

23rd ASEAN-EU Joint Cooperation Committee (JCC) Meeting convenes in Jakarta

The 23rd Meeting of the ASEAN-EU Joint Cooperation Committee (JCC) was held on 4 February 2016 in Jakarta.

The meeting carried on the excellent momentum in strengthening ASEAN-EU relations, following the successful conclusions of the 20th ASEAN-EU Ministerial Meeting held in Brussels on 23 July 2014, the informal ASEAN-EU Leaders' Meeting held in Milan in October 2014 and the ASEAN-EU Post-Ministerial Conference in Kuala Lumpur in August 2015, as well as the Informal ASEAN-EU Ministerial Meeting in November 2015 in Luxembourg. Both sides welcomed the substantial rate of implementation of the cooperation activities foreseen in the Bandar Seri Begawan Plan of Action to Strengthen the ASEAN-EU Partnership (2013-2017).

ASEAN and the EU exchanged views on developments in their respective regions. The EU welcomed the establishment of the ASEAN Community on 31 December 2015 and the adoption of ASEAN 2025: Forging Ahead Together, as well as reaffirmed its support to the centrality of ASEAN in the evolving regional architecture. The ASEAN side appreciated the EU's commitment to further strengthen ASEAN-EU relations as highlighted in the EU's Joint Communication on ASEAN-EU relations, adopted by the European Commission on 18 April 2015, and the Conclusions of the Foreign Affairs Council on the same topic issued on 22 June 2015.

ASEAN and the EU highlighted the unique nature, the deepening and the intensification of their partnership with considerable progress being made in the political-security, economic and socio-cultural fields and in the development of new areas of cooperation. In this connection, ASEAN welcomed the establishment of the European Union Mission to ASEAN and the appointment of His Excellency Mr. Francisco Fontan as the first dedicated EU Ambassador to ASEAN.

Both sides looked forward to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the establishment of ASEAN and the 40th Anniversary of ASEAN-EU Dialogue Relations in 2017.

ASEAN and the EU reiterated their commitment to further strengthening the existing close trade and investment relations between both regions. They welcomed the progress made in 2015 on the trade agenda between both regions, both at the bilateral and region-to-region level.

ASEAN and the EU welcomed the strengthening of their cooperation in non-traditional security areas, including on maritime security, preventive diplomacy, mediation, cyber security, counter-terrorism and transnational crimes. The Meeting noted with appreciation the convening of the 2nd ASEAN-EU High Level Dialogue (HLD) on Maritime Security Cooperation in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on 5-6 May

2015. The 2nd HLD served as a platform to exchange best practices and experiences in addressing maritime related issues vis-à-vis the strengthening of regional cooperation and capabilities. The Meeting looked forward to the convening of the ASEAN-EU High Level Dialogue on Maritime Security Cooperation in 2016 in Thailand and in 2017 in the Philippines.

Both sides welcomed the growing dialogue and engagement between the EU and ASEAN on broad security and defence related issues, including the EU's active engagement in the ARF. The Meeting noted with appreciation the EU-initiated 2nd Seminar on the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy, with a special focus on EU-ASEAN relations. Both sides underlined the importance of further developing the dialogue on security and crisis management, exchanging lessons learned and seeking opportunities for practical cooperation as part of the effort to establish a roadmap towards an ASEAN-EU strategic partnership.

ASEAN and the EU were also satisfied with the growing dialogue and cooperation on human rights and welcomed the inaugural ASEAN-EU Human Rights Policy Dialogue in October 2015 in Brussels.

ASEAN noted with interest that as part of the Aviation Strategy for Europe, adopted by the European Commission on 7 December 2015, the European Commission requested the mandate to negotiate an ambitious ASEAN-EU Comprehensive Air Transport Agreement. The parties looked forward to a mutually beneficial ASEAN-EU approach on liberalisation and regulatory cooperation, which will strengthen air connectivity between ASEAN and the EU.

Both sides acknowledged the successful implementation and tangible results of the many ongoing projects in the area of development cooperation, working in support of the ASEAN integration processes across the economic, socio-cultural and political-security areas.

ASEAN and the EU welcomed the increase in EU funding for development cooperation projects from €70 million to €170 million in the period 2014-2020 to help boost ASEAN integration, in support of the implementation of the newly adopted ASEAN 2025: Forging Ahead Together and its Blueprints. Both sides noted the successful discussions on the preparation of the ASEAN Regional Integration Support from the EU Programme Plus (ARISE Plus) which took place on 2 February 2016 in Jakarta. Both sides also welcomed the recent conclusion of the Financing Agreement on the Enhanced EU-ASEAN Dialogue Instrument (E-READI), which received significantly increased funding in order to further intensify the already broad spectrum of areas of ongoing cooperation and exchanges. The Meeting also noted the funding decision from the EU for the two new programmes, sustainable use of peatlands and haze mitigation, and biodiversity conservation in ASEAN, supporting the work in the areas of climate change, environment and disaster management.

Reaffirming the commitment by ASEAN and EU Ministers at the 20th ASEAN-EU Ministerial Meeting (AEMM), the EU raised the prospects for closer cooperation in line with the UN's 2030 agenda and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in

addressing global poverty and sustainable development, including the implementation of the Paris Agreement adopted at the UN Climate Change Conference (COP21).

The 23rd Meeting of the ASEAN-EU JCC was co-chaired by Her Excellency Ms. Busadee Santipitaks, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Thailand to ASEAN, Country Coordinator for the ASEAN-EU Dialogue Relations, and by Mr. Ranieri Sabatucci, Head of the South-East Asia Division of the European External Action Service, together with Mr. Jorge de la Caballeria, Head of Unit of Development Coordination South and South East Asia of the European Commission Directorate General for International Cooperation and Development. The Meeting was opened by Her Excellency Ms. Busadee Santipitaks, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Thailand to ASEAN, and His Excellency Mr. Francisco Fontan, Ambassador of the EU to ASEAN and attended by members of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to ASEAN, officials from the ASEAN Secretariat and EU, as well as representatives of EU Member States.