Headline: Asean leaders vow stronger regional cooperation

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President Rodrigo Duterte. MARLON RAMOS/INQUIRER

VIENTIANE – Leaders of member-states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) on Wednesday agreed to improve the regional cooperation with their dialogue partners, including China, United States, Japan and South Korea.

Looking dapper in a black suit, President Rodrigo Duterte joined his counterpart from the 10-member regional bloc during the retreat session on the second day of the 29th Asean summit being held at the National Convention Center.

After the 90-minute meeting, the Asean leaders met with Chinese Premier Li Keqiang for the 19th Asean-China summit.

In a press statement issued by the summit organizers, the Asean leaders spoke about the organization's "future direction while maintaining Asean centrality in the evolving regional architecture."

"The Asean leaders had a candid exchange of views on regional and international issues of mutual interest and concerns," the statement read.

It said the regional bloc discussed issues pertaining to terrorism and religious extremism, climate change and natural disasters, human trafficking, migration and transnational crimes.

The Asean leaders also spoke about territorial disputes, maritime security and armed conflicts. CDG

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