

**FORTY-THIRD MEETING OF THE ASEAN COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND  
TECHNOLOGY  
Yogyakarta, Indonesia 15-17 May 2002**

**JOINT PRESS STATEMENT**

1. The 43<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the ASEAN Committee on Science and Technology (COST) was held in Yogyakarta, Indonesia from 15 to 17 May 2002. The Meeting was attended by S&T officials, scientists and researchers from government agencies and academic institutions in Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam. The COST Meeting was preceded by parallel sessions of eight of its Sub-Committees, in the areas of Food Science and Technology, Biotechnology, Microelectronics and Information Technology, Non-Conventional Energy Research, Materials Science and Technology, Marine Science and Technology, Science and Technology Infrastructure and Resources Development, and Space Technology Applications.
2. The Meeting was opened by H.E. M. Hatta Rajasa, Minister for Research and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia. In his Opening Address, the Minister underlined the importance of science and technology as an essential element for sustainable economic and social development as well as the basis for competitiveness. He also highlighted the efforts to foster the innovation atmosphere in ASEAN countries, particularly in Indonesia. The Minister recalled that one of the actions included in the ASEAN Plan of Action on Science and Technology to promote networking of S&T centers of excellence and programmes to optimize resources and achieve maximum result. To implement this actions, he recommended launching of research collaboration among ASEAN experts utilizing existing facilities. In this regard, the Minister invited ASEAN Member Countries to make use of the facilities that are available in PUSPIPTK (Center for Research, Science and Technology) at Serpong, near Jakarta.
3. The Minister also recalled the decision made by the ASEAN S&T Ministers at their Meeting in Bandar Seri Begawan in September 2001, regarding efforts to strengthen cooperation among ASEAN Member Countries within the framework of the ASEAN-help-ASEAN, and people-to-people interaction. These would require ASEAN to identify and design specific comprehensive programmes critical to ASEAN which build upon each other's strengths. The Minister invited all ASEAN Member Countries to join in several activities initiated by Indonesia such as "Bio-island" focusing on genome studies as well as other international activities.
4. The Meeting discussed policy issues affecting the S&T cooperation programmes in the region, including recent decisions made by the ASEAN Heads of State and Government at the 7<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit in Brunei Darussalam in November 2001, and the 9<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on S&T in September 2001, also in Brunei Darussalam.
5. The Meeting also reviewed the progress of its ongoing projects being implemented by the Sub-Committees and launched new mechanisms to facilitate implementation of the ASEAN Plan of Action on Science and Technology.
6. The Meeting announced the recent completion of 4 projects, two of which are

projects supported by Dialogue Partners, one by India and the other by China. The two others are cost-shared projects wholly funded by ASEAN. These projects are:

- ASEAN-China Workshop of Seismology, held in Beijing, China, on 23-25 October 2001;
  - ASEAN-India Workshop on Technology Management and Competitiveness, held in Bangalore, on 5-7 March 2002;
  - ASEAN From Space Book, published on self-funded basis, officially launched during the 6<sup>th</sup> ASTW, September 2001, Brunei Darussalam; and
  - Manpower Training in Food Microbiology in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Viet Nam, an intra-ASEAN project supported by Singapore, completed in November 2001.
7. The various ongoing projects totaling 25 in all put strong emphasis on human resource development especially to assist the newer Member Countries to build up their S&T capabilities with training programmes in technology areas. These areas include food microbiology, biotechnology, drying technology for agricultural products and remote sensing, as well as policy areas such as technology management, foresighting and indicator-based technology monitoring. The Meeting also noted the establishment of a trial website for the project on ASEAN Virtual University in Science and Technology (AVUST) at [www.aseanvust.net](http://www.aseanvust.net). The AVUST project is envisioned to offer, through the virtual mode, training programmes for the professional enhancement of engineers and science teachers.
8. The Meeting noted the progress of the augmentation of the ASEAN Science Fund, with most of the Member Countries meeting their targets for the annual contributions. Since the Agreement on the Augmentation of the ASEAN Science Fund was signed by the S&T Ministers in 2000, the size of the fund has more than tripled.
9. The next Meeting of ASEAN COST will be hosted by Malaysia from 9 to 13 September 2002.