

Twenty-Third ASEAN Ministerial Meeting

Excerpts from the Joint Communiqué Jakarta, 24–25 July 1990

INTRODUCTION

1. The Twenty-Third ASEAN Ministerial Meeting was held in Jakarta from 24 to 25 July 1990. The Meeting was formally opened by His Excellency President SOEHARTO of the Republic of Indonesia.
2. The Meeting was attended by His Royal Highness Prince Mohamed Bolkiah, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Brunei Darussalam; His Excellency Mr. Ali Alatas, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia; His Excellency Dato' Haji Abu Hassan bin Haji Omar, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Malaysia; His Excellency Mr. Raul S. Manglapus, Secretary of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Philippines; His Excellency Mr. Wong Kan Seng, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Community Development of Singapore; His Excellency Air Chief Marshal Siddhi Savetsila, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand and their respective delegations.
3. His Excellency Mr. Rusli Noor, Secretary-General of the ASEAN Secretariat and his staff also attended the Meeting.
4. His Excellency Mr. Michael Somare, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade of Papua New Guinea, attended the open session as Observer.
5. His Excellency Mr. Ali Alatas, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia chaired the Meeting. His Excellency Dato' Haji Abu Hassan bin Haji Omar, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Malaysia, was elected Vice Chairman.

OPENING ADDRESS

6. In his Opening Address, His Excellency President SOEHARTO of the Republic of Indonesia stated among others that the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting was being held in the midst of profound global change and transition. It was also a time of challenge as well as of new opportunity within the on-going process of detente and conciliation between the two major powers and their respective alliances. The President stressed that the political and economic transformations which continued to unfold in Europe would have far-reaching ramifications for future relations among states not confined to the continent alone. The President emphasized that ASEAN, in facing these global changes, needed to maintain a commensurate capacity for dynamic adaptation and to preserve at all times a clear and unified sense of purpose. It was therefore pertinent that the present Meeting was not only a routine event, but a time for ASEAN to seize the opportunity to assess particularly and comprehensively its position, interest and objectives within a regional and global context.

REVIEW OF THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION

7. The Foreign Ministers noted that the world had changed dramatically in the intervening 12 months between the 22nd and 23rd AMM. Europe had undergone a radical transformation with the dismantling of the Berlin Wall and the democratization of the East European countries. German unification portended a whole new European architecture. East-West relations had improved beyond the level of detente as aid for East European economies, including the USSR, was being actively considered by the West. The relationship between the Warsaw Pact and NATO was undergoing rapid changes. The USSR had redirected its attention towards domestic problems. Plagued by persistent trade and budget deficits, the US was reassessing its global presence and calling on its allies to share the financial burden of their defense.

8. The Foreign Ministers felt that it was imperative for ASEAN, in taking cognizance of the above developments, to adopt a more flexible and forward looking approach to prepare itself for the challenges of the 90s, and in particular to strengthen itself and intensify intra-ASEAN cooperation.

9. The ASEAN Foreign Ministers recommend that pursuant to the decision of the Heads of State/Government at the Manila Summit in 1987 and in view of the rapid changes presently taking place in the world, it would be desirable to prepare for the next Summit. They noted that careful preparation would have to be made to ensure a successful Summit.

10. Foreign Ministers agreed that the ASEAN Secretariat should develop a capability to conduct annually an exercise to produce an ASEAN Macroeconomic Outlook (AMO) for the consideration of ASEAN Ministers at their meetings. They requested the Secretary-General of the ASEAN Secretariat to pursue the immediate implementation of the AMO project

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FOLLOW-UP ACTION ON THE DECISIONS OF THE THIRD MEETING OF ASEAN HEADS OF GOVERNMENT

27. The Foreign Ministers reviewed the implementation of the decisions of the Third Meeting of the ASEAN Heads of Government, held in Manila, December 1987. They were pleased to note that considerable progress had been made during the past year, particularly in the establishment of sectoral dialogue relations with the Republic of Korea. An important development in the strengthening of ASEAN's coordinating mechanism was the convening of the ASEAN Joint-Ministerial Meeting (JMM) of the Foreign and Economic Ministers. They welcomed the participation of the ASEAN Economic Ministers in the Post Ministerial Conferences especially as more economic issues were being discussed at these Meetings.

