

## **MINISTERIAL DECLARATION ON THE ESTABLISHMENT AND OPERATION OF THE ASEAN VIRTUAL INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (AVIST)**

WE, ASEAN Ministers responsible for Science and Technology, considering the important role of science and technology for economic development in the region and supporting the overall regional goals of enhancing economic integration and building competitiveness, seek to contribute to the realization of these goals by strengthening the research and development (R&D) infrastructure and human resource base in science, technology and engineering in the ASEAN Member Countries;

CONSIDERING the call made by ASEAN Vision 2020 for “a technologically competitive ASEAN competent in strategic and enabling technologies, with an adequate pool of technologically qualified and trained manpower, and strong networks of scientific and technological institutions”;

RECALLING the support at the highest levels of leadership in ASEAN, in particular at the 3rd Informal Summit in Manila on 27-28 November 1999, for the idea of an ASEAN virtual institute of science and technology;

RECALLING further the advocacy of the Hanoi Plan of Action for the implementation of a science and technology human resource development programme to address the needs of business and industry;

ASSERTING that a key to technological competitiveness in a globalised knowledge economy is the strong capability for research, development and innovation, of which a pool of highly technically skilled human resources is an important component;

RECOGNISING the rapid advances of information and communications technologies and their applications in education that allow for virtual modes of teaching and learning to complement and enrich the traditional modes;

ACKNOWLEDGING the shared goals and partnerships formed with relevant institutions within and from outside of ASEAN to promote science and technology human resource development;

DESIRING to conclude an agreement with a view to ensuring the establishment and operation of appropriate science and technology infrastructure and mechanisms to support human resource development;

HEREBY DECLARE TO:

1. ACT collectively to further strengthen the science and technology human resource development programme in the ASEAN region through the establishment of an ASEAN Virtual Institute of Science and Technology (AVIST), which aims to contribute to the development of science and technology human resources in ASEAN member countries

through continuing professional education opportunities to various science and technology sectors by leveraging on the innovative use of information and communication technologies.

2. DIRECT the ASEAN Committee on Science and Technology (COST) to initiate linkages and form partnerships among R&D institutions, academic institutions, professional organizations, private sector and industries and other similar learned societies and forge mutually agreeable and beneficial managerial, technical and financial arrangements to facilitate the establishment and sustain the operations of AVIST.

3. URGE our colleagues in the education agencies to support the AVIST by encouraging the academic institutions under their purview to make available their faculty expertise, technical facilities and administrative mechanisms for the implementation of AVIST programmes, such that they may benefit from the synergy of pooled resources within AVIST.

4. REQUEST Thailand to draw upon its extensive national experience in the design, development and implementation of virtual teaching and learning systems and take a major role in leading the AVIST through its start-up phase.

5. DEVELOP AVIST into a sustainable and effective platform for creating an environment for life-long learning and innovation in the ASEAN region.

Done in Tagaytay, the Republic of the Philippines, this 26th day of November Two Thousand and Four, on the occasion of the 3rd Informal ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Science and Technology.

For the Government of Brunei Darussalam:

HON. PEHIN ORANG KAYA SETIA PAHLAWAN  
DATO SERI SETIA DR. AWANG HAJI AHMAD BIN HAJI JUMAT  
Minister of Development

For the Government of the Kingdom of Cambodia:

H.E. MR. KHLAUT RANDY  
Secretary of State  
Ministry of Industry, Mines and Energy

For the Government of the Republic of Indonesia:

H.E. PROF. DR. KUSMAYANTO KADIMAN  
Minister of State for Research and Technology

For the Government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic:

H.E. MR. KHAMPHANH THAMPHITHAK  
Director-General  
Science and Technology and Environment Agency

For the Government of Malaysia

H.E. DATO' SRI DR. JAMALUDDIN MOHD. JARJIS  
Minister of Science, Technology and Innovation

For the Government of the Union of Myanmar:

H.E. DR. CHAN NYEIN  
Deputy Minister  
Ministry of Science and Technology

For the Government of the Republic of the Philippines:

H.E. DR. ESTRELLA F. ALABASTRO  
Secretary of Science and Technology

For the Government of the Republic of Singapore:

H.E. MS. LIM KHENG HUA  
Ambassador of the Republic of Singapore to  
the Republic of the Philippines

For the Government of the Kingdom of Thailand:

H.E. MR. KORN THAPPARANSI  
Minister of Science and Technology

For the Government of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam:

H.E. DR. TRAN QUOC THANG  
Vice-Minister  
Ministry of Science and Technology