

**Joint Press Release The 35th Meeting of the ASEAN Committee on Science and  
Technology  
Manila, Philippines, 30 March-3 April 1998**

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1. The 35th Meeting of the ASEAN Committee on Science and Technology (COST) was held in Manila, Philippines, from 30 March to 3 April 1998, attended by delegates from all ASEAN Member Countries and the ASEAN Secretariat.
2. Dr. Estrella F. Alabastro, the National COST Chairperson and Undersecretary for R&D, Department of Science and Technology (DOST) delivered the welcome remarks. In her welcome remarks, she cited the challenges to COST to achieve the goals of technological competitiveness enunciated in the ASEAN Vision 2020, especially in the areas of S&T infrastructure development, information networking, promotion of private sector involvement, innovative funding and programme management mechanisms, and phasing in of new members into its activities.
3. Mr. Chong Lit Cheong, Chairman of ASEAN COST cum Executive Director of the National Science & Technology Board, Singapore, in his opening remarks outlined the work facing the 35th Meeting of COST and highlighted the importance of preparations for the 8th Meeting of the ASEAN Ministers for Science and Technology and the Fifth ASEAN Science and Technology Week in Hanoi, October 1998.
4. Dr. Amelia Ancog, Undersecretary of Science & Technology, Philippines, read the Keynote Speech on behalf of Dr. William G. Padolina, Secretary of the Department of Science and Technology (DOST). In the Keynote Speech, the Secretary cited the progress in implementation of the ASEAN Medium Term Programme on Science and Technology, lauded the COST initiative to develop the ASTNET, emphasized the importance of science and technology as a resource for economic development and urged COST to study the expected energy demand of continued economic development of ASEAN, the possibility of the use of nuclear power, and the feasibility of a regional cooperation in nuclear safety and waste management.
5. The Meeting discussed the progress of the flagship projects, the recommendations of the Brainstorming Session held in January 1998 to address ASEAN S&T cooperation in the next millennium, the augmentation of the ASEAN Science Fund, the preparations for the 5th ASEAN Science and Technology Week (ASTW) and the 8th Meeting of the ASEAN Ministers for S&T, and the key items for focus at the 36th COST Meeting to be held in Hanoi, Vietnam on 5-15 October 1998.
6. The Meeting considered taking a new approach to enhance regional S&T cooperation by developing innovative systems for programme management and revenue generation. One such new approach being considered is by supporting flagship projects to demonstrate commercialization and revenue sharing as well as sustainable development. The Meeting deliberated on a possible mechanism for developing and operating autonomous enterprises spun-off from COST activities and agreed to consider the mechanism as a possible approach. Examples of model projects that have potential for commercialization and industry participation are ASEAN Science and Technology Information Network (ASTNET), technology transfer and scan mechanisms, and human resource development.
7. The Meeting took note of the proposal to augment the ASEAN Science Fund (ASF) and that the target is US\$1 million per Member Country. The Meeting agreed to recommend to the ASEAN Science and Technology Ministers that this be payable over a maximum period of 10 years, with 1999 as the starting year.
8. The Meeting reviewed the status of the 55 projects in food science and technology,

meteorology and geophysics, microelectronics and information technology, materials science and technology, biotechnology, non-conventional energy research, marine sciences, and science and technology infrastructure resources development of which 3 were completed, 21 are on-going, 24 are pending, 4 are new projects and 3 are to be dropped. The Meeting also reviewed the development of cooperation programmes with ASEAN Dialogue Partners, namely, Australia, Canada, China, European Union, India, Japan, Republic of Korea, New Zealand, Russia, United States, and UNDP and also Sectoral Dialogue with Pakistan. A description of the completed projects appears in the attached [Annex](#).

9. On the flagship projects, the Meeting noted the Completion of the 6th ASEAN Food Conference, Singapore, 24-27 November 1997 and that a basic framework for ASTNET has been developed with ASEAN Science and Technology Management Information System (ASTMIS) databases as its initial content. The ASTNET will be demonstrated at the 5th ASTW.

10. The 5th ASTW with the theme " Science and Technology: A Dynamic Force Towards Sustainable Development in ASEAN", will also feature scientific conferences and exhibitions on food science and technology, meteorology and geophysics, microelectronics and information technology, materials science and technology, biotechnology non-conventional energy research, marine sciences, and science and technology infrastructure and resource development. The following awards will also be given during the event: ASEAN Young Scientist and Technologist Award, ASEAN Outstanding Scientist and Technologist Award, and ASEAN Science and Technology Meritorious Award. The ASTW is open to the public and invitations will be extended to ASEAN Dialogue Partners, Sectoral Dialogue, as well as to the private sector.

11. The Meeting agreed to encourage all Member Countries to develop a homepage focusing on S&T policy and submit their homepage addresses to facilitate information exchange.

12. On the proposed regional cooperation on nuclear safety and nuclear waste management, the Meeting endorsed the holding of a meeting of ASEAN experts on nuclear safety and waste management, to be organized by the Philippines, tentatively, before the end of June 1998, and assist the Philippines in identifying experts to participate in the meeting.

13. The Meeting agreed to hold the 36th Meeting of ASEAN-COST in Hanoi on 7-9 October 1998 and the 37th Meeting in Myanmar tentatively in March or April 1999.