

DOCUMENTATION

Fourth ASEAN Ministerial Meeting On the Environment Subang, Malaysia, 18–19 June 1990

JOINT PRESS RELEASE

Malaysia hosted the Fourth ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on the Environment (AMME), in Subang, Selangor Darul Ehsan, Malaysia on 18–19 June 1990. The Meeting was chaired by H. E. Datuk Amar Stephen K. T. Yong, the Minister of Science, Technology and the Environment of Malaysia.

The Meeting was attended by H. E. Pengiran Dato' Seri Paduka Dr Hj. Ismail bin Pengiran Hj. Damit, Minister of Development of Brunei Darussalam, H. E. Prof. Dr Emil Salim, the Minister of State for Population and the Environment of the Republic of Indonesia, H. E. Datuk Amar Stephen K. T. Yong, the Minister of Science, Technology and the Environment of Malaysia, H. E. Dr Celso Roque, the Under-Secretary of the Environment and Natural Resources of the Republic of the Philippines, H. E. Dr Ahmad Mattar, the Minister for the Environment of the Republic of Singapore, and H. E. Prachuab Chaiyasan, the Minister of Science, Technology and Energy of the Kingdom of Thailand. Mr Theng Chye Yam, Director, Bureau III of the ASEAN Secretariat, attended on behalf of the Secretary-General.

Among the major decisions of the Fourth AMME were the launching of the ASEAN Senior Officials on the Environment (ASOEN), adoption of the Kuala Lumpur Accord on Environment and Development and the adoption of common ASEAN stand on major global environmental issues in preparation for ASEAN's participation at future Ministerial meetings such as the forthcoming Ministerial Level Conference on the Environment for Asia and the Pacific and the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. A copy of the Kuala Lumpur Accord on Environment and Development is attached.

The establishment of ASOEN signifies the importance which ASEAN attaches to environmental concerns and the region's interest to play a greater role in mitigating global environmental problems. ASOEN would contribute towards the strengthening of ASEAN cooperation in the exchange of information, technology, resources and manpower in dealing with international environmental concerns. ASOEN was also mandated to help ensure the integration of environmental dimensions in the decisions of other ASEAN Committees.

Six Working Groups under the Chairmanship of the respective ASEAN member countries were established. They are namely:—

- i. ASEAN Working Group on Nature Conservation (ANC);
- ii. ASEAN Working Group on ASEAN Seas and Marine Environment;
- iii. ASEAN Working Group on Transboundary Pollution;
- iv. ASEAN Working Group on Environmental Management;
- v. ASEAN Working Group on Environmental Economics; and
- vi. ASEAN Working Group on Environmental Information, Public Awareness and Education.

The ASEAN Environment Ministers stressed that, the linkages of environmental concerns with the developmental needs of countries cannot be ignored. Also that our common responsibility towards the future of mankind would require effective, common actions for the protection of the environment. Such actions must be based on an equitable sharing of responsibilities which takes into account existing asymmetries between developed and developing countries.

The Kuala Lumpur Accord reaffirms ASEAN's commitment to the pursuit of sustainable development. It stresses the need for closer cooperation between the member countries of ASEAN in particular and global cooperation in general in the pursuit of sustainable development. The Accord would contribute towards ASEAN's preparation for the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development.

In the pursuit of environmental conservation and sustainable development, developing countries would not only require considerable manpower and economic resources but would also have to forego economic and developmental opportunities. It is therefore essential that developed countries recognise the needs of the developing countries and assist the latter through the transfer of environmentally sound technology and contribute towards appropriate funding mechanisms established to assist the developing countries.

The Fourth AMME noted the difficulties encountered by the developing countries in their negotiations on international conventions on the environment. As ASEAN member countries are likely to be adversely affected by these conventions, the Fourth AMME stressed that ASEAN member countries should take a greater role in the formulation of these international conventions through consultations and coordinated efforts.

