

Co-Chairs' Summary
of the 4th High-Level Brainstorming Dialogue on Enhancing Complementarities
between the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and
the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

4 June 2020 (Video Conference)

1. Thailand and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) jointly organised the 4th High-Level Brainstorming Dialogue on Enhancing Complementarities between the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (HLBD) via video conference on Thursday, 4 June 2020. The Meeting provided a platform for ASEAN, UN agencies, and other external partners to further advance their cooperation in promoting complementarities between the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (Complementarities Initiative). This year's HLBD also highlighted the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in response to the challenges and opportunities of the COVID-19 outbreak.

2. The Meeting was co-chaired by His Excellency Mr. Don Pramudwinai, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Thailand, as the ASEAN Coordinator on Sustainable Development Cooperation, and Her Excellency Ms. Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Secretary of ESCAP. His Excellency Dato Lim Jock Hoi, Secretary-General of ASEAN, also participated in the Meeting as did high-level representatives and development experts of ASEAN Member States, UNDP, UN Women, UNOSSC, UNICEF, the World Bank, and the Asian Development Bank. Representatives of China and the European Union, as ASEAN's Dialogue Partners, Switzerland and Norway, as ASEAN's Sectoral Development Partners, and Germany, as ASEAN's Development Partner, were present as Guests of the Co-Chairs. Representatives of the Asia Foundation and the Rockefeller Foundation also attended as Observers.

3. The Co-Chairs underlined the important role of sustainable development in mitigating the socio-economic impact of COVID-19. They also emphasised that ASEAN can turn the COVID-19 crisis into opportunities to reshape its development path based on the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. To maintain the hard-won development gains and strive towards the realisation of the SDGs, the region needs to continue its collective efforts in promoting the priorities identified in the Complementarities Initiative including through the effective implementation of the Complementarities Roadmap (2020-2025). The Co-Chairs also highlighted specific policy areas that ASEAN should pursue in order to build back better from the multi-dimensional impacts of COVID-19, including (a) Protecting peoples' health and well-being (b) Finding a balance between economic and social development and

environmental impacts by supporting sustainable and inclusive economic recovery in line with the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement (c) Restoring and building sustainable supply chains through regional and subregional coordination on trade, investment and transport, and supporting small and medium enterprises (SMEs) (d) Promoting human capital development and leveraging on digitalisation and technologies to reduce inequalities and build resilience against future disruptions and (e) Strengthening multi-stakeholder and comprehensive partnerships.

4. The Meeting had wide-ranging and in-depth discussions on how to better concretise cooperation under the Complementarities Initiative to ensure that SDG progress in ASEAN will continue to advance and the region will recover stronger from COVID-19 and be well-prepared for future disruptions and disasters.

5. The Meeting noted with satisfaction the progress made on the Complementarities Initiative presented by ESCAP, Thailand and the ASEAN Secretariat. The Meeting welcomed two key deliverables which resulted from the recommendations by the HLBD and the Complementarities Report, namely the launch of the *ASEAN Centre for Sustainable Development Studies and Dialogue (ACSDDSD)* at the 35th ASEAN Summit in Bangkok in November 2019 and the finalisation of the *Complementarities Roadmap (2020-2025)* noted by the 10th ASEAN-UN Summit in Bangkok in November 2019. It was highlighted that the ACSDDSD should work closely with relevant sectoral bodies, ASEAN centres and institutions in the region as well as ESCAP and other UN agencies and external partners to facilitate, coordinate and monitor the implementation of the Roadmap, including through compiling best practices in SDG implementation in the region. The Meeting also welcomed other important developments in promoting the Complementarities Initiative and sustainable development cooperation in ASEAN including the convening of the inaugural *ASEAN Forum on SDGs with National Development Agencies* in Jakarta in July 2019, and the demonstration of “ASEAN’s voices” through a Joint Statement and a Statement at the Climate Action Summit and the SDG Summit in New York in September 2019. The Meeting also looked forward to further strengthened cooperation between ASEAN and the UN in taking forward the Complementarities Initiative under the new ASEAN-UN Plan of Action.

6. The Meeting also discussed concrete ideas to implement the *Complementarities Roadmap (2020-2025)*. The Meeting took note of updates by Viet Nam, as the ASEAN Chair, the World Bank, Singapore, ESCAP, the European Union, Switzerland, UNOSSC, UNDP, UN Women, and the ACSDDSD regarding the progress made on enhancing sustainable development cooperation in ASEAN and future plans to support the implementation of the Roadmap across all six areas of cooperation, namely poverty eradication, infrastructure and connectivity, sustainable management of natural resources, sustainable consumption and production, resilience and capacity-building. Key projects and activities presented to the Meeting were *the ASEAN Smart Cities Network (ASCN)*, which was highlighted by Singapore as a collaborative platform to develop and implement commercially viable smart urban solutions that address issues of common concern such as public health emergencies and sustainable development; the

Initial Rolling Priority Pipeline of Potential ASEAN Infrastructure Projects by the World Bank; the *ASEAN Resources Panel* and work on resilience by ESCAP; potential and upcoming projects with the ACSDDSD in the area of sustainable consumption and production by Switzerland and the European Union; a proposed green economic recovery project in response to COVID-19 by UNOSSC; the *ASEAN My World Survey* and the *ASEAN-China UNDP symposium* by UNDP; and the *ASEAN Gender Outlook* by UN Women. The Meeting viewed that these projects and activities can also directly and indirectly alleviate the adverse impacts of COVID-19, reinforce regional resilience, including through exchanges of best practices and technical and knowledge sharing, and contribute to a better and sustainable future for ASEAN.

7. The Meeting emphasised the need to reflect and recalibrate COVID-19 recovery efforts in implementing the Complementarities Roadmap and underlined that sustainable development efforts should remain people-centred and leave no one behind. The meeting also stressed the importance of enhancing the spirit of multilateralism and forging international, multi-stakeholder, cross-sectoral, and cross-society SDG partnerships, including through South-South and Triangular cooperation.

8. The Meeting commended Thailand's efforts, as the ASEAN Coordinator on Sustainable Development Cooperation, to further enhance the Complementarities Initiative and strengthen ASEAN-UN partnerships in this respect.

9. The Meeting appreciated the efforts of ESCAP in coordinating within the UN System to promote the Complementarities Initiative. The Meeting recognised the importance of potential cooperation between ASEAN, regional organisations, UN Development System and other international organisations in achieving sustainable development in the region.

10. The participants expressed their appreciation to the Royal Thai Government and ESCAP for hosting this High-Level Brainstorming Dialogue and looked forward to the 5th High-Level Brainstorming Dialogue next year.

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