

## **OVERVIEW OF ASEAN-U.S. DIALOGUE RELATIONS**

1. The ASEAN-U.S. Dialogue Relations have been progressing well since its establishment in 1977. In addition to the exchange of views on political and security matters in the early stages of the dialogue relations, both sides gave priority to cooperation in commodities, market and capital access, transfer of technology, development of energy resources, shipping, and food security. In the early 1990s, the focus of development cooperation between ASEAN and the U.S. was reoriented with the launching of a programme approach focusing on trade and investment, technology transfer and human resources development.
2. Following the meeting between the ASEAN Foreign Ministers and the U.S. Secretary of State in September 2005 in New York, the Joint Vision Statement on the ASEAN-U.S. Enhanced Partnership was adopted on 17 November 2005. Two implementing documents of this Joint Vision Statement were later adopted, namely the 2006 Plan of Action to Implement the ASEAN-U.S. Enhanced Partnership and the Revised Priorities for Cooperation under the ASEAN-U.S. Enhanced Partnership 2009. These documents served as the foundation for both sides to expand their partnership to cover a wide range of areas, including political-security, economic, socio-cultural, and development cooperation.
3. The First ASEAN-U.S. Leaders' Meeting in November 2009 issued a Joint Statement on the "ASEAN-U.S. Enhanced Partnership for Enduring Peace and Prosperity," which reflected their commitment to enhance cooperation to further promote peace, stability, and prosperity in the Asia-Pacific region. Subsequently, the Plan of Action to Implement the ASEAN-U.S. Enhanced Partnership 2011-2015 for Enduring Peace and Prosperity was adopted at the Third ASEAN-U.S. Leaders' Meeting in November 2011 in Bali, Indonesia. This Plan of Action, which mapped out the key priorities and measures to strengthen the ASEAN-U.S. partnership in the four pillars of political-security, economic, socio-cultural, and development cooperation, was successfully implemented.
4. With the adoption of the Joint Statement on the ASEAN-U.S. Strategic Partnership at the 3<sup>rd</sup> ASEAN-U.S. Summit, which was held on 21 November 2015 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, the Leaders announced the elevation of the ASEAN-U.S. dialogue relations to a strategic level. The goals and vision of this Strategic Partnership is going to be realised through the implementation of the Plan of Action to Implement the ASEAN-U.S. Strategic Partnership (2016-2020). As this Plan of Action will continue to support the ASEAN Community in its three pillars, the five priority areas of economic integration, maritime cooperation, transnational challenges including climate change, emerging leaders, and women's opportunities, were highlighted.

## **A. POLITICAL-SECURITY COOPERATION**

### **ASEAN-U.S. Mechanisms**

5. ASEAN and the U.S. have sustained their regular engagements at all levels, including the ASEAN-U.S. Summit, the Post Ministerial Conferences (PMCs), the ASEAN-U.S. Dialogue, and the Joint Cooperation Committee (JCC) Meeting.
6. Before the institutionalisation of the ASEAN-U.S. Summit, the Leaders of ASEAN and the U.S. met four times in 2009, 2010, 2011, and 2012 on the sidelines of the ASEAN Summit to discuss various issues related to ASEAN-U.S. cooperation and exchange views on international and regional issues of common interest and concerns. Following the adoption of the recommendation of the ASEAN-U.S. Eminent Persons Group (EPG) to institutionalise the ASEAN-U.S. Summit, at the Fourth ASEAN-U.S. Leaders' Meeting in November 2012, three ASEAN-U.S. Summits have been held, in Brunei Darussalam in October 2013, in Myanmar in November 2014, and in Malaysia in November 2015. A Special ASEAN-U.S. Summit will be in Sunnylands, California, U.S.A., in February 2016.
7. The PMC mechanism offers an opportunity for the U.S. Secretary of State and the ASEAN Foreign Ministers to review existing cooperation and exchange views on regional and global issues. Periodic Dialogues are held at the senior officials' level to provide a more in-depth review of cooperation across the pillars and discuss the future direction of the partnership. In addition, the Committee of Permanent Representatives to ASEAN (CPR) and the U.S. Ambassador to ASEAN meet annually at the ASEAN-U.S. JCC Meeting to review status of implementation of the ASEAN-U.S. Plan of Action, with a focus on particular projects and programmes.

### **The U.S.' Accession to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC)**

8. The U.S. acceded to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC) at the ASEAN Post Ministerial Conference (PMC) + 1 Session with the U.S. in Phuket, Thailand on 22 July 2009. This accession symbolises the U.S.' pivot to Asia and its renewed commitment to engage ASEAN as a key partner in promoting regional peace and cooperation.