The ASEAN Environment Ministers agreed on the following ASEAN common stand on major environmental issues:

— **Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer:** the need for, and the commitment of, developed countries for the transfer of technology and the provision of financial assistance should be the first major item for deliberation on the proposed amendments to the Montreal Protocol.

— **Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal:** greater emphasis should be placed on issues relating to the responsibilities of exporting countries to re-import wastes and on the liability and compensation for damage resulting from transboundary movements and disposal of hazardous wastes.

— **Proposed Climate Change Convention:** formation of a working group is recommended to assess the ecological and socio-economic impacts of global warming and the implications of the proposed Convention to the ASEAN region.

— **Biological Diversity:** to place emphasis on the need to consider issues on poverty and development as well as compensation in the proposed International Legal Instrument on the Conservation of Biological Diversity of the Planet.

The ASEAN Environment Ministers were of the view that ASEAN Resolutions and Declarations on the Environment previously issued at ASEAN Environment Ministers' Meetings and the Langkawi Declaration on the Environment were forward-looking documents and their elements should be reflected in the outcome of the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development.

SOURCE: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Singapore.

**The Kuala Lumpur Accord on Environment
and Development
Issued by the ASEAN Ministers
for the Environment
at the Fourth ASEAN Meeting of Ministers
for the Environment
Kuala Lumpur, 19 June 1990**

AWARE, that the management of the environment and the pursuit of sustainable development are imperative to secure the well-being of the people of ASEAN today and in the future,

FURTHER AWARE, that the management of the environment and the pursuit of sustainable development require close cooperation between the member-countries of ASEAN in particular and global cooperation in general, and that ASEAN should endeavour to strengthen such cooperation,

CONSCIOUS, that the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, to be held in 1992, provides a forum and an opportunity to further promote such cooperation and for ASEAN to assert its view on environmental management and sustainable development,

RECOGNIZING, that the formulation of such views and practices would require preparatory steps and studies, jointly as well as separately,

ALSO RECOGNIZING that in such formulation, it would be beneficial to take note of:

the Manila Declaration of 1981
the Bangkok Declaration of 1984

the Jakarta Resolution of 1987
the Manila Summit Declaration of 1987
and the Langkawi Declaration of 1989

WE THE ASEAN MINISTERS FOR THE ENVIRONMENT HEREBY AGREE

1. To initiate efforts leading towards concrete steps pertaining to environmental management, including:
 - a. the formulation of an ASEAN strategy for sustainable development and a corresponding action programme,
 - b. the harmonisation of environmental quality standards,
 - c. the harmonisation of transboundary pollution prevention and abatement practices,
 - d. the undertaking of research and development and the promotion of the use of clean technologies.
2. To initiate efforts leading towards concrete steps pertaining to natural resource management, including:
 - a. the harmonisation of approaches in natural resource assessment,
 - b. the development of joint natural resource management programmes,
 - c. the development and harmonisation of procedures aimed at obtaining a better reflection of the state of natural wealth in the context of the System of National Accounts.
3. To initiate efforts enabling the inclusion of environmental factors into economic calculations and thus providing a better base for international economic cooperation.
4. To develop and formulate a common ASEAN position to be presented 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, including:
 - a. affirming ASEAN's commitment to the pursuit of sustainable development,
 - b. stressing the need to strengthen regional and international cooperation and proposing the principles upon which such cooperation should be based,
 - c. emphasizing the importance of a global environmental agenda which reflects the priorities and concerns of all countries,
 - d. calling attention to the patterns of international relations that inhibit the implementation of national environmental efforts in developing countries and their participation in global environmental efforts,
 - e. reiterating the urgency for a supportive and predictable international economic environment which promotes economic growth and development of all countries,
 - f. stressing the need for equitable sharing of responsibilities and allocation of liabilities in global environmental efforts,
 - g. stressing that although global environmental efforts will benefit the common good, such benefits should be shared equitably, including the benefits of Research and Development,
 - h. underlining the need for substantial additional resources to assist developing countries to pursue their goals of sustainable development as well as access to, and transfer of, environmentally sound technologies at affordable costs and the establishment of appropriate funding mechanisms.