



**JOINT COMMUNIQUE
OF THE THIRTY THIRD ASEAN MINISTERIAL MEETING
Bangkok, Thailand 24-25 July 2000**

1. The Foreign Ministers of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations convened at the 33rd ASEAN Ministerial Meeting in Bangkok on 24-25 July 2000 under the chairmanship of His Excellency Dr. Surin, Pitsuwan, Foreign Minister of Thailand.
2. The Meeting was attended by all the Foreign Ministers of the ten ASEAN Member Countries and Papua New Guinea, The Secretary-General of ASEAN was also in attendance. The representatives of the Southern African Development Community and the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor were also invited as guest of the host country. His Excellency Mr. Chuan Leekpai, Prime Minister of Thailand, addressed the Ministers at the opening of the meeting.
3. The Foreign Ministers, at their meeting and at a Retreat among themselves, reviewed the situation in Southeast Asia. They concluded that ASEAN had emerged from the global and financial difficulties of 1997 and 1998 stronger and more cohesive than before. ASEAN continued to be an effective force for regional peace and stability. At the same time, the Ministers acknowledged that the regional and national measures being undertaken to make the region's economic recovery possible needed to be sustained if the recovery was to endure.

A COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

4. The Foreign Ministers recalled that the ASEAN Declaration was signed in Bangkok almost 33 years ago on 8 August 1967, and that the organisation had grown from the five original members to now include all the ten countries in the region.
5. The Foreign Ministers reviewed some of the issues discussed at last year's Retreat in Singapore, including the need to maintain a united and relevant ASEAN, the future of the ARF and PMC, and the emerging issues affecting regional peace and stability.
6. The Foreign Ministers discussed the challenges affecting the Association, in particular the region's geo-economic realities and the effects of globalisation. The Foreign Ministers exchanged views on how a more comprehensive development agenda in Strengthening national resilience could better prepare the region for the complexities and magnitude of globalisation, enhance the region's economic competitiveness and advance the creation of caring societies called for in the ASEAN Vision 2020.

7. The Foreign Ministers discussed the main elements of a more comprehensive development agenda, including augmenting the process of greater outreach to the people, enhancing ASEAN's economic integration; advancing the development of ASEAN as a concert of nations; and building a community of peace.
8. The Foreign Ministers noted the importance of poverty eradication, heightening social and human resources development, promoting equitable growth, facilitating the participation of all sectors of society in community and national activities in realizing the objective of total human development. They agreed to propose that, a portion of the Solidarity Fund in the ASEAN Foundation be used for human resources development. They agreed that promoting a strong sense of ASEAN identity would enable ASEAN to maintain its rich cultural heritage and promote ASEAN to the outside world.
9. The Foreign Ministers expressed support for the efforts to promote the development of information technology (IT) as a tool to foster 'knowledge-based' societies in ASEAN in such areas as e-literacy, e-education, e-health and e-development.
10. The foreign Ministers underscored the need to strengthen cooperation on transnational issues affecting the region, especially those related to environment, trafficking in persons, trafficking of illicit drugs, transnational crime and HIV/AIDS.
11. While economic recovery was taking place, The Foreign Ministers noted that the situation remained volatile and stressed the need to continue the reform process, in public and private sectors, at national and international. levels. while noting that existing economic cooperation programmes had achieved tangible results in integrating ASEAN economies into a unified market, the Foreign Ministers reiterated the importance of maintaining the pace of ASEAN's economic integration.
12. In order to advance the goal of ASEAN as a concert of Southeast Asian nations, and as an effective force of peace and stability in the region, the foreign Ministers believed that it was essential to strengthen ASEAN's cohesiveness and capacity to respond effectively to developments within and outside the region; ASEAN must participate in the globalization debate in order to have a role in shaping the process. Heightened efforts would also have to be exerted to promote constructive bilateral relations and elevate ASEAN's interaction to a higher plane in the light of the increasing interdependence.
13. The Foreign Ministers noted with satisfaction, in the context of a more Comprehensive Development Agenda, the progress made by the ASEAN committees and other bodies, including the ASEAN Secretariat, in the realization of the Ha Noi Plan of Action (HPA) to implement the ASEAN Vision 2020. They expressed appreciation for the support made by Dialogue Partners, international financial and development institutions, and others in the international community to realize the HPA, and looked forward to further productive discussions.