### **U.S. Mission to ASEAN**

9. The U.S. was the first Dialogue Partner to establish a mission to ASEAN in Jakarta. Since its establishment in early 2010, the U.S. Mission to ASEAN has worked closely with the CPR and the ASEAN Secretariat in coordinating and monitoring the implementation of joint activities under the ASEAN-U.S. Enhanced Partnership.
10. The U.S. nominated H.E. David Lee Carden as the first U.S. resident Ambassador to ASEAN in September 2010. H.E. Nina Hachigian officially

succeeded him in this position on 3 November 2014 upon her presentation of credentials to H.E. Le Luong Minh, Secretary-General of ASEAN.

## **Security Cooperation**

11. The principal focus of ASEAN-U.S. security dialogues has been the role of the U.S. in maintaining peace, security, and stability in the region through its participation in different ASEAN-led regional mechanisms such as the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM-Plus), and the East Asia Summit (EAS). Areas of mutual interest include maritime security, nuclear non-proliferation, cyber security, and combatting transnational crime, including terrorism, trafficking in persons (TIP), etc.
12. Under the ARF framework, the U.S. has co-chaired and co-hosted with the Philippines and Japan the Inter-sessional Meeting (ISM) on Maritime Security. The U.S. has also actively participated in the six ADMM-Plus Experts' Working Group (EWG) on humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR), maritime security, military medicine, counter terrorism, peacekeeping operations, and humanitarian mine action, as well as contributed assets to various ADMM-Plus exercises.
13. ASEAN-U.S. cooperation to promote maritime security has picked up its momentum, particularly through the Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum (EAMF) framework, focusing on seafarer training, education and sharing of experiences. At the initiative of the Philippines and the U.S., two annual Expanded ASEAN Seafarer Training-Counter Piracy (EAST-CP) Workshops and Seminars were successfully held in September 2013 and September 2014, respectively.
14. Cooperation in combatting transnational crime and other non-traditional security issues has been strengthened through the U.S.' engagement with the ASEAN Senior Officials' Meeting on Transnational Crime (SOMTC). So far eight Consultations between the ASEAN SOMTC and their U.S. counterparts have been held. Combatting cybercrime and wildlife trafficking are emerging areas of cooperation under the SOMTC+U.S. framework. An "ASEAN-U.S. Cybercrime Workshop" was held on 6-9 May 2014 in Singapore.
15. ASEAN and the U.S. signed the ASEAN-U.S. Joint Declaration on Cooperation to Combat International Terrorism on 1 August 2002 in Bandar Seri Begawan. Both sides have also adopted a Work Plan to implement this Joint Declaration.
16. On TIP, following the success of the MTV Exit Programme that involved ASEAN Member States and Australia, the U.S. and the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) have launched another campaign called the IOMX-Stop Exploitation, which promotes a victim-centred approach to combatting TIP through social media. The U.S. has also proposed to conclude with ASEAN an "ASEAN-U.S. Joint Declaration for Cooperation to Combat Trafficking in Persons."

## **B. ECONOMIC COOPERATION**

17. ASEAN and the U.S. utilise the ASEAN Economic Ministers - U.S. Trade Representative (AEM-USTR) Consultations and the Senior Economic Officials-Assistant USTR (SEOM-USTR) Consultations to promote trade and investment flows between ASEAN and the U.S., as well as to exchange views on a range of economic issues.

### **ASEAN-U.S. Trade and Investment Framework Arrangement (TIFA) and Expanded Economic Engagement (E3) Initiative**

18. ASEAN and the U.S. concluded the Trade and Investment Framework Arrangement (TIFA) in August 2006, which has served as a key mechanism to strengthen ASEAN-U.S. economic ties. A Joint Council has been established to provide direction on the implementation of the ASEAN-U.S. TIFA as well as to monitor and evaluate the progress of ASEAN-U.S. economic cooperation.

19. The ASEAN-U.S. Expanded Economic Engagement (E3) initiative was launched at the Fourth ASEAN-U.S. Leaders' Meeting on 19 November 2012 as a new framework for economic cooperation designed to expand the ASEAN-U.S. trade and investment ties and create new business opportunities and jobs in all eleven countries.

20. Within these frameworks, ASEAN and the U.S. have strengthened cooperation in trade facilitation, Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) development, and harmonisation of standards and conformance, among others.

