

**ASEAN-UN Comprehensive Partnership**  
**September 2015 - August 2016 Report**  
**Jointly Submitted by the ASEAN and UN Secretariats**

September 2016

**BACKGROUND**

1. ASEAN-UN cooperation has entered a new phase with the formal establishment of the ASEAN Community, the adoption of the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda) as well as the adoption of the new five-year Plan of Action (2016-2020) to implement the Joint Declaration on the Comprehensive Partnership between ASEAN and the UN.<sup>1</sup>
2. This Joint Report summarises the progress in the implementation of the ASEAN-UN Comprehensive Partnership<sup>2</sup>, covering the period of 1 September 2015 to 31 August 2016 and includes follow-up on the proposed recommendations in the 2013-2015 Joint Report to further strengthen the partnership. This Report will be submitted to the ASEAN-UN Ministerial Meeting (AUMM) on 22 September 2016 at United Nations Headquarters.

**POLITICAL-SECURITY COOPERATION**

Peace and security

3. Cooperation to promote regional and international peace and security is a key feature of the ASEAN-UN Comprehensive Partnership. The UN continues to attach great importance to cooperate with ASEAN on conflict prevention and preventive diplomacy, undertaken through a series of ASEAN-UN Track 1.5 Workshops: Regional Dialogues on Political-Security Cooperation (AURED). The third “AURED” workshop scheduled to take place in November 2016 will focus on conflict

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<sup>1</sup> The Joint Declaration on Comprehensive Partnership between the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the United Nations (UN) was adopted at the Fourth ASEAN-UN Summit on 19 November 2011, in Bali, Indonesia. The Joint Declaration, together with its Annex maps out major action lines across the four pillars of cooperation and has served as an overall framework for both sides to strengthen their cooperation.

<sup>2</sup> This report also includes an annex with an implementation matrix which fully details specific completed, ongoing and planned activities under areas of cooperation of the Comprehensive Partnership.

prevention and the prevention of violent extremism. Lao PDR will also host the first UN “Preventive Diplomacy and Peace-making Training” programme for the Asia-Pacific Region in late 2016, which will prioritise participation from ASEAN Member States, ASEAN Secretariat and ASEAN institutions.

4. ASEAN and the UN continue to strengthen cooperation in peacekeeping through contributions from ASEAN Member States to engage in UN Peace Operations around the world as well as through training programmes, including in humanitarian affairs and the protection of civilians. It will be important to also explore areas of potential cooperation between ASEAN and the UN in relation to peace-building.
5. Collaboration has been intensified to combat transnational crime. The UN has provided training and engaged in various ASEAN initiatives to address specific transnational crime issues including trafficking in persons and drug trafficking, as well as trafficking in wildlife and timber, among others.
6. To counter terrorism and prevent violent extremism, the UN has also increased its efforts to aid Member States as they work to limit the impact of foreign terrorist fighters (FTF) and related challenges. ASEAN has also expressed support to UNSC Resolutions 2170 (2014) and 2178 (2014) as well as the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and the UN Secretary-General’s Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism.

#### Promotion of Human Rights

7. ASEAN and the UN continue to explore possible areas of cooperation to support human rights work in ASEAN, including through information sharing, dialogues and support for the implementation of the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) Work Plan for 2016-2020 and Priority Programmes of 2016-2017. In a recent meeting involving AICHR and the UN, possible areas of cooperation were explored to support human rights work in the region.
8. Other ASEAN bodies, such as the ASEAN Committee on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC) and the ASEAN

Committee on Women (ACW), have closely collaborated with the UN in thematic issues relevant to the region. In addition, the UN is implementing a regional initiative for Governments to make new and concrete commitments to end violence against women and girls.

## **ECONOMIC COOPERATION**

### Integration

9. Both sides continue to explore cooperation on the promotion of economic integration for a competitive ASEAN Economic Community (AEC), through among others, the creation of effective operational and regulatory frameworks and the promotion of decent work in the region. The UN, together with other external partners, has supported ASEAN in enhancing regional connectivity through policy dialogues, capacity development seminars and workshops on issues of trade, road transportation, financing of infrastructure including Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs), among others.

