

**Presidential Communications Operations Office**

**Presidential News Desk**

**ASEAN-CHINA COMMON STATEMENT  
DELIVERED BY  
PRESIDENT RODRIGO ROA DUTERTE  
AT THE 21ST ASEAN-CHINA SUMMIT**

[Suntec Singapore International Convention and Exhibition Center | 14 November 2018]

Your Excellency, Prime Minister *Li Siyen Long*,  
Your Excellency, Premier *Li Kuh Chang*,  
Your Majesty and Excellencies,

As the new Country Coordinator for the ASEAN-China Dialogue Relations, I am pleased to deliver the ASEAN Common Statement for this Meeting.

Your Majesty and Excellencies,

ASEAN-China Dialogue Relations remain one of the most dynamic and substantive partnerships in the region and a key pillar of the evolving regional architecture. Since 1991, ASEAN-China cooperation has expanded across the political security, economic, and socio-cultural pillars. The establishment of the ASEAN-China Cooperation Fund (ACCF) Management Team will further strengthen ASEAN-China cooperation. Enhanced people-to-people exchanges, including tourism cooperation, have also provided bridges of friendship among the peoples of ASEAN and China.

This year marks the 15th Anniversary of ASEAN-China Strategic Partnership. Frequent high-level meetings and dialogues, especially at the Leaders' level, promote mutual trust and understanding. The presence of all leaders of ASEAN Member States and China in today's 21st ASEAN-China Summit is proof of the shared commitment to further elevate the already solid ASEAN-China Strategic Partnership to greater heights for mutual benefit.

*Political-Security Cooperation*

ASEAN and China continue to enhance political-security dialogue and cooperation through various ASEAN Plus One mechanisms including summit, ministerial and senior officials' meetings, as well as in broader ASEAN-led frameworks such as the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), ASEAN Plus Three (APT), the East Asia Summit (EAS) and ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM-Plus).

China has been a strong supporter for ASEAN Centrality, ASEAN Community building and its economic integration. Close dialogue and active consultations have contributed to building mutual trust and understanding, and enhanced cooperation in both traditional and non-traditional security issues.

ASEAN and China are committed to the full and effective implementation of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) in its entirety and the expeditious conclusion of an effective Code of Conduct in the South China Sea (COC).

ASEAN and China have seen steady progress in the initial phase of the COC negotiations since the announcement of a Single Draft COC Negotiating Text, and looked forward to the completion of the first reading of the Single Draft COC Negotiating Text by 2019. ASEAN and China will continue to maintain a conducive environment for future rounds of negotiations of the COC. As co-chair of the COC negotiations, the Philippines will continue to work closely together with the ASEAN Member States and China for the early conclusion of an effective and substantive COC.

In the meantime, ASEAN and China continue to reaffirm the importance of maintaining and promoting peace, security, stability, safety and freedom of navigation and overflight. We also reaffirm the need to enhance mutual trust and confidence, exercise self-restraint in the conduct of activities and avoid actions that may further complicate the situation, and pursue peaceful resolution of disputes in accordance with international law, including the 1982 UNCLOS.

ASEAN and China also successfully completed an ASEAN-China Maritime Exercise for the first time. The Exercise is a useful confidence-building measure that strengthens practical cooperation, and builds mutual trust, friendship, and understanding amongst ASEAN and Chinese navies.

*Economic Cooperation*

For over eight years now, China has been ASEAN's largest trading partner. Merchandise trade between ASEAN and China reached USD 441.6 billion in 2017, accounting for 17.1 per cent of ASEAN's total merchandise trade. Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) flows from China to ASEAN amounted to USD 11.3 billion in 2017, accounting for 8.2 per cent of total ASEAN's FDI.