POLITICAL AND SECURITY COOPERATION

14. The Foreign Ministers reviewed the progress of ASEAN's political and security cooperation and noted the efforts made in further strengthening intra-ASEAN relations. They shared the view that the overall security environment in the Southeast Asian region remains stable and peaceful despite the existence of certain challenges. They re-affirmed their commitment to ensuring that ASEAN continues to play a promotion role in the promotion of peace and stability in Southeast Asia and in the wider Asia-Pacific region.
15. The Foreign Ministers reiterated the importance of the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC) as a code of conduct governing relations among states in the region. They welcomed the announcement made by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Papua New Guinea at the AMM that Papua New Guinea has now ratified the Second Protocol amending the TAC. With all signatory, states having now ratified the Second Protocol, the Protocol has now entered into force. In the light of this, they encouraged non-Southeast Asian states, particularly the Dialogue Partners, to accede to the TAC as an expression of their commitment to the Treaty's purposes and principles in the promotion of peace and stability. They also noted the progress being made to finalise the Draft Rules of Procedure for the High Council under the TAC, and agreed to expedite efforts in this regard.
16. The Foreign Ministers welcomed the Progress made in implementing the Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ). They noted with satisfaction the establishment of all the various organs under the Treaty and the work undertaken by these organs, including consultations with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).
17. The foreign Ministers urged the Nuclear Weapon States to accede to the Protocol to the SEA14YYTZ Treaty at an early date. They welcomed the announcement made by China at the PMC 10+1 in Singapore in July 1999 of its readiness to accede to the Protocol, and called on the other Nuclear Weapon States to exercise greater flexibility in the consultations, on the Protocol.
18. The Foreign Ministers noted the positive development in the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) process, including the Intersessional Support Group on Confidence Building Measures, The Intersessional Meeting on Disaster Relief and other activities which contributed to enhancing mutual confidence and cooperation among countries in the ARF. They noted that while confidence-building measures (CBMs) remain the primary focus of the ARF process, the ARF could advance in the development of the overlap between CBMs and preventive diplomacy (PD) as well as the concepts and principles of PD. In this regard, they stressed the importance of continued participation of defence and military officials in the ARF process. They also reaffirmed ASEAN's determination to continue to be the driving force of the ARF, and its resolve to intensify consultations and promote further progress of the ARF as an effective and relevant forum for political and security dialogue and cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region. The Foreign Ministers also noted with appreciation the efforts being undertaken in Track II to generate ideas to move the ARF forward, and encouraged greater interaction between the ARF and Track II fora.
19. Pursuant to the decision of the Third ASEAN Informal Summit, convened in Manila on 28 November 1999, on the proposal to set up an ASEAN Troika at

the ministerial level, the Foreign Ministers approved the Paper which sets out the principles and purposes, and the procedures for the constitution of the ASEAN Troika.

REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ISSUES

20. The Foreign Ministers had a wide-ranging exchange of views on current regional and international developments. They noted that the overall security environment was marked by a number of positive developments, including continued economic recovery and greater interactions and exchange between and among regional countries. They were of the view that stable relations among the major powers had been a factor contributing to these positive developments. They stressed that it was particularly important for the major powers to work-together with countries of the Asia-Pacific to further enhance peace, stability and prosperity of the region.
21. The Foreign Ministers commended Indonesia for all its efforts in revolving the East Timor issue, and noted the key role of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) in ensuring the territory's smooth transition to full independence. They reaffirmed ASEAN's support for and encouraged the international community to remain engaged in, the process of reconciliation, rehabilitation and reconstruction that is essential for a peaceful and stable East Timor.
22. The Foreign Ministers reiterated their continuing support for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and national unity of Indonesia, which includes the Provinces of Aceh and Irian Jaya (Papua). The Foreign Ministers commended the efforts and measures taken by the Indonesian Government to restore peace and order. The Foreign Ministers reaffirmed that the stability and prosperity of Indonesia would, positively contribute to the peace, stability and prosperity of the Asian region as a whole.
23. The Foreign Ministers reaffirmed their "One China" policy. On the matter of Cross-Straits relations, they expressed the hope to see positive developments.
24. The Foreign Ministers welcomed progress being made towards the adoption of a code of Conduct in the South China Sea which would be an important contribution to confidence-building and enhancing dialogue and understanding between ASEAN and China. They noted ongoing efforts by ASEAN and China, particularly the informal consultations between both sides in Hua Hin, Thailand, on 15 March 2000 and the First Meeting of the Working Group of the ASEAN-China Senior Officials Consultations on the Code of Conduct in Kuala Lumpur on 26 May 2000. They were encouraged that the Meeting in Kuala Lumpur agreed to a consolidated working draft of the Code of Conduct in the South China Sea which would provide the basis for achieving further progress in the discussions by the Working Group.
25. The Foreign Ministers, welcomed the commitment of all parties concerned to resolving disputes in the South China Sea by peaceful means in accordance with the recognized principles of international law, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), as well as to ensuring the freedom of navigation in the area. They encouraged all parties concerned to continue to exercise self-restraint in the conduct of their activities and

refrain from taking any action that may disturb the peace and stability in the area. They recognized the positive contribution of the bilateral and multilateral consultations among the parties concerned at the intergovernmental level, the extensive consultations at the ASEAN-China Dialogue and the regular exchange of views in the ARF, and the ongoing Informal Workshops on Managing Potential Conflicts in the South China Sea and encouraged their continuance.

26. The Foreign Ministers reaffirmed that peace and stability in the Korean Peninsula was crucial to the security of the region as a whole. They welcomed the Summit between the leaders of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) and the Republic of Korea (ROK) in Pyongyang on 13-15 June 2000, and hoped that the momentum would be carried forward with a view to achieving enduring peace and stability in the Korean Peninsula and reunification of the two countries. They noted with satisfaction the efforts by the DPRK to improve relations with its neighbours, as well as ASEAN member countries, and to enhance its interaction with the wider international community. In this regard, they looked forward to the participation of the DPRK at the 7th ARF in Bangkok on 26-27 July 2000. Further, they continued to express support for the Four-Party Talks and the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO).
27. The Foreign Ministers reaffirmed their support for the Middle East Peace Process. They welcomed the decision by all parties concerned to continue negotiations at Camp David Middle East Summit, and hoped for a positive outcome. They reiterated the importance of ensuring full implementation of the pledges and commitments made at the Madrid Conference by all parties concerned. Welcoming the Sharm El Sheik Agreement and relevant positive developments, regarding the resolution of final status issues by September 2000, they also called for full implementation of all relevant United Nations Resolutions.
28. The Foreign Ministers stressed the importance of strengthening the Non-Aligned Movement in order to enable it to effectively reinforce its ability to represent the interests and aspirations of the developing world. They noted with satisfaction the successful outcome of the 13th Ministerial Conference of the Non-Aligned Movement held in Cartagena on 8-9 April 2000 and the First South Summit held in Havana on 12-14 April 2000 which, *Inter alia*, reaffirms South-South Cooperation as an essential mechanism for promoting the sustainable economic self-support among developing countries.
29. The Foreign Ministers noted that discussions on the reform of the United Nations were still continuing. They reiterated the view that reform and expansion of the UN Security Council should be considered in tandem, with a view to enhancing, the representativeness, effectiveness, transparency and accountability of the UN Security Council. They looked forward to the convening of the Millennium Summit of the United Nations on 6-8 September 2000.
30. The Foreign Ministers reiterated the importance of achieving universal adherence to the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). They welcomed the convening of the NPT Review Conference 2000 in New York on 24 April-19 May 2000 and hoped that it would create a momentum towards the implementation of

concrete measures on nuclear disarmament by the Nuclear Weapon. States. In this regard, the Foreign Ministers affirmed the unanimous conclusion of the Advisory. Opinion of the International Court of Justice of 8 July 1996 that “there exists an obligation to pursue in good faith and Bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects Under strict and effective international control.”