28. The Foreign Ministers approved the ASC's recommendations on the improvement of the format of the PMCs.

ASEAN SECRETARIAT

29. The Foreign Ministers expressed great satisfaction over the initiatives taken by the ASEAN Standing Committee to strengthen the role and effectiveness of the ASEAN mechanism and structures, especially the ASEAN Secretariat and called for sustained efforts in this direction. They welcomed the assistance being rendered by UNDP, ADB, Canada, and the EC in support of these initiatives.

30. The Foreign Ministers agreed to the establishment of the UNDP Sponsored panel of five Eminent Persons to study and make the necessary recommendations on strengthening and re-vamping the structure and mechanism of ASEAN, in particular the ASEAN Secretariat.

31. The Foreign Ministers appointed Dr. Chng Meng Kng of Singapore to the new post of Deputy Secretary General of the ASEAN Secretariat for a period of three years. The Foreign Ministers felt that the new post would assist in enhancing the role of the ASEAN Secretariat in line with the decision of the Third ASEAN Summit.

REVIEW OF ASEAN COOPERATION

32. In reviewing the progress made in ASEAN cooperation over the past year, the Foreign Ministers noted with satisfaction the various programmes and activities undertaken to further promote intra-ASEAN cooperation, particularly in the fields of trade, energy, commodities, social welfare, culture, labour affairs, education, youth development, science and technology and civil service matters.

33. The Foreign Ministers expressed satisfaction that progress had been made in the finalization of Thailand's ASEAN Potash Mining Project and noted that all the six ASEAN member countries would be participating as shareholders in the project.

34. The Foreign Ministers noted that the Revised Basic Agreement on ASEAN Industrial Joint Ventures (AIJV) would be amended in order to extend the deadline of 1990 for the 60% non-ASEAN equity participation in the AIJV up to the end of 1993.

35. The Foreign Ministers agreed on the establishment of the ASEAN Social Development Fund and, along with the ASEAN Science and Technology Fund which was created earlier, were convinced that these funds would help promote greater regional cooperation in these fields.

36. The Foreign Ministers welcomed the adoption of the Kuala Lumpur Accord on Environment and Development at the 4th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on the Environment (AMME) held in Subang, Malaysia on 18-19 June 1990, which decided that a common ASEAN position on environmental matters be formulated for presentation to the Ministerial Level Conference on the Environment for Asia and the Pacific and later to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in 1992.

37. The Foreign Ministers noted with satisfaction the progress being made on the preparations for the Visit ASEAN Year 1992 (VAY '92) and requested the dialogue countries to contribute to the success of the programme.

PROPOSED ASEAN TREATY OF ECONOMIC COOPERATION

38. Cognizant of the urgent need for ASEAN to cope with the rapid and dramatic developments taking place not only in Europe but also in the region and conscious of the challenges that these events will pose for ASEAN's viability, the Foreign Ministers felt that it was timely to take more concrete steps towards more effective intra-ASEAN economic cooperation. In this connection the Foreign Ministers took particular note of the proposal of the Philippines for the conclusion of an ASEAN Treaty of Economic Cooperation and directed their senior officials, in coordination with

senior economic officials and the Directors-General of the ASEAN National Secretariats to consider the setting up of a committee to study the need for a treaty or other framework for ASEAN economic cooperation for submission to the AEM for its consideration.

PARTICIPATION OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR

39. The Foreign Ministers acknowledged the growing importance of private sector participation in the dialogue process as well as in intra-ASEAN cooperation and expressed the hope that such participation would be intensified.

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ASEAN-PACIFIC COOPERATION ON HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (APC-HRD)

41. The Foreign Ministers noted the report of the Fifth Meeting of the Ad-hoc Working Group on APC-HRD, held in Jakarta on 22 February 1990. They expressed concern over the lack of progress made to date on the implementation of the Programme and called upon the dialogue partners for a more positive response to the project proposals submitted by ASEAN.

