

The First Meeting of the ASEAN-China Joint Cooperation Committee

Beijing, 26–28 February 1997

JOINT PRESS RELEASE

The First Meeting of the ASEAN-China Joint Cooperation Committee (ACJCC) was held in Beijing in 26–28 February 1997. The Meeting was co-chaired by H.E. Mr. Chen Jian, Assistant Foreign Minister of China, and H.E. Dato' Abdul Majid Ahmad Khan, Director-General of ASEAN-Malaysia.

Officials from China (the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, State Planning Commission, State Commission for Science and Technology, Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Transportation, Ministry of Railways, Ministry of Agriculture, National Environmental Protection Agency, National Tourism Administration, China Council for the Promotion of International Trade (CCPIT), the seven ASEAN Member Countries (Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam) and the ASEAN Secretariat attended the Meeting.

The Chinese Vice Premier and Foreign Minister, H.E. Mr. Qian Qichen and the Secretary-General of ASEAN, Dato' Ajit Singh, attended the Opening Ceremony on 26 February and delivered speeches. H.E. Mr. Qian Qichen inaugurated the ACJCC.

The Meeting had an in-depth discussion on a wide range of issues in the traditional spirit of ASEAN-China solidarity and South-South cooperation. The Meeting reviewed the development of ASEAN-China cooperative relationship. It agreed that remarkable progress has been made in the relations between ASEAN and China as well as between individual ASEAN Member Countries and China. High-level exchanges of visits are frequent, economic and trade contracts are close and all-around cooperation in other areas is expanding. The political dialogue is at a high level, the economic and trade as well as science and technology cooperation mechanisms have started smoothly. The two sides have also coordinated and supported each other in regional and international affairs and maintained an encouraging momentum.

The Meeting agreed that there is a great deal of potential for further cooperation. The Meeting discussed ways and means to promote greater cooperation and address constraints and limitations. The Meeting advanced various concrete proposals and ideas for further cooperation.

The Meeting discussed the dialogue mechanisms. It agreed that the following five parallel mechanisms would form the overall structure of ASEAN-China dialogue: ASEAN-China Senior Officials Political Consultations, ACJCC, ASEAN-China Joint Committee on Economic and Trade Cooperation, ASEAN-China Joint Science and Technology Committee, and ASEAN Committee in Beijing. The ACJCC would act as the coordinator of all the ASEAN-China mechanisms at the working level. The

ACJCC oversees the ASEAN-China Joint Management Committee of the ASEAN-China Cooperation Fund, and would work closely with the ASEAN-China Business Council (ACBC). The ACJCC will review and approve cooperation projects to be financed by the Fund.

The Secretary-General of the ASEAN Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ASEAN-CCI) briefed the Meeting on the successful outcome of his separate meeting with the CCPIT, including acceleration of the formal establishment of the ACBC and promotion of exchanges of business people and information.

Based on the existing strong foundation of the ASEAN-China cooperation and extensive complementarity in such areas as natural resources, industrial and technological structures, etc., both sides agreed to focus and expand their cooperation on economic, trade, science and technology, tourism and other functional areas. Taking the mutual aspiration for greater cooperation into account, the Meeting approved in principle three project proposals, i.e. Personnel Exchange Between ASEAN and China, Workshop on ASEAN-China Economic and Trade Cooperation, and ASEAN-China Information Exchange.

The Meeting also discussed and adopted the Terms of Reference of the ACJCC, and the Rules of Procedure of the Joint Management Committee of the ASEAN-China Cooperation Fund.

The two sides agreed that the Meeting was a great success. The next ACJCC Meeting is to be held in 18 months time in Malaysia.

SOURCE: ASEAN Secretariat, Jakarta.