31. The Foreign Ministers stressed the importance for all states which had not ratified acceded to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) to consider doing so at the earliest opportunity and noted the progress in negotiating a verification Protocol to strengthen the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) by the Ad Hoc-Group of the State Parties to the BWC.
32. The Foreign Ministers emphasized the importance of greater regional and international cooperation in dealing with the rise of transnational crime, which threatens the economic prosperity and stability of the region. They welcomed the efforts of the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime to strengthen the regional capabilities to deal with this problem and expedite the process leading to the establishment of the ASEAN Centre for Combating Transnational Crime. In this regard, they noted the progress being made towards the completion of the elaboration of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its 3 additional Protocols. They also welcomed the contribution of the Asia-Pacific Ministerial *Seminar* on "Building Capacities for Fighting Transnational Organized Crime" held in Bangkok on 20-21 March 2000 in promoting regional cooperation on this issue.
33. In recalling the decision of the 26th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting held in Singapore on 23-24 July 1993 to consider the establishment of an appropriate regional mechanism on human rights, the Foreign Ministers noted with appreciation the consultations between the ASEAN Senior Officials and the Working Group for an ASEAN Human Rights Mechanism. They also noted the establishment of a national mechanism on human rights in some ASEAN countries.

EAST ASIA COOPERATION

34. The Foreign Ministers were gratified by the steady momentum of East Asian cooperation within the context of the ASEAN+3 forum with China, Japan and the Republic of Korea and in accordance with the Joint Statement on East Asia Cooperation, which the ASEAN+3 Leaders issued in Manila last November. They considered this process, which now includes annual summits and cooperation at various levels and in several sectors, as contributing significantly to the political and economic stability of East Asia. They noted with satisfaction the rapid growth of cooperation activities under the ASEAN+3 Framework for East Asia Cooperation especially in trade, economic and financial cooperation.
35. The Foreign Ministers looked forward to their own meeting with the Foreign Ministers of China, Japan and the Republic of Korea on 26 July. They hoped to intensify cooperation in such areas as human resources development, science and technology, culture and information, health and transnational issues. They looked, forward to exploring mechanisms and modalities for

strengthening cooperation in the implementation of the Joint Statement on East Asia Cooperation as well as promoting peace and stability in East Asia.

SUSTAINABLE RECOVERY THROUGH RESILIENCE AND INTEGRATION

36. The Foreign Ministers welcomed the continued strengthening of economic recovery in the region, noting that ASEAN's economy grew by 4.6% in 1999, compared. to a contraction of 4.4% a year earlier, and is projected to grow by 4.5-5% this year. ASEAN's exports also recovered, growing by 6.4% from US\$322,8 billion in 1998 to US\$343.4 billion in 1999. They acknowledged that much of the improvement in ASEAN's economic performance can be attributed to on-going reforms, increased exports, return of private sector's confidence, domestic demand stimulation as well as progress made towards regional economic integration which has created an environment conducive to greater trade and investment in the region. They expressed confidence that continuation of such efforts and stable conditions would enhance regional resilience and ensure sustainable recovery.
37. The Foreign Ministers noted that advancement of ASEAN's economic integration was one of the key topics raised during the Third ASEAN Informal Summit in Manila last November, addressing such issues as acceleration of the ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA) and trade in services, implementation of the ASEAN Investment Area (AJA) and the ASEAN Industrial Cooperation (AICO), Scheme as well as the new "e-ASEAN initiative." Progress on financial cooperation, energy interconnections and transportation linkages were also highlighted. These and other cooperation activities being carried out serve to underline the comprehensive and steady integration of the ASEAN economies into a combined market of over 500 million people.
38. In this connection, the Foreign Ministers welcomed the idea by Prime Minister Chuan Leekpai to hold the ASEAN Trade Fair, which would help to attract increased trade into the region. The proposed ASEAN Trade Fair would be rotated among the ASEAN capitals every three years. They agreed to commend it to the relevant Ministers for consideration.
39. The Foreign Ministers recalled the decision of the ASEAN Leaders at the Third ASEAN Informal Summit to eliminate all import duties on intra-ASEAN trade by 2010 for the six original signatories to the AFTA Agreement and by 2015 for the four new signatories with some flexibility. They noted that the sensitive unprocessed agricultural products will be phased into the tariff reduction scheme beginning in 2001. The Foreign Ministers noted that a modality is being worked out to deal with countries experiencing real difficulties in meeting their obligations under the CEPT Scheme for AFTA in a manner that is consistent with AFTA and GATT rules and principles, while upholding the fundamental goal of achieving an ASEAN free trade area.
40. The Foreign Ministers welcomed the efforts made to enhance ASEAN's industrial cooperation. They recognized the key role played by SMEs in ASEAN's recovery and economic growth, and were pleased that regional cooperation in the development of SMEs sector is being actively pursued in such areas as ASEAN SMEs database and SMEs skills development and training.

