN;
- (e) Support effective implementation of the ASEAN Economic Community Blueprint 2025 at regional and national levels including in the area of trade facilitation;

2.2. Strengthen the role of the private sector and Public-Private Partnership

- (a) Encourage public-private sector dialogue and business-to-business engagement, with the aim of effectively representing both ASEAN and EU business interests;
- (b) Share best practices between EU Member States and ASEAN Member States on Public Private Partnership (PPP) in support of regional integration; and
- (c) Encourage the implementation of the ASEAN-EU Business Summit recommendations including supporting the ASEAN-EU Business Council.

2.3. Strengthen Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises

- (a) Share best practices and experience in financing and developing Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), and encourage further exchanges on policy and regulatory frameworks for including in digital economy; and
- (b) Exchange best practices and lessons learned from the EU in the implementation of the ASEAN Strategic Action Plan for SME Development 2016-2025 and its Strategic Goals.

2.4. Strengthen Cooperation in Transport, Energy and ICT

- (a) Promote cooperation and exchange best practices on regional transport issues including with reference to the Kuala Lumpur Transport Strategic Plan (ASEAN Transport Strategic Plan) 2016-2025;
- (b) Cooperate further to conclude and implement the ASEAN-EU Comprehensive Air Transport Agreement, the first ever region to region agreement, with a view to enhancing air connectivity between ASEAN and the EU;
- (c) Promote jointly the development of the ASEAN Single Aviation Market including the enhancement of aviation safety, security, and air traffic management consistent with the ICAO's Standards and Recommended Practices;
- (d) Strengthen ASEAN-EU cooperation by sharing best practices on promoting energy access, energy security and multilateral measures to support competitive global energy markets, including with reference to the ASEAN Plan of Action for Energy Cooperation (APAEC) 2016-2025;
- (e) Cooperate to promote energy efficiency and conservation (EE&C) measures and technologies, renewable energy and other clean energy programmes including research; promote the development of alternative energy and cooperate on civilian nuclear safety, as well as promote public awareness and capacity building in this area; and
- (f) Jointly explore ways to develop transparent, coherent, ICT regulatory framework as well as other ICT priorities as mutually agreed.

2.5. Enhance cooperation in sectors on food, agriculture, fisheries, aquaculture and forestry

- (a) Enhance cooperation in sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) matters of mutual interests, including, but not limited to, exchange of best practices in aspect of inspections and the implementation of the precautionary principle;
- (b) Strengthen fisheries cooperation, including among others, supporting efforts to combat Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing, and promote sustainable fisheries management and aquaculture development;
- (c) Explore cooperation for the possible development of an ASEAN Common Fisheries Policy;
- (d) Promote cooperation on Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) and Forest Law Enforcement and Governance (FLEG);
- (e) Promote cooperation in addressing illicit trafficking of wildlife and timber in accordance with relevant international conventions including the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

2.6. Enhance cooperation on research and innovation, Science and Technology

- (a) Continue dialogue between the ASEAN Committee on Science and Technology (COST) and the EU to promote cooperation in science, technology and innovation;
- (b) Promote the implementation of the ASEAN Plan of Action on Science, Technology and Innovation (APASTI) 2016-2025 as a strategic platform for ASEAN-EU Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) cooperation;
- (c) Enhance cooperation of S&T centres of excellence and other S&T stakeholders, including through the EU's Framework Programme and relevant ASEAN mechanisms as well as national programmes in the EU and ASEAN, in areas of mutual interest; and
- (d) Promote the exchange and mobility of scientists and researchers between ASEAN and the EU through exchange programmes and other appropriate arrangements in accordance with the respective laws, rules, regulation, and national policies.

3. SOCIO-CULTURAL COOPERATION

3.1. Enhance cooperation in education, academic and cultural exchanges

- (a) Maximise cooperation on students' exchange in ASEAN and the EU through the EU's programme for education, training, youth and sports, as well as national programmes in EU Member States and ASEAN countries;
- (b) Strengthen collaboration between international educational organisations in ASEAN Member States and the EU to enhance the quality of education in areas in line with the ASEAN Work Plan on Education 2016-2020;

- (c) Promote greater cultural understanding and awareness between ASEAN and the EU, as well as the exchange of experience and expertise on public policy in the field of culture; and
- (d) Facilitate interaction between EU Member States and ASEAN University Network.

3.2. Enhance cooperation to address health matters including pandemics

- (a) Strengthen coordination and cooperation in addressing the challenges of communicable diseases and emerging infectious diseases including pandemics; and potential health threats or outbreak due to disasters; and
- (b) Develop a network of existing agencies to enhance the effectiveness of regional surveillance and response towards Emerging Infectious Diseases (EID) for better preparedness against major disease outbreaks.

3.3. Promote gender equality, well-being, rights and welfare of women, children, the elderly, persons with disabilities and migrant workers;

- (a) Collaborate with the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC) and ASEAN Committee on Women (ACW) to promote gender equality as well as the promotion and protection of the rights of women and children, especially those in vulnerable situations including the elderly, persons with disabilities, women living with HIV/AIDS, internally displaced persons, and women at risk or victims of gender-based violence, in line with their respective mandates and work plan;
- (b) Support exchange of experience and best practices on policies and programmes on gender mainstreaming to promote gender analysis and women's perspectives in regional initiatives across sectors, including initiatives on decent work, social protection, and building resilience;
- (c) Promote, where applicable, research and raising awareness in areas of safe migration, and labour gender and criminal justice dimension of trafficking in persons towards the protection and promotion of the rights of migrant workers;
- (d) Promote dialogue and exchange of best practices, in addressing migration;
- (e) Enhance cooperation on issues related to migration in the UN and other multilateral contexts, as appropriate;
- (f) Support cooperation to promote the rights and welfare of persons with disabilities, particularly targeting poor and vulnerable groups and those suffering from multiple disabilities.

