

## **Bandar Seri Begawan Declaration on Youth Volunteerism and Entrepreneurship**

**WE**, the Ministers Responsible for Youth of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (hereinafter referred to as ASEAN), namely Brunei Darussalam, the Kingdom of Cambodia, the Republic of Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, the Republic of the Philippines, the Republic of Singapore, the Kingdom of Thailand and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam:

**HAVING** gathered in Bandar Seri Begawan on 22 May 2013, for the Eighth ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Youth (AMMY VIII);

**RECOGNISING** that the theme of "Our People, Our Future Together" during Brunei Darussalam's chairmanship of ASEAN in 2013 highlights the role of people in advancing cooperation to ensure the development of the whole region as it moves towards an ASEAN Community in 2015;

**ACKNOWLEDGING** that the theme of the Ministerial Meeting, "Young People: Building Tomorrow's ASEAN Today", reflects the 22nd ASEAN Summit in Bandar Seri Begawan on 24-25 April, which highlighted the importance of nurturing the role of youth, the region's future assets, in promoting socio-economic development to benefit the next generation particularly the marginalized youth and the unique position of young professionals in boosting ASEAN solidarity;

**RECALLING** the *Manila Declaration on Strengthening Participation in Sustainable Youth Employment* at AMMY IV in 2003, which recognised the importance of youth entrepreneurship in addressing issues such as unemployment among young people, and the *Hanoi Initiative* at AMMY VII in 2011, which reflected the commitment to strengthen Southeast Asia's future generation of leaders and entrepreneurs;

**GUIDED BY** the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Blueprint adopted in 2009, which has 15 youth-related actions including the establishment of an ASEAN youth peace corps and an ASEAN forum on youth entrepreneurship as well as a regional network of experts to train entrepreneurial skills to out-of-school youth;

**AGREE** that youth volunteerism and entrepreneurship are very important for ASEAN community building to forge a common regional identity and build a caring and sharing society, with the ultimate goal of achieving unity and solidarity among all nations and people in Southeast Asia;

**ACKNOWLEDGE** the First ASEAN Young Entrepreneurs Seminar and Expo held back-to-back with the Ministerial Meeting as a platform for promoting greater economic self-reliance among young people through enterprise and entrepreneurship development;

**NOTE** the resolution adopted by the Seminar, which highlighted the challenges of youth employment and called for actions to establish an enabling environment that supports pro-employment growth and the economic empowerment of all youth subsectors;

**AGREE** to organize regular Young Entrepreneurs Seminars to move forward the resolution of the first seminar;

**WELCOME** progress in implementing and finalizing the operating arrangements for the ASEAN Youth Volunteer Programme (AYVP) established by Malaysia, noting that the programme is to create a multiplier effect for the development of volunteerism across ASEAN with an inaugural project namely ASEAN Youth Eco-Leaders, and ASEAN Youth Heritage Ambassador;

**CALL ON** young professionals, who are in a unique position to boost ASEAN solidarity, to offer voluntary community services in areas such as rural development and poverty eradication, disaster relief, health, education and the environment, supporting vulnerable groups such as the physically challenged and fostering entrepreneurial skills;

**ENDORSE** a proposal by Brunei Darussalam to engage young professionals through a youth volunteer corps that will complement AYVP with three initial short-term projects scheduled to be carried out in Cambodia, Indonesia, and the Philippines this year;

**URGE** our officials and partners to develop and implement the youth volunteer programmes in a complementary and sustainable manner;

**FURTHER URGE** our officials to promote greater awareness of ASEAN among young people and engage young volunteers and entrepreneurs through different platforms to promote dialogue and people-to-people exchanges with the aim of sharing the dreams and aspirations of the region;

**ENCOURAGE** our officials to include young volunteers and entrepreneurs among key stakeholders in the comprehensive communications plan being developed to explain the objectives, benefits and challenges of the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community;

**WELCOME** the agreement to set up the ASEAN Youth Programme Fund aimed to improve the quality of life of the ASEAN Youth through the implementation of enabling regional youth policies and programmes along with the readiness of Member States to make an initial contribution;

**ENCOURAGE** the further mobilization of existing resources including the Singapore-ASEAN Youth Fund and other resources from ASEAN Dialogue Partners to support the youth cooperation towards peace, stability and a brighter future for younger generations; and

**URGE** our officials to bring together activities and initiatives to realise the Declaration.

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