COOPERATION WITH DIALOGUE COUNTRIES AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

42. The Foreign Ministers reviewed the activities being implemented within the framework of ASEAN cooperation with dialogue countries and international organizations and noted with satisfaction the progress made in the various fields, particularly in the areas of development cooperation. The Foreign Ministers, however, expressed their disappointment on the slow progress on issues relating to improved market access for products of export interest to ASEAN.

43. The Foreign Ministers expressed satisfaction with the progress on the implementation of the ASEAN-Australia Economic Cooperation Programme (AAECP) Phase II and the focus given to the areas of trade and investment promotion, science and technology and agro-based projects, with special reference to Human Resources Development (HRD). The Foreign Ministers noted the broadening of the ASEAN-Australia Forum's agenda to include cooperation in telecommunications, environment and education.

44. The Foreign Ministers noted with satisfaction the progress in the ASEAN-Canada dialogue relations. The Foreign Ministers also noted that the establishment of the Canada-ASEAN Centre in Singapore had resulted in improved management and coordination of the development cooperation programmes. The Foreign Ministers further expressed the hope that there would be greater increase in trade and investment cooperation between ASEAN and Canada. The Foreign Ministers welcomed the offer of the Canadian Government to host a Special ASEAN-Canada Ministerial Meeting in Jasper, Canada, on 5-7 October 1990 and hoped that the outcome of the Meeting would further enhance the ASEAN-Canada relations.

45. The Foreign Ministers noted the successful outcome of the 8th ASEAN-EC Ministerial Meeting, Kuching, Malaysia, 16–17 February 1990. In taking note of the developments in the Soviet Union and in Central and Eastern Europe, the Foreign Ministers expressed the hope that the EC's commitment to assist these countries towards free-market economies would not be at the expense of ASEAN-EC ties. On the creation of the Single European Market, the Foreign Ministers urged the EC to ensure that its implementation would not adversely affect ASEAN's interests. The Foreign Ministers reaffirmed that industrial cooperation should be accorded high priority in ASEAN-EC relations. The Foreign Ministers further urged the EC to provide improved market access for ASEAN exports.

46. The Foreign Ministers expressed satisfaction over Japan's continuing support for ASEAN's cultural and development cooperation activities. The Ministers expressed the hope that Japan would give priority consideration to the resolution of existing trade issues between ASEAN and Japan, particularly in the area of market access for products of interest to ASEAN. In this regard, the Ministers welcomed the convening of the first meeting between ASEAN and Japan trade experts in Tokyo in September 1990, as well as the participation for the first time by the private sector in the forthcoming 12th ASEAN-Japan Forum in Tokyo.

47. The Foreign Ministers welcomed measures to be taken by the New Zealand Government in across-the-board reduction in its tariff and other liberalization programmes in the industrial sector. The Foreign Ministers requested New Zealand to continue to find practical ways to resolve problems and obstacles to facilitate the entry of ASEAN export products to the New Zealand market. The Foreign Ministers also welcomed the implementation of the projects under Inter-Institutional Linkages Programme (IILP) and the finalization of Trade and Investment Promotion Package (TIPP) projects.

48. The Foreign Ministers noted with satisfaction that the ASEAN-US Dialogue continued to serve as an important forum for cooperation in the areas of trade, investment and development. The Foreign Ministers welcomed the signing of the Project Grant Agreement on Private Investment and Trade Opportunities (PITO). The project set forth new directions for ASEAN-US cooperation which would enhance the participation of ASEAN and US private sectors in ASEAN-US trade and investment. On the ASEAN-US Initiative (AUI), the Foreign Ministers welcomed the decision of the AEM and the USTR to establish a Joint Working Group on ASEAN-US Economic Relations as a concrete effort not only to strengthen and improve the ASEAN-US economic and trade relations but also to complement the multilateral trading system under GATT.

