



**Joint Media Statement of the Eight Meeting of ASEAN, China, Japan and Republic of Korea
Tourism Ministers
(M-ATM Plus Three)
Viet Nam, 8 January 2009**

1. The Eighth Meeting of the Tourism Ministers from ASEAN, China, Japan and Rep. of Korea (ROK) was held on 8 January 2009 in Ha Noi in conjunction with the ASEAN Tourism Forum 2009 and the Twelfth Meeting of ASEAN Tourism Ministers. The Meeting was chaired by H.E. Mr. Tran Chien Thang, Vice Minister of Culture, Sports and Tourism, Viet Nam and co-chaired by H.E. Pehin Dato Yahya, Minister of Industry and Primary Resources, Brunei Darussalam.
2. As the global economy started to deteriorate in 2008, caused by the global financial crisis, the initial figures of international tourist arrivals in ASEAN Plus Three (APT) countries still recorded growth of 7.49 per cent increase compared to 2007 or 93 million arrivals. China, Japan and ROK continued as the important source markets for ASEAN region with more than 9.1 total million arrivals or 19.01 per cent of total international tourist arrivals in ASEAN. In anticipating the impact to tourism, the Ministers shared a common view to strengthen the tourism cooperation among APT countries to effectively deal with the challenges.
3. ASEAN Tourism Ministers also briefed their Plus Three Partners on the tourism tactical programme to address the impact of global downturn on the tourism sector and sought the support of the Plus Three Partners. The campaign, with a focus on Youth, will see the development of new cost-competitive, multi-destination tour packages and a synergized calendar of youth events leveraging on air, land and sea connectivity within ASEAN and with the Plus Three Partners.
4. The Ministers were pleased with the progress of APT Cooperation Work Plan (2007-2017) particularly on the implementation of tourism measures, namely: Train-the-Trainer on Crisis Communications held on 18-19 June 2008 in Bangkok; the Workshop on Characteristics of Chinese Outbound Market held on 25-29 June 2008 in Beijing; the ASEAN plus Three Youth Festival held in Singapore on 29 July – 3 August 2008; and ASEAN Plus Three Workshop on Healthy Tourism from 17-18 September 2008 in Bangkok. The Ministers welcomed the initiative on Healthy Tourism conducted by the APT Emerging Infectious Diseases (EID) Programme Phase II that would enhance collaboration and communication between health and tourism sector and promote health and safety of travellers and host communities in the ASEAN Plus Three Countries.
5. ASEAN Tourism Ministers invited the Plus Three Countries to participate in the formulation of the ASEAN Tourism Strategic Plan 2011-2015 and tasked officials to work closely in this undertaking.
6. The Ministers appreciated China for provision of booths to ASEAN Member States and the ASEAN Secretariat at China International Travel Mart (CITM) 2008 which were utilized to support the establishment of ASEAN Common Area and promotion of ASEAN Cruise Tourism. The Ministers encouraged ASEAN Member States to participate in the forthcoming World Expo which will be held in Shanghai in 2010. The Ministers welcomed China to participate in developing tourism connectivity corridors to facilitate land travel between ASEAN and China. The Ministers thanked China for the support in progressing the ASEAN and China Tourism Cooperation such as through the convening of the Workshop on Characteristics of Chinese Outbound Market and other training programmes.
7. The Ministers welcomed the effort of Japan on the reactivation of the cooperation on ASEAN-Japan Cruise Promotion Strategy under the ASEAN-Japan Transport Partnership. The Ministers also appreciated the effort made by Japan in the implementation of various projects, such as organizing training programme for tourism industries, promotion activities in Japan of ASEAN-Japan Centre including the convening of the "ASEAN Tourism Fair" from 20 to 26 August 2008 in Kita-Kyushu City in Fukuoka prefecture, training programmes for tourism industry's front-liners in the ASEAN and a Tour Planning Competition for students, which was started in 2007.

8. The Ministers were pleased with the establishment of the ASEAN-Korea Centre in early 2009 to promote trade, investment, tourism and socio-cultural cooperation. The Ministers noted that Culture & Tourism Division of AKC is mandated to provide the following services: organise cultural events, provide information on regional ASEAN tourism resources and organise events promoting tourism between the ASEAN Member States and ROK. The Ministers also thanked ROK for the implementation of concrete work-programmes such as Korean Language Course and Korean Culture Experiences for ASEAN Tour Guides & Officials on the period of 7 July 2008 – 29 August 2008.

9. The Ministers expressed their sincere appreciation to the Government and People of Viet Nam for the warm hospitality accorded to the delegations and the excellent arrangements made for the meeting.

LIST OF MINISTERS

The Meeting was attended by:

- (i) H.E. Pehin Dato Yahya, Minister of Industry and Primary Resources, Brunei Darussalam;
- (ii) H.E. Dr. Thong Khon, Minister of Tourism, Cambodia;
- (iii) H.E. Mr. Zhu Shanzhong, Director-General of Marketing and Communications of National Tourism Administration, China;
- (iv) H.E. Mr. Jero Wacik, Minister of Culture and Tourism, Indonesia;
- (v) H.E. Mr. Noboru Nishisaka, Assistant Commissioner for International Affairs, Japan Tourism Agency;
- (vi) H.E. Mr. Somphong Mongkhonvilay, Minister, Chairman of Lao National Tourism Administration, Lao PDR;
- (vii) H.E. Dato' Sri Azalina Dato' Othman Said, Minister of Tourism, Malaysia;
- (viii) H.E. Brig. Gen. Aye Myint Kyu, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Hotels and Tourism, Myanmar;
- (ix) H.E. Mr. Oscar P. Palabyab, Undersecretary of Tourism, Philippines;
- (x) H.E. Mr. Jang-Sil Kim, Vice-Minister of Culture, Sports and Tourism, Rep. of Korea.
- (xi) H.E. Mr. S. Iswaran, Senior Minister of State for Trade and Industry, Singapore;
- (xii) H.E. Mr. Chumpol Silapa-archa, Minister of Tourism and Sports, Thailand;
- (xiii) H.E. Mr. Tran Chien Thang, Vice Minister of Culture, Sports and Tourism, Viet Nam; and
- (xiv) H.E. Dr. Surin Pitsuwan, Secretary-General of ASEAN.