

Meeting of ASEAN and Indian Senior Officials on the Establishment of Sectoral Dialogue Relations between ASEAN and India

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New Delhi, 16–17 March 1993

1. The Meeting of ASEAN and Indian Senior Officials on the establishment of Sectoral Dialogue between ASEAN and India was held in New Delhi on March 16 and 17 1993.

2. The Meeting was attended on the ASEAN side by H.E. Dato' Ajit Singh, Secretary-General, ASEAN, H.E. Dato Paduka Haji Mohd. Adnan bin Buntar, Director-General, ASEAN-Brunei Darussalam, H.E. Mr Susanto Ismodirdjo, Head of Bureau of Development and Analysis, ASEAN-Indonesia, H.E. Mr Hasmy Agam, Director-General, ASEAN-Malaysia, H.E. Ms Delia Albert, Director-General, ASEAN-Philippines, H.E. Mr Toh Hock Ghim, Director-General, ASEAN-Singapore, H.E. Mrs Laxanachantorn Laohaphan, Director-General, ASEAN-Thailand and their respective delegations.

Also in attendance from ASEAN were the ASEAN Heads of Missions in New Delhi and their staff as well as officials from the ASEAN Secretariat.

The Indian delegation was led by the Hon'ble Minister of External Affairs, Shri Dinesh Singh and included the Hon'ble Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri Salman Kurshid, Foreign Secretary, Shri J.N. Dixit, Commerce Secretary, Shri A.V. Ganesan, Industry Secretary, Shri Suresh Kumar, Secretary for Science and Technology, Dr P. Rama Rao, Secretary for Tourism, Shri J.M. Lyngdoh and Additional Secretary (MEA) Shri P.M.S. Malik.

3. *Opening Remarks*

In their opening remarks, H.E. Shri Dinesh Singh, Minister of External Affairs, India and H.E. Dato' Ajit Singh, Secretary-General, ASEAN, both emphasized the importance and timeliness of the establishment of ASEAN-India Sectoral Dialogue and expressed the sincere intention of ASEAN and India to further promote co-operation through this relationship.

4. *Adoption of the Agenda*

The Official Meeting was co-chaired by H.E. J.N. Dixit, Foreign Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and H.E. Dato' Ajit Singh, Secretary-General, ASEAN.

5. *Exchange of Letters*

The Meeting noted and affirmed the exchange of letters between the two sides on the establishment of sectoral dialogue relations between ASEAN and India.

6. *Consideration of Modalities*

The Meeting considered the following:

- (i) ASEAN-India Joint Sectoral Cooperation Committee
- (ii) ASEAN New Delhi Committee
- (iii) Joint ASEAN-India Business Council

The ASEAN-India Joint Sectoral Cooperation Committee will be set up as the inter-government consultative body to co-ordinate the ASEAN-India Sectoral Dialogue Relations, initially in the areas of trade, investment and tourism. It will also establish sub-committees as appropriate.

The Meeting also agreed to set up an ASEAN New Delhi Committee consisting of the Heads of Diplomatic Missions of ASEAN member countries in New Delhi who shall facilitate ASEAN's Sectoral Dialogue Relations with India.

The meeting also agreed to establish a Joint ASEAN-India Business Council which will consist of representatives from the respective private sectors of ASEAN and India.

7. *Consideration of relevant matters on the areas of co-operation*

The Meeting agreed on various proposals to increase co-operation in the areas of trade, investment and tourism.

Trade and Investment

In the area of trade, India proposed four areas of co-operation which could form the basis for discussion in future sectoral dialogue meetings.

- (i) Hold regular trade talks between India and ASEAN.
- (ii) Establish a mechanism for the exchange of trade and commercial data.
- (iii) Have regular interaction between the business communities of India and ASEAN.
- (iv) Establish a mechanism for interaction on industrial standards and quality control.

The Meeting noted that India would be establishing a fund under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) to develop programmes and projects in the fields of tourism, administration and management, trade and investments, computers and informatics, and solar energy and environmental protection. This fund would be placed at the disposal of the ASEAN Secretariat and administered by a Joint Management Committee which will be established for this purpose.

ASEAN too put forward several proposals such as an Information/Promotion Centre for Trade/Investment, lists of investment opportunities for investors from both sides, an increased exchange of trade missions and trade fairs and the development of joint marketing strategies for the promotion of exports to third countries.

India informed the Meeting of changes in investment policies and the improvement of investment incentives on the Indian side and proposed joint ventures between ASEAN and India which could explore the specific areas of co-operation.

Science and Technology

The Meeting was also informed of India's suggestion that each side offer six post-doctoral fellowships for up to six months in the areas of science and technology and the holding of joint workshops to identify themes of common interest for joint projects in the areas of:

1. advanced materials
2. biotechnology
3. information technology

Tourism

In the field of tourism, the Meeting recognized the vast potential that exists for collaboration between ASEAN and India. It was agreed that co-operation in travel, hotels and joint marketing of tourist destinations would certainly be of benefit to both sides. India expressed its desire to learn more about tourism publicity from ASEAN. The following areas of co-operation were identified:

1. Management of destination tourism
2. Co-operation between the travel trade on the two sides
3. Co-operation in the Hotel Industry
4. Promoting a Visit India-ASEAN Year
5. Establishing an ASEAN-India Tourist Information Centre.

The meeting agreed that the above proposals were by no means exhaustive or inclusive and that these and other new proposals which each side may wish to make would be taken up at the first meeting of the AIJSCC.

8. *Date and Venue of the First Meeting of the ASEAN-India Joint Sectoral Cooperation Committee.*

The Date and Venue of the First ASEAN-India Sectoral Dialogue will be decided through diplomatic channels.

SOURCE: Ministry for Foreign Affairs, ASEAN-Singapore.