49. The Foreign Ministers expressed their appreciation for the UNDP's contribution to ASEAN development cooperation. In particular, the Foreign Ministers were pleased to note the preparations being made for the 5th UNDP Cycle (1992–1996) in the development of a programmatic approach to the formulation and implementation of the ASEAN-UNDP technical cooperation.

APEC

50. The Foreign Ministers noted with satisfaction the outcome of the Joint Ministerial Meeting held in Kuching, Malaysia, on 15 February 1990, in which ASEAN reaffirmed its position on APEC as stated at the Canberra Meeting on 6–7 November 1989. ASEAN would continue to be guided by the basic principles stated at the Canberra Meeting, which stated, *inter alia*, that the

APEC should continue to be a loose, exploratory and informal consultative process, that APEC process should not dilute ASEAN's identity and that it should not be directed towards the establishment of an economic trading bloc, as this would be contrary to ASEAN's support for the establishment of a more fair and freer multilateral trading system. In pursuing this goal, ASEAN should take a pragmatic and gradual approach.

51. The Foreign Ministers welcomed the positive results of the two Meetings of APEC Senior Officials held in Singapore in March and May 1990 and looked forward to the opportunity for consultations with other participants on major economic developments and issues at the forthcoming Ministerial Meeting in Singapore, 29-30 July 1990.

INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC ISSUES

52. The Foreign Ministers noted that the global economic scene was still characterized by the escalation of trade protectionism including new forms of protectionism, the unstable and low commodity prices, heavy debt burden and the drastic aggravation of reversed transfer of financial flows and the persistent monetary instability. The Foreign Ministers felt that it was therefore essential for the developed and developing countries to enhance their cooperation in addressing the global problems of an increasingly interdependent and integrated world economy.

53. The Foreign Ministers reaffirmed their strong commitment to the successful completion of the URMTN by December 1990 and urged the developed countries to adopt a more forthcoming and positive attitude in the remaining period of the Uruguay Round, taking fully into consideration the areas of interest to the developing countries particularly tropical products, agriculture, textiles and clothing, and international trading rules including anti-dumping and countervailing measures. The Foreign Ministers reiterated that Special and Differential treatment for developing countries was an integral element of the negotiations and that it should be applied to all aspects of the Uruguay Round.

54. The Foreign Ministers expressed concern at the adverse effects that the anti-tropical timber and anti-vegetable oil campaigns in certain developed countries were having on ASEAN exports earnings. The Foreign Ministers noted that an ASEAN Ministerial Delegation would be visiting the EC and other major consuming countries to counter the anti-tropical timber campaigns. The Foreign Ministers urged the developed countries to provide technical and research expertise to upgrade tropical forest management and development, so as to intensify R and D activities on tropical forests.

55. The Foreign Ministers were of the view that efforts should be made for the Common Fund for Commodities to become operational as soon as possible as it would give fresh impetus to international action in the area of commodities.

56. On the global debt problem, the Foreign Ministers expressed their concern over the growing financial outflows from developing countries in the form of external debt payment which constituted one of the most debilitating deterrents to sustained growth and development. The Foreign Ministers felt that a comprehensive, durable and development-oriented solution to the debt problem, based on the principle of shared responsibility of both debtors and creditors, was imperative.

SUMMIT LEVEL GROUP FOR SOUTH-SOUTH CONSULTATION AND COOPERATION (G-15)

57. The Foreign Ministers welcomed the First Meeting of the Summit Level Group for South-South Consultation and Cooperation, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 1–3 June 1990. The Foreign Ministers expressed the hope that this forum would further enhance cooperation through the revitalization of the North-South Dialogue and the strengthening of South-South cooperation.

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TWENTY-FOURTH ASEAN MINISTERIAL MEETING

76. The Foreign Ministers agreed that the Twenty-Fourth ASEAN Ministerial Meeting would be held in Malaysia in June 1991.

77. The Delegations of Brunei Darussalam, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand expressed their sincere and deep appreciation to the Government and people of the Republic of Indonesia for their warm and generous hospitality and the excellent facilities and efficient arrangements made for the Meeting.

78. The Meeting was held in the traditional spirit of ASEAN friendship and solidarity.

SOURCE: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Singapore.