In 2015, both sides have successfully upgraded the ASEAN-China Free Trade Area (ACFTA) through the implementation of the ACFTA Upgrade Protocol. ASEAN and China concluded negotiations to enhance the Product Specific Rules under the ACFTA this year. We will continue to further discussions on further tariff liberalisation and investment liberalisation and protection, as well as other areas of mutual benefit to bring ASEAN and China closer to achieve the joint target of USD1 trillion in two-way trade, and USD150 billion in two-way investment by 2020. We urge all Parties to work towards the Protocol's full implementation, including advancing the Future Work Programme in the Protocol. We are confident that ASEAN and China will continue to advance greater and mutual economic and trade cooperation in the years ahead.

ASEAN and China share a common interest in preserving and promoting the multilateral trading system and are working together to achieve a modern, comprehensive, high quality, and mutually beneficial Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) agreement.

ASEAN and China also continue to enhance cooperation in the area of connectivity, particularly with the launching of the ASEAN-China Year of Innovation this year, collaboration has expanded into new areas, such as innovation, technology, Smart Cities, e-commerce and the digital economy. We will also be issuing the ASEAN-China Joint Statement on Science, Technology and Innovation today.

Another major initiative is the exploration of synergies between the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity 2025 (MPAC 2025) and the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), as well as sub-regional initiatives such as the Brunei Darussalam-Indonesia-Malaysia-Philippines East ASEAN Growth Area (BIMP-EAGA) and the Ayeyawady-Chao Phraya Mekong Economic Cooperation Strategy (ACMECS) Master Plan. We also look forward to the full liberalization of the ASEAN-China Air Transport Agreement (AC-ATA), which will not only facilitate greater people-to-people and economic linkages, but also complement MPAC 2025 and China's initiative to develop a "21st Century Maritime Silk Road". ASEAN and China look forward to the implementation of such cooperation in a mutually beneficial manner.

ASEAN and China shall continue active cooperation to strengthen equitable and sustainable development in the region. ASEAN looks forward to the active participation of China in efforts to narrow the development gap and enhance sub-regional cooperation, as well as China's continued support for ASEAN's efforts in realizing the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) Work Plan III, as well as in sub-regional development, including in the Mekong area.

ASEAN welcomes China's support for the ASEAN Smart Cities Network (ASCN), and looks forward to the development of mutually beneficial partnerships between China and the ASCN pilot cities.

#### Socio-Cultural Cooperation

Numerous activities between ASEAN and China in various areas of cooperation i.e. public health, education, culture, labour and social security, local government and people to-people exchanges, environment, media, youth, social development and poverty reduction have been underway.

People-to-people ties between ASEAN and China have also been strengthened through the growing number of exchanges between the two sides in order to provide opportunities to develop such ties. Initiatives such as the ASEAN-China Cultural Exchange Year in 2014, the ASEAN-China Educational Exchange Year in 2016, and the ASEAN-China Year of Tourism in 2017 contributed to fostering people-to-people contacts as a foundation for the long-term friendship and cooperation between ASEAN and China.

On tourism, China has become a major source of tourists for ASEAN. In 2016, the total number of tourist arrivals from China to ASEAN was 19.8 million, an increase of 6.4 per cent compared to 2015, while the number of ASEAN tourists to China recorded 10.34 million, an increase of 57.8 per cent.

The Year of Media Exchanges in 2019 will be an opportunity to elevate the profile of ASEAN-China cooperation and promote the benefits of this enduring partnership to the peoples of ASEAN and China.

We appreciate the role of the ASEAN-China Centre in promoting ties and mutual understanding between ASEAN and China, particularly in economic and socio-cultural aspects.

#### Conclusion

The ASEAN-China Strategic Partnership Vision 2030, which will be issued today, will provide a strategic roadmap for ASEAN-China cooperation in the next 12 years. It will complement the many ASEAN-China agreements made through the years and the Plan of Action to Implement the Joint Declaration on ASEAN-China Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity (2016-2020). ASEAN-China sectoral bodies and mechanisms shall look into incorporating the Vision 2030 in their work plans.

Thank you and good day.

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