



Joint Declaration for A Socially Cohesive and Caring ASEAN

WE, the Foreign Ministers of the ASEAN Member Countries representing Brunei Darussalam, the Kingdom of Cambodia, the Republic of Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, the Union of Myanmar, the Republic of the Philippines, the Republic of Singapore, the Kingdom of Thailand, and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam;

RECALLING the commitment of the Ministerial Understanding adopted by the Inaugural Meeting of the ASEAN Ministers on Rural Development and Poverty Eradication held in Kuala Lumpur in October 1997, and reaffirmed at their Second Meeting in Manila in February 2000, towards eradicating poverty, with the view to creating a caring society in the ASEAN Member Countries;

RECALLING further the ASEAN Vision 2020 adopted by the ASEAN Heads of State and Government in Kuala Lumpur on 15 December 1997, which envisions a socially cohesive and caring ASEAN where all will enjoy the opportunities for total human development and a higher quality of life;

ENCOURAGED by the Hanoi Declaration signed by the ASEAN Heads of State and Government in Hanoi on 16 December 1998, which declares that efforts to safeguard the interests of the poor and vulnerable segments of societies form an integral part of the regional reform efforts;

INSPIRED further by the Hanoi Plan of Action adopted by the ASEAN Heads of State and Government in Hanoi on 15 December 1998, which commends ASEAN to promote social development and address the social impact of the financial and economic crisis;

REAFFIRMING the importance that ASEAN Leaders at the Third ASEAN Informal Summit in Manila on 28 November 1999 accorded to human resources development;

REITERATING the need to strengthen regional capacity to meet the challenges of globalization;

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HAVE RESOLVED IN A SPIRIT OF AMITY AND COOPERATION, TO ACHIEVING A SOCIALLY COHESIVE AND CARING ASEAN THROUGH THE FOLLOWING MEASURES :

1. Implement, as appropriate, the ASEAN Action Plan on Social Safety Nets to enhance institutional capacity of Member Countries in delivering effective social programmes to the designated target groups and strengthen social infrastructure for sustainable long-term economic upliftment;
2. Strengthen people-centred policies to promote a positive environment for those who are disabled, pregnant, single parent, unemployed, in ill-health and during old age;
3. Strengthen national policies and strategies aimed at expanding employment opportunities, enhancing productivity in both rural and urban areas, and promoting equitable distribution of economic benefits;
4. Enhance economic growth through investing in human resource development, including skills training, promoting the use of technologies that generate productive employment and fostering the development of entrepreneurship and small and medium-sized enterprises;
5. Strengthen policies and programmes to enable people of all ages and groups to have the fullest opportunities to realize their potential in order to promote their full participation in the social, economic and political process of development;
6. Strengthen partnerships among governments, non-governmental organizations, private sector, and local communities in the development of an enabling economic environment, aimed at promoting more equitable access for all to income, resources and social services;

7. Strengthen policies and programmes to include the disadvantaged and vulnerable persons and groups in social development, thus promoting their access to productive resources, public services, and participation in decision-making process and in the process, enabling them to benefit from expanding employment and economic opportunities;
8. Strengthen and promote intra-regional linkages among existing regional and international institutional mechanisms to reinforce cooperation and coordination among ASEAN Member Countries, and with the rest of the region and the world, especially in the areas of information exchange, dissemination of best practices, exchange of expertise, upgrading of human resource development and capacity building for social assessment, design and delivery of effective social programmes;
9. Strengthen national policies and intensify regional cooperation to ensure that health concerns are mainstreamed in development efforts and effectively integrated into the larger scheme of regional development;
10. Strengthen policies and programmes to curb illicit drug abuse through community empowerment and facilitate the provision of rehabilitation programmes and other support services;
11. Develop programmes to promote ASEAN awareness, regional identity and cooperation amongst the people in the region.

SIGNED in Bangkok this 25th day of July 2000.

*For the Government of
Brunei Darussalam:*




MOHAMED BOLKIAH
Minister of Foreign Affairs

*For the Government of
the Union of Myanmar:*




WIN AUNG
Minister for Foreign Affairs

*For the Government of
the Kingdom of Cambodia:*



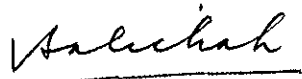
HOR NAMHONG
Senior Minister and Minister of
Foreign Affairs and International
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*For the Government of
the Republic of the Philippines:*



DOMINGO L. SIAZON, JR.
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*For the Government of
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*For the Government of
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S. JAYAKUMAR
Minister for Foreign Affairs

*For the Government of
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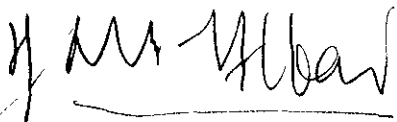
SOMSAVAT LENGSAVAD
Deputy Prime Minister and
Minister of Foreign Affairs

*For the Government of
the Kingdom of Thailand:*



SURIN PITSUWAN
Minister of Foreign Affairs

For the Government of Malaysia:



SYED HAMID ALBAR
Minister of Foreign Affairs

*For the Government of
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NGUYEN DY NIEN
Minister for Foreign Affairs