3.4. Enhance cooperation on Crisis and Disaster Management

- (a) Enhance dialogue and cooperation between EU and ASEAN to support the implementation of the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) Work Programme; and

- (b) Support the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on disaster management (AHA Centre) including through capacity building activities organised with the support of the Integrated Programme in Enhancing the capacity of AHA Centre and ASEAN Emergency Response Mechanism (EU SAHA project) and through the consolidation of increased operational links with the European Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC) as well as by identifying areas of joint cooperation reflected in the ASEAN Declaration on One ASEAN One Response: ASEAN Responding to Disasters as One in the Region and Outside the Region.

3.5. Address regional and global environmental challenges and promote sustainable development

- (a) Conduct ASEAN-EU Dialogue on Sustainable Development as a platform to discuss development issues and sustainability issues and the implementation of the Agenda 2030 and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);
- (b) Exchange of best practices in the areas of poverty reduction and rural development;
- (c) Support the implementation of Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) through technical assistance and capacity building;
- (d) Strengthen cooperation to address the challenges posed by climate change through support to the implementation of relevant strategic priorities of ASEAN Programme on Sustainable Management of Peatland Ecosystems (APSMPE), and Paris Agreement adopted under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, among others;
- (e) Strengthen cooperation to address climate related issues such as water and air pollution, sea level rise, adaptation and mitigation of greenhouse gasses (GHG) emissions; enhance EU-ASEAN cooperation on global climate change mitigation initiatives;
- (f) Explore collaboration to address societal challenges in the framework of Copernicus, in accordance with the respective domestic laws, regulations and policies;
- (g) Strengthen support for ASEAN's efforts in the full and effective implementation of ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution to effectively address land and forest fires in the region, such as through the ASEAN-EU Sustainable Use of Peatland and Haze Mitigation in ASEAN (SUPA) which supports the ASEAN Programmes on Sustainable Management of Peatland Ecosystems (APSMPE);
- (h) Strengthen cooperation to address inter alia issues such as marine litter, focusing efforts in particular on prevention;
- (i) Explore possible cooperation on the concept of circular economy and encourage sustainable consumption models by exchanging experiences on measures covering the entire product life cycle: from production to consumption, waste management and the market for secondary raw materials;

- (j) Promote sub-regional cooperation to promote social-economic development and sustainable water management, including the Lower-Mekong region, drawing out from relevant EU experience and promote the sustainable use of inland waters, coastal and marine environment;
- (k) Promote biodiversity conservation and management as well as support biodiversity initiatives in the region through the work of the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity in particular the ASEAN-EU Biodiversity Conservation and Management of Protected Areas in ASEAN (BCAMP); and
- (l) Strengthen cooperation in the development of “Smart Cities”.

4. CONNECTIVITY COOPERATION

- (a) Continue policy dialogue on how to enhance inter-regional connectivity between ASEAN and the EU, including through the ASEAN Coordinating Committee on Connectivity (ACCC) and relevant EU counterparts;
- (b) Promote jointly the implementation of the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity (MPAC) 2025, particularly in the areas of sustainable infrastructure, digital innovation, seamless logistics, regulatory excellence and people mobility; and
- (c) Explore possibility of exchange lessons learned and best practices from the EU on the development of sub-regional and trans-regional connectivity initiatives, including the Mekong sub-region, Brunei-Indonesia-Malaysia-Philippines-East ASEAN Growth Area (BIMP-EAGA) and Indonesia-Malaysia-Thailand Growth Triangle (IMT-GT).

5. THE INITIATIVE FOR ASEAN INTEGRATION AND NARROWING THE DEVELOPMENT GAP IN ASEAN

- (a) Continue to contribute towards narrowing the development gaps within and between ASEAN Member States through the implementation of Work Plan III of the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI), as well as taking into account existing sub-regional cooperation frameworks;
- (b) Exchange expertise and best practices with the EU on sustainable development in the Lower Mekong sub-region, on the basis of strong commitment by ASEAN, building on the EU's relevant programmes and experiences and the data provided by the Mekong River Commission.

6. FOLLOW-UP OF THE PLAN OF ACTION

- (a) ASEAN and the EU shall regularly review this Plan of Action through the appropriate existing mechanisms comprising ASEAN and EU officials, including through the ASEAN-EU Joint Cooperation Committee (JCC) and the ASEAN-EU Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM), with the assistance of the ASEAN Secretariat, on the basis of mutual consent;

- (b) Progress report of the implementation of the Plan of Action could be submitted to the biennial ASEAN-EU Ministerial Meeting;
- (c) The implementation of the present Plan of Action is a shared responsibility of ASEAN and the EU. It will be jointly taken forward by ASEAN and the EU;
- (d) The ASEAN-EU Plan of Action (2018-2022) does not, nor is it intended to create any legal obligations on either side under domestic or international law.

