



Co-Chairs' Press Release
ASEAN-EU Senior Officials' Meeting
5-6 July 2017, Bangkok

The ASEAN-EU Senior Officials' Meeting was held in Bangkok, the Kingdom of Thailand, on 5-6 July 2017. The Meeting was co-chaired by H.E. Ms. Busaya Mathelin, Permanent Secretary and ASEAN SOM Leader of Thailand and H.E. Mr. Gunnar Wiegand, Managing Director for Asia and Pacific, European External Action Service and EU SOM Leader. The Meeting took place in an important year for ASEAN and the EU as 2017 marks the 40th Anniversary of ASEAN-EU Dialogue Relations, the 50th Anniversary of ASEAN and the 60th Anniversary of the Treaties of Rome.

The Meeting exchanged views on recent developments in ASEAN and the EU which remain two of the world's leading regional organisations. With a rapidly changing political landscape and growing challenges in both regions and in the world, the Meeting underscored their commitment to regional integration and cooperation as a means to promote regional peace, security, stability and prosperity and to promote multilateralism and a rules-based international order. The EU reaffirmed its support for ASEAN Centrality in the evolving regional architecture and ASEAN welcomes the interest of the EU in furthering engagement with the region through all ASEAN-led processes. The Meeting also discussed ways to make ASEAN and the EU even more relevant to the peoples of the two regions and to be able to better address shared global challenges, from human trafficking and irregular migration to maritime security and safety and transnational crime, from terrorism and violent extremism to poverty, sustainable development and climate change.

The Meeting recalled that the 21st ASEAN-EU Ministerial Meeting in Bangkok in 2016 had issued a Bangkok Declaration on Promoting an ASEAN-EU Global Partnership for Shared Strategic Goals which provides the political impetus for the continued strengthening of ASEAN-EU Dialogue Relations. The Meeting discussed the future of ASEAN-EU cooperation and underscored the importance of the new ASEAN-EU Plan of Action (2018-2022) which aims to bring cooperation between ASEAN and the EU to a higher level by addressing regional and global challenges of shared concern over the next five years and it is expected to be adopted at the ASEAN Post Ministerial Conference (PMC) 10+1 Session with the EU in August 2017 in Manila, the Philippines.

The Meeting welcomed the commemorative activities to mark the 40th Anniversary of ASEAN-EU Dialogue Relations already carried out and looked forward to the ones to be implemented before the end of the year, as well as to promote greater understanding and awareness of ASEAN-EU Cooperation among the people of both regions.

Recognising that ASEAN-EU cooperation should yield tangible and concrete benefits to the peoples of the two regions, the Meeting reiterated the importance of cooperation on enhancing trade, investment and connectivity, enhancing dialogue on political and security issues of common concern and promoting closer people-to-people ties as well as reaffirming their commitment to promote and protect human rights, fundamental freedoms, the rule of law, gender equality, and women's empowerment. The Meeting also welcomed the decision of the 15th AEM-EU Trade Commissioner Consultations in Manila in March 2017 that tasked the Senior Economic Officials to develop a framework in encompassing the parameters of a future ASEAN-EU FTA as well as the progress in the negotiations on ASEAN-EU Comprehensive Air Transport Agreement.

The Meeting also looked forward to the EU's continued support for ASEAN's Community Building Efforts, including the implementation of the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) Work Plan III and the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity 2025.

The Meeting noted the adoption of the Resolution on Palm Oil and Deforestation of Rainforest by the European Parliament on 4 April 2017. ASEAN looks forward to working closely with the European Union in addressing the latter's concerns, including the recognition of national sustainability certification schemes.

The Meeting discussed important developments in other regions and global issues which could have a potential impact on regional and global peace and prosperity. The Meeting recognised that ASEAN and the EU, individually and in partnership, could contribute further to peace, security, stability and prosperity of the global community of nations. The Meeting also stressed the importance of promoting sustainable development and global public goods as well as addressing the shared global challenge of climate change. The Meeting welcomed the preparations for the first ASEAN-EU High Level Dialogue on Sustainable Development in November 2017 in Thailand, the ASEAN-EU Forum of Strategic Thinkers in 2017 in Brussels and the Second ASEAN-EU Policy Dialogue on Human Rights.

The Meeting undertook preparations for the upcoming ASEAN Post Ministerial Conference 10+1 Session with the EU in Manila and looked forward to its success.

The Meeting agreed to hold the next ASEAN-EU SOM in Europe and expressed appreciation to Thailand for the warm hospitality and excellent arrangements of this year's SOM.
