

JOINT STATEMENT OF THE FIRST ASEAN PLUS THREE EDUCATION MINISTERS MEETING

Yogyakarta, Indonesia

4 July 2012

1. The First ASEAN Plus Three Education Ministers Meeting (1st APT EMM) was convened on 4 July 2012 in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, in conjunction with the Seventh ASEAN Education Ministers Meeting (7th ASED) and the First East Asia Summit Education Ministers Meeting (1st EAS EMM). The Meeting was co-chaired by H.E. Im Sethy, Minister of Education, Youth and Sport of Cambodia and H.E. Hirofumi Hirano, Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) of Japan. The Meeting was attended by Ministers and senior officials responsible for education of ASEAN Member States, as well as China, Japan and Republic of Korea. The ASEAN Secretariat, the ASEAN University Network (AUN) Secretariat, and the Southeast Asia Ministers of Education Organisation (SEAMEO) Secretariat, were also in attendance.
2. The Ministers noted with appreciation the progress in the ASEAN Plus Three process and the implementation of the “ASEAN Plus Three Cooperation Work Plan (2007-2017)” adopted in 2007 aimed at broadening ASEAN Plus Three cooperation in education.
3. The Ministers reaffirmed their commitments in strengthening cooperation and joint efforts to promote development in the education sector and to address common challenges of education in the region. In this regard, the Ministers agreed to endorse the ASEAN Plus Three Plan of Action on Education: 2010 – 2017 (Plan of Action) which details wide-ranging areas of cooperation, concrete plans, proposals and future direction in the education sector, to realise the ASEAN Plus Three Cooperation Work Plan (2007-2017) and to contribute to the ASEAN community building process.
4. The Ministers also noted the significance of education in the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity, and agreed to harness the ASEAN Plus Three extensive mechanisms and leverage education’s positive spillover effect on regional connectivity.
5. The Ministers reaffirmed that the ASEAN Plus Three education process will support the realization of the long-term goal of building an East Asian community. As such, the Ministers emphasised their strong commitment to strengthen regional cooperation on education by convening the APT Education Ministers Meeting (EMM) on a biennial basis, in conjunction with the ASEAN Education Ministers Meeting (ASEM). The Ministers agreed to promote an effective coordination mechanism with relevant regional and international organisations including the ASEAN University Network and the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organisation.

6. The Ministers adopted the Terms of Reference of the ASEAN Plus Three Education Ministers Meeting, which provides a clear process for effective coordination and monitoring of the implementation of the Plan of Action: 2010 – 2017, while providing a dialogue on broad educational strategies, common interest and concerns under the framework of ASEAN Plus Three cooperation.

7. China appreciated the efforts from all the ASEAN Plus Three countries for the education cooperation and development in the region. The Ministers noted China's proposal to convene the First APT Rectors' Conference in Peking University in 2012.

8. The Ministers reaffirmed the importance of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and welcomed Japan's intention to invite the ASEAN Plus Three to the World Conference on UN Decade of ESD to be organised in 2014 by UNESCO and the Government of Japan. The Ministers welcomed the SEAMEO-Japan ESD Award established in April 2012, which aims to honour schools which made superior ESD efforts in SEAMEO member countries and to encourage ESD's popularity.

9. The Ministers supported Japan's initiative to set up a higher education quality assurance center for Asia and share with other ASEAN Plus Three countries the achievements and experiences of various collaborative activities in the ASEAN Plus Three countries, which will contribute actively to the Plan of Action in the area of quality assurance.

10. The Ministers noted Japan's proposals to set up a new working group of the APT EMM to strengthen cooperation and links among the ASEAN Plus Three countries on the Plan of Action in the area of quality assurance, which will further develop and consolidate future quality assurance efforts and deepen debate on these points. The Ministers agreed that Japan's proposal would be discussed at SOM-ED+3 to ask for its recommendation.

11. The Ministers noted ROK's appreciation of the efforts of ASEAN Plus Three countries to enhance educational cooperation and development in this region. Recalling the Master Plan for the ASEAN Cyber University, agreed by the delegates of the ASEAN Member States and ROK in 2011, ROK has made concerted efforts to explore a collective credit transfer system which will be functioned among CLMV countries in mid-September 2012, including tailored e-learning content development and a full-fledge capacity building plan. Noted is that a credit transfer framework will be expanded to ASEAN Member States in 2014, further to be a foundation to establish the ASEAN Cyber University in 2015. Supposed that the ASEAN Cyber University will be designed as a new platform for academic exchange and higher education through e-learning, ROK reaffirmed that this visionary project will be implemented in a coordinated and collaborated manner with the support and cooperation of all ASEAN Member States, with their support and cooperation.

12. The Ministers further reiterated the need to enhance human resource development through the education cooperation, which is regarded as a significant factor on the success of building a dynamic, prosperous and people-oriented ASEAN community and

East Asia as a whole. In that context, the Ministers welcomed new initiatives to enhance education cooperation in ASEAN and the East Asian Region.

13. The Ministers expressed full support to Lao PDR to host the 2nd APT EMM in 2014.

14. The Ministers expressed their appreciation to Indonesia for the warm hospitality and arrangements made in hosting the 1st APT EMM and to the ASEAN Secretariat for its technical assistance to the Meeting.
