

**JOINT STATEMENT**  
**THE NINTH ASEAN PLUS THREE LABOUR MINISTERS MEETING (9<sup>TH</sup> ALMM+3)**  
**16 MAY 2016, VIENTIANE, LAO PDR**

**Introduction**

1. We, the Ministers/Heads of Delegations responsible for labour in ASEAN, China, Japan, and Republic of Korea, gathered on 16 May 2016 in Vientiane, Lao PDR, under the chairmanship of H.E. Dr. Khampheng Saysompheng, Minister of Labour and Social Welfare Lao PDR, and reviewed the progress of cooperation on labour under the ASEAN Plus Three framework. The Deputy Secretary-General for the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) was also present at our meeting.
2. We recognised the importance of heightening cooperation among the ASEAN Plus Three Countries in light of recent developments at the regional and global levels, most notably the formal establishment of the ASEAN Community with its new Vision for 2025 and the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals. In line with the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Blueprint 2025, we discussed areas of mutual interest and encouraged closer collaboration on ASEAN's new priorities and projects on labour for the next five years.

**Exchange of Views on transition from informal employment to formal employment towards decent work promotion in ASEAN**

3. We expressed concerns about the rising informalisation of employment in the region and the challenges it poses on the protection of the rights of workers, access to social protection and social dialogue. Unless addressed, the continued increase in informal employment in the region will impede the ASEAN Community's prospects of achieving the goal of decent work and inclusive and sustainable growth.
4. We shared information and highlighted the diversity in factors, characteristics, and circumstances of informality in our respective countries. Given this diversity, we recognise the importance of differentiated strategies and approaches that would enable a well-managed transition process from informal to formal employment of workers in ASEAN Member States.
5. We exchanged views on necessary policy responses at the regional and national levels and encouraged collaboration among the ASEAN Plus Three Countries through sharing of best practices, research and information sharing, strengthening of human resource development policies and programmes among others.

**Status of ASEAN Plus Three Cooperation in Labour**

6. We expressed appreciation and welcomed the initiatives of China: (a) South-South Cooperation Project to expand employment services and enhance labour market information system with Lao PDR and Cambodia; (b) ASEAN-China High Level Seminar on Social Security in September 2016; (c) Study Visit on Employment

Services in 2016; (d) Follow-up Study Visit to China in 2017; and (e) Fellowship Programmes on employment promotion and informality and social insurance development in 2017.

7. We noted with satisfaction the progress of the following projects: (a) ASEAN-Japan HRD Collaboration Programme for Strengthening the Basis of Human Resources Development in CLMV Countries-Phase III towards Phase IV, development and dissemination of the Guide for ASEAN Instructors (GAIN), and Skills Evaluation System Promotion Programme; (b) ASEAN-ILO/Japan Project on Promoting and Building Income Security and Employment Services in ASEAN-Phase II; and (c) The 13<sup>th</sup> ASEAN-Japan High Level Meeting on Caring Societies on 20-22 October 2015 in Kobe, Japan, with the theme “People Centered Disaster Risk Reduction and Restoration”. We welcomed the convening of the 14<sup>th</sup> ASEAN-Japan High Level Meeting on Caring Societies on 9-11 November 2016 in Tokyo, Japan, with the theme “Encouraging participation and improving accessibility to the society- for persons with disabilities and the elderly”.
8. We noted with appreciation the completion of numerous joint programmes supported by Republic of Korea such as the 14<sup>th</sup> Human Resources Development Programme for Officials of ASEAN Countries on 21 March – 1 April 2016 in Gwacheon, ROK, and the ASEAN-ILO/Korea Project towards the Realisation of the Asian Decent Work Decade. We were also pleased to note the lined up projects on the 2<sup>nd</sup> ASEAN+3 Forum on Financing of Skills and TVET Programs on 23-25 May 2016 in Seoul, ROK, as well as the ASEAN-Korea Migration Network, including the 1<sup>st</sup> ASEAN-Korea Experts Meeting held on 26-27 April 2016 in Manila, the Philippines. We welcomed the new initiative of the ROK to launch training programmes for vocational teachers from ASEAN Member States and supported its plan to establish an international center for technical vocational education and training (TVET).

## **Conclusion**

9. We expressed our sincere appreciation to the Government of Lao PDR, particularly the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, for the warm hospitality extended to the ALMM+3 delegates and excellent arrangement of the Meeting.
10. We agreed to meet again in Malaysia in 2018 under the ALMM Chairmanship of Malaysia.

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**List of Ministers/Heads of Delegations Attending  
the 9<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Plus Three Labour Ministers Meeting (9<sup>th</sup> ALMM+3)  
16 May 2016, Vientiane, Lao PDR**

- 1. H.E. Pehin Abu Bakar Apong**  
Minister of Home Affairs  
Brunei Darussalam
- 2. H.E. Mam Vannak**  
Secretary of State, Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training  
Cambodia
- 3. H.E. Kong Changsheng**  
Vice Minister, Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security  
China
- 4. H.E. Irmawan Emir Wisnandar**  
Ambassador, Embassy of Indonesia to Lao PDR  
Indonesia
- 5. H.E. Junichi Okazaki**  
Vice Minister for Policy Coordination, Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare  
Japan
- 6. H.E. Dr. Khampheng Saysompheng**  
Minister of Labour and Social Welfare  
Lao PDR
- 7. H.E. YB Dato' Sri Richard Riot Jaem**  
Minister of Human Resources  
Malaysia
- 8. H.E. Thein Swe**  
Union Minister of Labour, Immigration and Population  
Republic of the Union of Myanmar
- 9. H.E. Rosalinda Dimapilis-Baldoz**  
Secretary of the Department of Labor and Employment  
The Philippines
- 10. H.E. Lee, Ki-Kweon**  
Minister of Employment and Labor  
Republic of Korea
- 11. Mr. Alvin Lim**  
Director, Workplace Policy and Strategy Division, Ministry of Manpower  
Singapore

**12.H.E. General Sirichai Distakul**

Minister of Labour  
Thailand

**13.H.E. Dao Ngoc Dung**

Minister of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs  
Viet Nam

**14.H.E Vongthep Arthakaivalvatee**

Deputy Secretary-General of ASEAN for the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community  
The ASEAN Secretariat