41. The Foreign Ministers were encouraged by the progress of the discussions on the liberalisation of intra-regional trade in services. They also welcomed the intensification of joint efforts to promote investments in the ASEAN Investment Area, in particular the successful conclusion of the ASEAN joint promotion missions to Japan in February 2000, and to the US and Europe in May 2000, which attracted participants from a large number of companies in various sectors, including finance and banking.
42. The Foreign Ministers were pleased to note that the Third ASEAN Informal Summit had endorsed the "e-ASEAN initiative" aimed at developing competencies among ASEAN countries in information and communications technology in order to enhance their competitiveness in the global economy. They noted the work done by the e-ASEAN Task Force in formulating the broad-based and comprehensive action plan, which includes measures to narrow the digital divide within the region. They also noted the effort to establish a free trade area for goods, services and investment for information and communications industries under a new e-ASEAN Agreement. .
43. The Foreign Ministers welcomed the progress made to develop a region-wide transportation network, which will comprise 23 ASEAN highway routes, 46 shipping ports and some 30 customs airports- They also noted the progress made in the work on all the remaining implementing protocols for the ASEAN Framework Agreement on the Facilitation of Goods in Transit, as well as the draft Framework Agreement on the Facilitation of Inter-state Transport and the draft Framework Agreement on Multimodal Transport,
44. The Foreign. Ministers noted with satisfaction the significant progress made in the operation of the ASEAN Surveillance Process and: the strengthening of monetary and financial cooperation in East Asia, which have contributed to the regions economic and financial stability. They welcomed the Chiang Mai Initiative launched by ASEAN+3 Finance Ministers in May 2000, as a start to establishing a regional financing arrangement to supplement the existing international facilities. This Initiative involves an expanded ASEAN Swap Arrangement and networks of bilateral swap and repurchase agreement facilities among ASEAN+3 countries. They looked forward to the study by the ASEAN Secretariat on other appropriate mechanisms that could enhance ability to provide sufficient and timely financial support to ensure financial stability in East Asia.
45. The Foreign Ministers noted with appreciation the efforts being undertaken to support and assist new Member Countries in their integration into the regional and global trading system, including through the promotion and development of the Mekong Basin including the West-East Corridor (WEC). In this regard, they welcomed the proclamation by ESCAP in June this year of the "Decade of the Greater Mekong Sub-region Development, 2000-2009" as a means to mobilise international support and cooperation for the development of the region in a coherent and comprehensive manner. They were also pleased that the Second ASEAN-Mekong Basin Development Co-operation (AMBDC) Ministerial Meeting-held in Hanoi on 4 - 5 July 2000 was able to revitalize interest in the AMBDC projects, including the Singapore-Kunming Railway Link.

INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC ISSUES

46. The Foreign Ministers agreed that in moving the WTO process forward, the existing Uruguay Round Agreements must be implemented, particularly those related to the use of anti-dumping and sanitary and phytosanitary measures for protectionist purposes. They called on the WTO to simplify and accelerate the accession process for Cambodia, Lao PDR and Vietnam.
47. The Foreign Ministers renewed the ASEAN call for a wider participation of developing countries in the reform of the international financial architecture as well as the urgency in *the* implementation of the reform. They emphasized the need to review the rules of the international financial institutions at, well as the international regulatory bodies and, if necessary, to further strengthen their capacity and capability to contain and resolve future financial crises.

ASIA PACIFIC ECONOMIC COOPERATION

48. The Foreign Ministers reiterated their support for Brunei Darussalam in preparing for and hosting the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Meetings in November under the theme "Delivering to the Community". They joined Brunei Darussalam in placing particular emphasis on building capacity to both underpin the region's economic recovery and, to enable all economic to take up the new opportunities arising from the information and communication technology development.

ASIA-EUROPE MEETING

49. The Foreign Ministers looked forward to a successful Third Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM 3) to be held in Seoul on 19-21 October 2000. They expressed the hope that ASEM 3 would lay the foundation for the reinvigoration of the comprehensive Asia-Europe Partnership in the post-crisis era in order for Asia and Europe to meet new challenges more effectively. They looked forward to achieving a substantive outcome at the Meeting with a long-term vision to promote a closer relationship between the two regions.

PEOPLE ORIENTED APPROACH

50. The Foreign Ministers expressed support for the "Healthy ASEAN 2020" Vision Statement issued by the 5th ASEAN Health Ministers Meeting to strengthen ASEAN collaboration for a healthier and stronger ASEAN in the year 2020. They agreed to work towards realizing the recommendations made by the ASEAN Health Ministers at their meeting in Yogyakarta in April 2000 that the HIV/AIDS issues be included for discussion at the 4th ASEAN Informal Summit in November 2000 and that an ASEAN HIV/AIDS Summit be convened in conjunction with the 7th ASEAN Summit to be held in 2001.
51. In protecting the interest and welfare of workers facing the rapid changes brought about by globalisation, the Foreign Ministers noted with satisfaction the Vision and Mission Statement issued by the 14th ASEAN-Labour Ministers' Meeting in Manila in May 2000 to forge closer regional integration for a more progressive ASEAN in the 21st Century, and to address the labour and employment priorities arising from ASEAN's recovery process. They also noted that the. Emphasis on training and retraining, manpower planning, strengthened tripartite consultation and greater social protection for workers will provide an enabling environment conducive to employment generation,

and would greatly assist the overall regional effort to build a firmer and more balanced foundation for processing sustainable social and economic progress.

