

**Joint Press Statement The 23rd ASEAN Committee on Science and Technology
Meeting
Singapore, 12-15 September 1990**

1. The Twenty Third Meeting of the ASEAN Committee on Science and Technology (COST) was held in Singapore, from 12 to 15 September 1990. The Meeting was officially opened by Mr. Mah Bow Tan, Minister of State (Trade & Industry and Communications & Information). The Meeting considered progress reports of on-going projects; assessed the development of cooperation programmes with ASEAN dialogue partners; and considered new project proposals and other relevant issues in the fields of science and technology. The Meeting was attended by delegates from Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand. The ASEAN Secretariat was also represented.
2. The Meeting reviewed regional cooperative research and development projects in food, non conventional energy, meteorology and geophysics, marine sciences, biotechnology, microelectronics and materials science. These ASEAN cooperative programmes on science and technology are undertaken with the financial support of dialogue partners, namely, Australia, Canada, the European Community, Japan, New Zealand, the United States and UNDP.
3. Arising from a project on Microelectronics, a prototype communicator keyboard for the handicapped was developed. This project was funded under the ASEAN-Australia Economic Cooperation Programme. At the presentation ceremony held at the Boulevard Hotel on 14 September 1990, a demonstration on the use of the communicator key-board was held. The ceremony was attended by His Excellency, the High Commissioner of Australia, Mr. Alan Brown, and staff of the Spastics Association of Singapore and Margaret Drive Special School. The communicator keyboard was developed by a team of seven members from the Department of Electronics and Communications, Singapore Polytechnic. The device, now undergoing field tests in Singapore and Australia, will eventually be manufactured for sale.
4. The Meeting discussed ways to augment the ASEAN Science Fund. The Fund set up has already attracted a contribution from New Zealand. Contributions from Australia and Japan are expected shortly: COST has agreed to actively solicit support for the Fund from all Dialogue partners.
5. At this Meeting, Singapore presented the details on the Organisation of the Third ASEAN Science and Technology Week (TASTW). The TASTW is scheduled to be held in Singapore in September 1992. Activities planned for the TASTW include: Conferences, a Science and Technology Exhibition, an ASEAN Young Scientist and Technologist Award, and meetings of ASEAN Ministers and senior officials on Science and Technology. ASEAN's dialogue partners are actively encouraged to participate in the activities of TASTW.
6. The Meeting also noted the successful completion of the Food Technology Research & Development Project. Among the accomplishments are :
 - (i) 20 Existing processes have been improved.
 - (ii) 11 new products were developed.
 - (iii) 3 pieces of equipment for food processing were fabricated namely 2 fruit dryers and a stuffing machine for Yong Tau Foo.
 - (iv) 86 papers.
7. The next COST Meeting is scheduled for March 1991 in Thailand.
8. The Meeting was held in the traditional spirit of ASEAN cordiality and solidarity.