### **Technical and Economic Cooperation**

21. ASEAN and the U.S. have forged cooperation on trade facilitation, standards and conformance, intellectual property rights (IPR), and public-private sector engagement (PPE). The U.S. has been ASEAN's primary partner in moving forward the ASEAN Single Window (ASW) initiative and has provided technical assistance on standards and conformance for priority sectors, including electrical and electronic equipment, medical devices, and automotive.

22. Upon the successful convening of the First ASEAN-U.S. Business Summit in August 2012 in Cambodia, the Second ASEAN-U.S. Business Summit was held on the side-lines of the 46<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Economic Ministers' Meeting (AEM) and Related Meetings in August 2014. With the theme of "SMEs and the Global Supply Chain," the Business Summit focused on enhancing the capacity of SMEs to participate in the global supply chain and to reap the benefits of deeper economic cooperation between ASEAN and the U.S.

23. The ASEAN Economic Ministers (AEM) Roadshow to the U.S., which was started in 2013, has played an important role in raising the awareness of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) and creating partnership opportunities for ASEAN

and U.S. business. The Third Roadshow has been scheduled for the first quarter of 2016.

24. The ASEAN Finance and Central Bank Deputies every year meet with the U.S. Treasury Deputy to exchange views on global and regional macroeconomic policies and outlooks. This consultation mechanism aims at improving mutual understanding and ensuring policy complementarities to maintain resilience and growth for both sides.
25. ASEAN and the U.S. are working to solidify institutional links between ASEAN sectoral bodies under the AEC pillar and the U.S. counterparts through new Dialogues on Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and Aviation. The U.S. has also committed to support ASEAN Member States in improving the skills of their workforce and enhancing their economic competitiveness through initiatives in education and training, SME development, youth entrepreneurship, and women empowerment

### **ASEAN-U.S. Trade, Investment, and Tourism**

26. The U.S. remains an important trading partner of ASEAN despite the challenges brought about by uncertainties in the global economy. ASEAN-U.S. total two-way trade grew by 2.6%, from US\$206.9 billion in 2013 to US\$212.4 billion in 2014, making it the fourth largest trading partner of ASEAN in the same year<sup>1</sup>.
27. Foreign direct investment (FDI) from the U.S. to ASEAN is estimated to have reached US\$13.04 billion in 2014<sup>2</sup>. With a share of 9.6% of total inward investment into ASEAN, the U.S. was ASEAN's third largest source of FDI in 2014.
28. The number of tourist arrivals from the U.S. to ASEAN was 3.24 million in 2014<sup>3</sup>. The U.S. remained the sixth tourism source market for ASEAN.

## **C. SOCIO-CULTURAL COOPERATION**

### **Environment, Climate Change and Disaster Management**

29. Cooperation on environment and climate change has been promoted through the City Links Pilot Partnership, an 18-month technical exchange programme that was launched in March 2013 to improve climate adaptation readiness in ASEAN cities. Phase II of this Partnership began in April 2014, which involved Legazpi City of the Philippines and Fort Lauderdale City of Florida, the U.S.A. The programme aims to develop tailored solutions to the climate adaptation challenges of ASEAN cities.

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<sup>1</sup> ASEAN Trade Database as of 21 December 2015

<sup>2</sup> ASEAN FDI Database as of 26 May 2015

<sup>3</sup> ASEAN Tourism Database as of 30 September 2015

30. ASEAN and the U.S. are also collaborating to tackle the impacts of climate change and working towards an agreed outcome of the 21<sup>st</sup> Session of the Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Paris in December 2015. This joint endeavour was reflected in the ASEAN-U.S. Joint Statement on Climate Change that was adopted by the Leaders at the Second ASEAN-U.S. Summit on 13 November 2014.
31. The U.S. is exploring cooperation with ASEAN in marine environmental protection and conservation within the framework of the new Plan of Action for 2016-2020. The U.S. has also proposed with Singapore an ARF Statement on Strengthening Cooperation on Marine Environmental Protection and Conservation. The Statement was adopted at the 22<sup>nd</sup> ARF on 6 August 2015 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.
32. On disaster management, the U.S., through the ASEAN-U.S. Partnership for Good Governance, Equitable and Sustainable Development and Security (ASEAN-U.S. PROGRESS) programme, is currently supporting the implementation of priority projects under the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) Work Programme Phase 2 (2013-2015). These include Concept Note No.1 on Strengthening the Capacity of AHA Centre to Achieve Operational Excellence in Disaster Monitoring and Emergency Response, Concept Note No. 8 on Regional Risk Assessment Concept Note. No.9 on Disaster Monitoring and Response System (DMRS) and Enhanced Information Content and Sharing Capacities for AHA Centre, Concept Note No.11 on Building the ASEAN Disaster Management Training Institutes Network (ADTRAIN), and Concept Note No.12 on AADMER Training Courses.