52. The Foreign Ministers noted the commitment of the ASEAN Ministers on Rural Development and Poverty Eradication to ensure that mutual learning and sharing of best practices and lessons learnt as well as delivering of social safety net measures and other measures promoting social resilience and cohesion in Member Countries would contribute to developing ASEAN into a community of caring societies, thus fostering greater ASEAN solidarity and advancing the goals of regional integration. They were also encouraged by its decision to promote meaningful participation of the poor and marginalised in the new global economy, especially through improved access to social services and to information technology.
53. The Foreign Ministers took note of the decision by the ASEAN Ministers for Science and Technology to augment the ASEAN Science Fund, as manifesting ASEAN's earnest commitment to support regional science and technology development and propel ASEAN as a world player into the knowledge economy of the 21st century.
54. The Foreign Ministers reaffirmed their full support for the ongoing Cooperation being undertaken by the ASEAN Ministers on the Environment to strengthen regional efforts to effectively address environmental protection and sustainable development issues. They hailed the launching of the ASEAN Environment Year 2000 campaign under the theme "Our Heritage, Our Future". They noted the progress and achievements of the ASEAN Regional Centre for Bio-Diversity Conservation (ARCBC). They expressed support for the preparation of the ASEAN Framework Agreement on Access to Genetic and Biological Resources to help regulate and facilitate proper bio-prospecting endeavours in ASEAN for mutual and equitable benefits between the concerned parties.
55. The Foreign Ministers noted the efforts made in implementing the Regional Haze Action Plan, and underlined the importance of strong commitments and concerted efforts of the Haze Technical Task Force of the ASEAN Senior Officials on the Environment in dealing with the regional haze problem, including formulation of an ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution, establishment of the coordination and support unit for the Regional Haze Action Plan and strengthening of the capacity of ASEAN specialized Meteorological Centre in Singapore. They also expressed appreciation for the active support of the Asian Development Bank and some Dialogue Countries.
56. The Foreign Ministers took note of the threat from drug abuse and drug trafficking on the security and stability of the ASEAN region, particularly its relations with transnational crime. They urged Member Countries to enhance joint efforts among all affected states in combating the drug menace, especially the newly emerging drugs like Methamphetamine or Amphetamine - Type Stimulants (ATS). In this regard, they agreed to advance the target year for realising a drug-free ASEAN from 2020 to 2015.
57. The Foreign Ministers signed the Joint Declaration for a Socially Cohesive and Caring ASEAN, which embodies ASEAN's resolve to cooperate in ensuring that the people of ASEAN of all ages and groups, including the

disadvantaged and the specially vulnerable, have access to opportunities to create, for themselves a decent and productive life.

58. In acknowledging that the conservation and cultivation of Southeast Asia's cultural heritage are vital for binding ASEAN together and for developing among ASEAN's people a sense of their common destiny, the Foreign Ministers signed the ASEAN Declaration on Cultural Heritage.

EXTERNAL RELATIONS

59. The Foreign Ministers commended the work of the Special ASEAN Directors--General Working Group on Dialogue Relationships and endorsed their recommendations to strengthen ASEAN dialogue relations and mechanisms including the PMC process. The Foreign Ministers agreed to extend the moratorium on new dialogue partnerships to allow ASEAN to consolidate its existing dialogue relationships. Recognising the interest of other countries in establishing ties with ASEAN and in line with its outward-looking orientation, the Foreign Ministers requested the ASEAN Standing Committee to develop new modalities for cooperation.
60. The Foreign Ministers reiterated their support for Lao PDR in preparing for and hosting the 13th ASEAN-European Union Ministerial Meeting to be held later this year in Vientiane. They expressed the hope that the Meeting would help reinvigorate ASEAN-EU relations.
61. Following the first-ever ASEAN-UN Summit in Bangkok in February 2000, the foreign Ministers called for greater collaboration with the UN and other international organizations, to address global issues and tap global expertise for the realisation of ASEAN goals. They also agreed on the need to further strengthen cooperation between ASEAN and ESCAR.
62. The Foreign Ministers noted the outcome of the G-8 Summit held in Okinawa, Japan on 21-22 Jul 2000. They welcomed the initiative taken by the late Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi and further pursued by Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori of Japan to invite representatives from developing countries as well as international and regional organizations to Meet with G-8 leaders, as a means to strengthen North-South cooperation. They noted with appreciation that Prime Minister Chuan Leekpai of Thailand was invited to a briefing session with G-8 leaders in Tokyo on 20 July 2000 prior to the Summit, as Thailand currently held the chairmanship of the ASC and UNCTAD X.
63. The Foreign Ministers acknowledged the continued support of the Dialogue Partners, international financial institutions, United Nations agencies, foundations and non-governmental organizations in the implementation of the HPA. They pointed out that ASEAN would still require a great deal more of resources and technical expertise to carry out the remaining RPA activities, including the new Member Countries' economic integration in ASEAN and the development of the Mekong Sub-region.
64. The Foreign Ministers expressed hope that the Dialogue Partners would accord a high priority to supporting the recovery and growth of ASEAN by cooperating with ASEAN in trade, investment, market access human resource's development, science and technology, information technology, the environment and social and cultural development. They emphasized the

importance of international and multilateral cooperation in combating transnational crimes.