

Joint Statement on East Asia Cooperation
28 November 1999

The Heads of State/Government of Brunei Darussalam, Kingdom of Cambodia, People's Republic of China, Republic of Indonesia, Japan, Republic of Korea, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Union of Myanmar, Republic of the Philippines, Republic of Singapore, Kingdom of Thailand, and Socialist Republic of Vietnam, and the Special Representative of the Prime Minister of Malaysia at the ASEAN+3 Summit in Manila, expressed satisfaction with the rapidly developing relations among their countries.

They noted the bright prospects for enhanced interaction and closer linkages in East Asia and recognized the fact that this growing interaction has helped increase opportunities for cooperation and collaboration with each other, thereby strengthening the elements essential, for the promotion of peace, stability and prosperity in the region.

Mindful of the challenges and opportunities in the new millennium, as well as the growing regional interdependence in the age of globalization and information, they agreed to promote dialogue and to deepen and consolidate collective efforts with a view to advancing mutual understanding, trust, good neighborliness and friendly relations, peace, stability and prosperity in East Asia and the world.

In this context, they underscored their commitment to handling their mutual relations in accordance with the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, the Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence, the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia, and the universally recognized principles of international law.

Recalling the decision of the Leaders of ASEAN, China, Japan and the Republic of Korea at the 6th ASEAN Summit in Hanoi in December 1998, on the importance of holding a regular meeting among them and recognizing the ongoing efforts of the East Asia Vision Group, they agreed to enhance this dialogue process and strengthen cooperation with a view to advancing East Asian collaboration in priority areas of shared interest and concern even as they look to future challenges.

In this context, they underscored their commitment to build upon existing consultative and cooperative processes, as well as joint efforts, in various levels and in various areas, in particular:

Economic and Social Fields

in economic cooperation, they agreed to strengthen efforts in accelerating trade, investments, technology transfer, encouraging technical cooperation in information technology and e-commerce, promotion of industrial and agricultural cooperation, strengthening of SMEs, promotion of tourism, encouraging active participation in the development of growth areas in East Asia, including the Mekong River Basin; to promote broader private sector participation in economic cooperation activities through considering networking initiatives such as an East Asian

Business Council and industry- specific business fora for major regional industries; and to continue structural reform and to strengthen cooperation since these are essential to sustained economic growth and indispensable safeguards against the recurrence of economic crises in East Asia.

in monetary and financial cooperation, they agreed to strengthen policy dialogue, coordination and collaboration on the financial, monetary and fiscal issues of common interest, focusing initially on issues related to macroeconomic risk management, enhancing corporate governance, monitoring regional capital flows, strengthening banking and financial systems, reforming the international financial architecture, and enhancing self-help and support mechanisms in East Asia through the ASEAN+3 Framework, including the ongoing dialogue and cooperation mechanism of the ASEAN+3 finance and central bank leaders and officials;

in social and human resources development, they agreed on the importance of social and human resources development for sustained growth of East Asia by alleviating economic and social disparities within and among East Asian countries. In this regard, they agreed to heighten cooperative efforts in such areas as the implementation of the ASEAN HRD Initiative by establishing a Human Resource Development Fund and the ASEAN Action Plan on Social Safety Nets;

in the area of scientific and technical development, they agreed to strengthen cooperation in these areas to enhance capacity-building for the promotion of economic development and sustained growth in East Asia;

in the cultural and information area, they agreed to strengthen regional cooperation in projecting an Asian point of view to the rest of the world and in intensifying efforts in enhancing people-to-people contacts and in promoting cultural understanding, goodwill and peace, focusing on the strengths and virtues of East Asian cultures and building upon the recognition that the region partly derives its strength from its diversity;

in development cooperation, they agreed on the importance of generating and extending support for ASEAN efforts in the implementation of the Hanoi Plan of Action to advance economic and sustainable development, technical capability, and the standard of living of the people with the view to fulfilling long-term economic and political stability in the region;

Political and Other Fields

in the political-security area, they agreed to continuing dialogue, coordination, and cooperation to increase mutual understanding and trust towards forging lasting peace and stability in East Asia;

in the area of transnational issues, they agreed to strengthen cooperation in addressing common concerns in this area in East Asia.

Noting how their collective efforts and cooperation agenda support and complement the initiatives of various multilateral fora, the Leaders agreed to intensify coordination and cooperation in various international and regional fora such as the UN, WTO, APEC, ASEM, and the ARF, as well as in regional and international financial institutions.

Determined to realize East Asia cooperation in the various areas, they tasked the relevant Ministers to oversee through existing mechanisms, particularly their senior officials, the implementation of this Joint Statement. They agreed to the holding of an ASEAN+3 Foreign Ministers Meeting in the margins of the Post Ministerial Conference in Bangkok, Thailand in the year 2000 to review the progress of the implementation of this Joint Statement.

Finally, they expressed greater resolve and confidence in further deepening and broadening East Asia cooperation towards generating concrete results with tangible impact on the quality of life of the people of East Asia and stability in the region in the 21st century.

Manila, Philippines