### Tourism

10. Collaboration on tourism has been intensified through the joint report produced by ASEAN and the UN in January 2016, namely the Mekong River-based Tourism Product Development, which focused on the analysis of tourism products and development in the Mekong area covering five ASEAN countries. The publications of the study were distributed during the 19<sup>th</sup> Meeting of ASEAN Tourism Ministers in February 2016 in Manila, the Philippines.

### Food, Agriculture and Forestry

11. The UN supported ASEAN to develop a Vision and Strategic Plan for ASEAN Cooperation in Food, Agriculture and Forestry 2016-2025. ASEAN with technical support from the UN is in the process of developing a strategic framework for the implementation of the ASEAN Integrated Food Security Framework (AIFS) and the Strategic Plan of Action on Food Security in the ASEAN Region (SPA-FS) 2015-

2020. The UN is also promoting the one-health agenda in ASEAN as an integrated approach to animal, plant and human health.

### Energy

12. The UN supported the development of the ASEAN Regional policy roadmap for Minimum Energy Performance Standard (MEPS) for Air Conditioning Systems and Lighting.

## **SOCIO-CULTURAL COOPERATION**

### Human Development, Social Welfare and Gender Equality

13. ASEAN and the UN have strengthened cooperation in providing equitable access to human development opportunities. ASEAN and the UN continue to promote the rights and welfare of children, gender equality and the advancement of women through the implementation of the (i) Regional Plan of Action on the Elimination of Violence Against Children (RPA EVAC) and (ii) ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on Elimination of Violence Against Women (RPA on EVAW) respectively.

### Labour and Health

14. ASEAN-UN cooperation on labour has been undertaken through various initiatives that have contributed to the promotion of decent work for men and women workers in ASEAN countries. Both sides also agreed to develop a plan of joint activities that would be anchored to the ASEAN Labour Ministers' Work Programme 2016-2020 and Work Plans 2016-2020.

15. ASEAN and the UN are working together to further promote collaboration on enhancing access to healthcare, maternal and child health including nutrition, and promotion of healthy lifestyles as well as improving capabilities to control any outbreak of communicable diseases. The UN continues its collaboration with the ASEAN Secretariat to strengthen multi-sectoral national responses to meet public health issues, including ongoing technical support for sustainable and equitable

health access within the ASEAN member states for HIV as well as non-communicable diseases.

### Environment, Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management

16. ASEAN and the UN have been working closely in addressing climate change and responding to its impacts on socio-economic development, health, environment and water resources, undertaken through various joint activities, consultancy and leadership programmes. The UN will support the upcoming Fourth Regional Ministerial Forum on Environment and Health in ASEAN and East Asian countries.
17. Good progress has been made in the development of the ASEAN-UN Action Plan on Environment and Climate Change (2016-2020) following the adoption of the ASEAN Post 2015 Strategic Plan on Environment. ASEAN Member States are also working towards the ratification of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change adopted in 2015.
18. On disaster management, the 28<sup>th</sup> meeting of the ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management (ACDM) in Semarang, Indonesia adopted the ASEAN–UN Joint Strategic Plan of Action on Disaster Management 2016-2020, which outlines the engagement between ASEAN and the UN in the implementation of the eight priority programme under the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) Work Programme 2016-2020.
19. Demonstrating its commitment to engage as a leader on disaster management at the global level, ASEAN also issued a Joint Statement for the World Humanitarian Summit in May 2016 and continues to implement the UN Secretary-General's Agenda for Humanity.

### Culture and Education

20. Promoting access to education remains a priority of ASEAN-UN cooperation. Both sides are exploring cooperation to further support the formulation of ASEAN Declaration in Strengthening Education for Out-of-School Children and Youth, and possible collaboration on the ASEAN University Network (AUN).

## 21. CROSS-SECTORAL COOPERATION

### Cooperation to Implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

22. Cooperation to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development has been promoted through various initiatives and activities, including the convening of an open-ended Interface Meeting involving the ASEAN Secretariat, Thailand, and the UN which took place on 23 June 2016 in Bangkok. Moreover, the UN is providing technical support to ASEAN Secretariat in organizing the Policy Symposium on 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (Leave No One Behind) which was held on 19 September 2016 in Jakarta.

