Joint Media Statement of the Sixth ASEAN Telecommunications & IT Ministers (TELMIN)
Bandar Seri Begawan, 18-19 September 2006

Enhancing ICT Competitiveness: Capacity Building

Opening Ceremony

1. His Royal Highness Prince Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah Ibni His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, The Deputy Sultan, Personal Representative of His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam, officially opened the Sixth ASEAN Telecommunications & IT Ministers Meeting (6th TELMIN).

2. In his Keynote Speech, His Royal Highness Prince Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah, The Deputy Sultan, Personal Representative of His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam, emphasised the increasingly important role of the ICT sector in shaping the competitiveness of individuals, nations and groupings such as ASEAN, as well as in increasing productivity, efficiency, cost-savings and hence competitiveness. He expressed that for ASEAN to successfully compete in a borderless world, Member Countries must move towards becoming early adopters of ICTs. He stressed on the importance to find ways and means for capacity building at all levels in enhancing ASEAN's ICT competitiveness. He believed that all ASEAN Member Countries must work together in a concerted manner towards a more even and widespread development of ICT in the region, both in terms of infrastructure and human resource development.

3. H.E. Pehin Abu Bakar Apong, Minister of Communications for Brunei Darussalam, chaired the 6th TELMIN, which was preceded by the 7th ASEAN Telecommunications & IT Senior Officials Meeting (TELSOM) and the TELSOM Meetings with the Dialogue Partners (China, India, Japan and Korea) on 14-16 September 2006.

Brunei Action Plan: Building ASEAN Capacity

4. The Ministers reviewed the progress and achievements in the implementation of the ASEAN ICT Focus 2005-2010, the 2005 Ha Noi ICT Action Agenda, and in particular the e-ASEAN Integration Roadmap and the Vientiane Action Programme's (VAP) telecommunications and IT action agenda. The Ministers discussed common issues in creating a conducive, competitive and sustainable ICT environment, developing digital content, ensuring network security, as well as on important initiatives for strengthening human and institutional capacities in the ASEAN ICT sector.

5. The Ministers highlighted on the importance of building capacity in areas such as ICT literacy, full integration of ICTs in education and training at all levels and creation of critical mass of qualified and skilled ICT professionals and experts. The Ministers stressed that enhancing ASEAN's competitiveness in such areas is crucial in ensuring ASEAN's relevance in the borderless world.

6. The Ministers endorsed the Brunei Action Plan which outlined a programme of action in building ASEAN capacity to enhance the region's competitiveness in the ICT sector.

7. The Ministers were pleased that the ASEAN ICT Fund is actively in place with the first contributions received from the Member Countries. The Ministers agreed that the ASEAN ICT Fund supports the priority projects/initiatives for timely implementation in 2007 under the Brunei Action Plan.

8. The Ministers endorsed the operational plan for the ASEAN ICT Centre (AICTC), with home-based seconded officials, to strengthen the management and coordination mechanisms in the implementation of ASEAN ICT Focus and Work Programmes. The Ministers welcomed the deployment of the first set of seconded AICTC officials next year. The Centre's Programme Director and the two Deputy Directors will be seconded from Malaysia and Indonesia and Viet Nam, respectively.

ATRC Work Agenda

9. The Ministers commended the ASEAN Telecommunication Regulators' Council (ATRC) for the notable achievements under the ATRC Work Plan 2005-2006, particularly in the areas of network/cyber-security, next generation networks, Radio Frequency Identification and MRA -telecoms equipment trade facilitation activities.

10. The Ministers also noted with satisfaction the ATRC Work Plan 2006-2007, which covered new initiatives on international mobile roaming charges, mobile number portability, prepaid SIM registration, information sharing on consumer protection, among others. The Ministers noted that ATRC formed working groups to study further these important concerns.

ASEAN Cyber-Security Cooperation

11. Building on the success of the ASEAN Computer Emergency Response Teams (CERTs) Incident Drills (ACID) held on 28 July 2006, the Ministers welcomed the proposal to launch a second phase of the Drills (ACID II), expanded to include ASEAN Dialogue Partners, to test participating countries' responses to simulate computer attacks and further strengthen cooperation amongst national CERTs.

Forging Strategic Links with ASEAN Dialogue Partners

12. The Ministers welcomed the regular dialogues and collaborative projects with the Dialogue Partners such as China, European Union, India, Japan and Korea. The Ministers also welcomed intensified partnership with ASEAN dialogue partners and key international organisations like the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and the Asia-Pacific Telecommunity (APT) to achieve synergistic and innovative approaches in enhancing cooperation in the ASEAN ICT sector.

13. The Ministers looked forward to the implementation of the cooperation work plans with China (Plan of Action to Implement the Beijing Declaration on ASEAN-China ICT Cooperative Partnership for Common Development), Korea (ICT Cooperation for Co-

Prosperity in East Asia 2007-2011), and Japan (Asia Broadband Programme: ICT Cooperation with ASEAN). The Ministers also looked forward to the convening of the ASEAN – India ICT Ministerial and Industry Forums in 2007. The Ministers were pleased with the Plus Three Countries' (China, Japan and Korea) commitment to further boost human development capacities of ASEAN ICT professionals and experts.

e-ASEAN Youth and e-ASEAN Business Council

14. The Ministers agreed to revitalise the e-ASEAN Youth Forum and the e-ASEAN Business Council, by ensuring that the work activities and priorities are relevant and supportive of the ASEAN ICT Focus/ Work Programmes.

15. The Ministers extended full support to Viet Nam's hosting of Asia – Europe ICT Ministers Meeting in 30 November – 1 December 2006 in Ha Noi.

16. Cambodia will be hosting the Seventh ASEAN Telecommunications & IT Ministers Meeting (7th TELMIN) and Related Meetings in 2007.

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LIST OF MINISTERS

1. H. E. Pehin Abu Bakar Apong, Minister of Communications, Brunei Darussalam
2. H. E. Dr. Sean Bun Chin, Secretary of State, Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications, Cambodia
3. H.E. Dr. Sofyan A. Djalil, Minister of Communication and Information Technology, Indonesia
4. H.E. Mr. Sommad Pholsena, Minister of Communication, Transport, Post and Construction, Lao PDR
5. H.E. Dato' Seri Dr. Lim Keng Yaik, Minister of Energy, Water and Communications, Malaysia
6. H.E. Brig. Gen. Thein Zaw, Minister of Communications, Posts and Telegraphs, Myanmar
7. H.E. Mr. Ramon P. Sales, Chairman (Secretary), Commission on Information and Communications Technology, Philippines
8. H.E. Dr. Lee Boon Yang, Minister for Information, Communications and the Arts, Singapore
9. H.E. Mr. Kanawat Wasinsungworn, Vice Minister, Ministry of Information and Communication Technology, Thailand
10. H.E. Mr. Le Nam Thang, Vice Minister, Ministry of Posts and Telematics, Viet Nam; and
11. H.E. Mr. Ong Keng Yong, Secretary-General of ASEAN.