## **Education and Youth**

33. On education, ASEAN and the U.S. announced the Partnership on English Language Education for ASEAN at the Third ASEAN-U.S. Leaders' Meeting on 18 November 2011 in Bali, Indonesia. This Partnership is a long-term commitment to improve English language capacity in the region and further support the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI). This five-year US\$25 million programme is being implemented by the East West Centre in Hawaii and the University of Brunei Darussalam in Brunei.
34. The Fulbright U.S. - ASEAN Visiting Scholars Initiative was launched in September 2012 during the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the ASEAN-U.S. partnership. This programme enables scholars from ASEAN Member States to travel to the U.S. to focus on ASEAN-related projects, and American Fulbright Specialists and Scholars in the region to provide capacity-building expertise and scholarly collaboration at ASEAN institutions and/or universities in ASEAN Member States. To date 26 academics from all ten ASEAN Member States have received scholarships to undertake their studies in the U.S. through this initiative.

35. On youth, in December 2013, President Obama announced a new initiative named the Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative (YSEALI), which aims to enhance leadership development and networking in ASEAN, deepen engagement among young leaders in the region, and empower the next generation of leaders. An inaugural training programme titled the "YSEALI Generation-Ideas into Action" Workshop was held in Kuala Lumpur on 25-28 April 2014, with the participation of 100 young leaders between the ages of 18-35 from ten ASEAN Member States.
36. The U.S. has also been active in raising youth's awareness of the ASEAN Community through its support for the video contest on "What does the ASEAN Community Mean to Youth?", which was announced by the ASEAN Senior Officials' Meeting on Youth (SOMY) in April 2015. In addition, the U.S. is exploring the opportunity to set up a connection between the U.S. Peace Corps and the ASEAN Youth Volunteer Programme (AYVP), which was launched in 2013 and has been run by the Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia.

### **Science and Technology**

37. The ASEAN Committee on Science and Technology (COST) has held annual consultations with the U.S. since 2011. The Fourth ASEAN-U.S. Consultation on Science and Technology, held on 24 August 2014 in Bogor, Indonesia, noted the progress report of the ASEAN-U.S. Science and Technology Fellow Pilot Programme (Phase I), a new U.S. support programme launched on 7 April 2014 to assist ASEAN Member States in making greater use of science to improve public policy and support national development. The second phase of this programme was launched on 4 May 2015 with 14 fellows from seven ASEAN Member States working in the areas of biodiversity, energy security, fisheries, and coastal management.
38. The U.S. launched in 2013 an ASEAN-U.S. Science Prize for Women sponsored by Underwriter Laboratory, USA. The first ASEAN-U.S. Science Prize for Women was awarded in 2014 and will be carried forward within the framework of the Plan of Action to Implement the ASEAN-U.S. Strategic Partnership (2016-2020).
39. Another new initiative by the U.S., the ASEAN-U.S. Youth Innovation Challenge, was endorsed by the 70<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the COST for implementation in the 2016-2020 period.

### **40. Promotion of the Rights of Women and Children**

41. On the promotion of the rights of women and children, the U.S. through its development cooperation programme (PROGRESS) is supporting the work of the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC).

## **D. DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION**

42. During the course of 2008-2013, the U.S.' development assistance to ASEAN was channeled mainly through the ASEAN Development Vision to Advance National Cooperation and Economic Integration (ADVANCE).
43. Two five-year U.S. support programmes were launched in December 2013 to replace the completed components of ADVANCE. These programmes include the ASEAN Connectivity through Trade and Investment (ACTI) and the ASEAN-U.S. Partnership for Good Governance, Equitable and Sustainable Development and Security (ASEAN-U.S. PROGRESS). Both sides are working on specific projects and activities for implementation under these two programmes.
44. The PROGRESS, funded by US\$14 million, aims at assisting ASEAN in achieving the targets outlined in the APSC and ASCC Blueprints, under three components: i) Good Governance and Political-Security Cooperation; ii) Human Development and Socio-Cultural Cooperation; and iii) ASEAN Secretariat and Institutional/Cross-Sectoral Capacity Building.
45. The ACTI, with the total budget of US\$16.2 million, focuses on assisting ASEAN's regional and national economic-related agencies to implement their commitment under the AEC, particularly in the following areas: i) ASEAN Single Window; ii) Trade and Investment Facilitation; iii) SMEs Development; iv) ASEAN Modernised Power; and v) ICT For Development Enhancement.

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