23. The Special Session of the ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting Focusing on Sustainable Development as well as the *Special Panel Discussion to Enhance Complementarities between the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* are scheduled to take place at United Nations Headquarters on 24 September 2016.

### **SECRETARIAT-TO-SECRETARIAT COOPERATION**

24. The ASEAN Secretariat and the UN have worked closely in monitoring ASEAN-UN cooperation and reporting the progress to the AUMM and through the AUMM to the ASEAN-UN Summit. The Secretariat-to-Secretariat Meeting (S2S) is held annually to review the implementation of the Comprehensive Partnership. Aside from the annual S2S in New York, the first full fledged S2S meeting was held at the ASEAN Secretariat in Jakarta on 30 March 2016.

25. The UN's cooperation with ASEAN has been strengthened with the deployment of three UN Liaison Officers to ASEAN, focusing on political-security issues, humanitarian affairs, as well as transnational organised crime and counter-terrorism, respectively. The UN has also appointed its Regional Adviser on ASEAN in October 2015 to focus on economic and socio-cultural cooperation. In September 2016, the UN informed the ASEAN Secretary-General of the additional responsibilities of the United Nations Resident Coordinator in Indonesia to represent the United Nations

with ASEAN in Jakarta. These deployments have contributed to more effective coordination and collaboration between the UN and Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR), the ASEAN Secretariat as well as with various ASEAN sectoral bodies.

26. The UN is also sharing its expertise with ASEAN in administrative and institutional processes, including technical assistance from the UN to develop a Reference Document System and establishing a physical security system for the ASEAN Secretariat. ASEAN Secretariat is also exploring cooperation with the UN to provide technical expertise to human rights training for ASEAN Secretariat.

### **FOLLOW-UP TO THE 2013-2015 RECOMMENDATIONS**

27. This Joint Report will also follow-up on the five recommendations in the 2013-2015 Joint Report submitted by the two Secretariats in September 2015 to further deepen the Partnership.

i. **Strengthened coordination through the “One UN” approach:**

The “One UN” approach to ASEAN-UN cooperation has been pursued, as demonstrated in the development of the first ASEAN-UN Plan of Action (2016-2020). The UN Liaison Presence in Jakarta including the UN Regional Advisor on economic and socio-cultural cooperation in Jakarta had played an important role in enhancing coordination on cross-cutting issues as well as effective coordination with UN Headquarters in New York and the UN regional offices and agencies in Bangkok.

ii. **More frequent engagements through the convening of S2S in the ASEAN region and UN’s interface with the CPR:**

The interaction between ASEAN and the UN system has been enhanced since the last Summit. Following the regional S2S Meeting in Jakarta, the UN also had an interface meeting with the CPR on 31 March 2016 to discuss matters related to ASEAN-UN cooperation. Technical-level engagement

continues between ASEAN and the UN in several established and new areas of cooperation.

iii. **Development of ASEAN-UN POA to prevent the proliferation of individual MOUs/FACs:**

The new five-year Plan of Action (2016-2020) to implement the Joint Declaration on the Comprehensive Partnership between ASEAN and the UN was adopted in early September 2016.

iv. **Implementation mechanisms on the available/mobilised resources:**

The new Plan of Action (2016-2020) includes a specific paragraph (6.1.3) intended to assist UN agencies establish appropriate instruments or exchange “letters of agreement” (LOA) in order to undertake activities, which would not require a new individual “Memorandum of Understanding”. Further discussion is required between ASEAN and the UN to systematically move forward.

v. **Long-term cooperation through the five-year of ASEAN-UN Plan of Action:**

The POA will guide both sides to realising the full potential of the comprehensive partnership in the next five years. Attention will be required to the allocation of available or resources mobilised by ASEAN and/or the UN System.

28. Noting the continued momentum of ASEAN-UN cooperation through the various mechanisms, plans and programmes, it is important for both sides to enhance the cooperation through the implementation of the newly adopted POA, and to promote complementarities between the ASEAN Vision 2025 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development within the framework of ASEAN-UN cooperation.

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