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NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Asia-Oceania Working Party
Subject: EU-ASEAN Plan of Action 2023-2027

Delegations will find attached the EU-ASEAN Plan of Action 2023-2027 adopted at the EU-ASEAN Post-Ministerial Conference on 4 August 2022.

Plan of Action to Implement the ASEAN-EU Strategic Partnership (2023-2027)

This Plan of Action to Implement the ASEAN-EU Strategic Partnership replaces the ASEAN-EU Plan of Action (2018-2022) and is adopted at the ASEAN Post-Ministerial Conference (PMC) +1 with the EU.

Under this Plan of Action, ASEAN and the EU will pursue cooperation in conformity with their respective Member States' obligations under international law, and in accordance with their respective Member States' domestic laws, regulations and policies in the following areas.

1. POLITICAL AND SECURITY COOPERATION

1.1. Enhance strategic dialogue and deepen political and security cooperation

- a) Convene biennial ASEAN-EU Ministerial Meetings (AEMM), Annual ASEAN Post Ministerial Conference with the EU (PMC)+1, supported by regular meetings of the ASEAN-EU Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM) and ASEAN-EU Joint Cooperation Committee (JCC) Meeting.
- b) Strengthen cooperation in regional and multilateral fora, including the United Nations and other bodies within the UN system, with the Asia – Europe Meeting (ASEM) and the G20, as well as enhance mutual support and develop joint positions where applicable/appropriate.
- c) Enhance dialogue between the Committee of Permanent Representatives to ASEAN (CPR) and the EU Mission to ASEAN in Jakarta to support efforts in advancing the ASEAN-EU Strategic Partnership, which is based on mutual cooperation and mutual benefit.

1.2. Enhance the ASEAN-EU cooperation in the ASEAN-led security architecture

- a) Support ASEAN centrality in the evolving regional architecture in Southeast Asia through ASEAN-led mechanisms.
- b) Support the open, transparent, inclusive, and rules-based ASEAN-led regional architecture, as well as the deepening of the engagement of the EU with the region through ASEAN-led processes and platforms, noting the EU's commitment to adhere to all relevant ASEAN-led security mechanisms, including the East Asia Summit, and the ADMM-Plus, in full respect of the relevant procedures and processes.
- c) Enhance dialogue and promote cooperation on defence and security matters, such as in the areas of maritime security, women, peace and security (WPS), youth, peace and security (YPS), peacekeeping operations, military medicine, cybersecurity, and counter-terrorism, as well as on humanitarian assistance and disaster relief.

- d) Continue to support the exchange of views between security and defence officials including with reference to the ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC) Blueprint 2025, as well as the EU's Strategic Compass.
- e) Enhance the role of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), as an action-oriented mechanism with ASEAN as the primary driving force; and support the implementation of the ARF Vision Statement, ARF Ha Noi Plan of Action II (2020-2025), and other relevant documents.
- f) Cooperate in mediation, reconciliation, confidence-building, preventive diplomacy, conflict management, conflict prevention and peace-building initiatives in the region through workshops, seminars, exchange of best practices and other capacity-building initiatives with relevant ASEAN platforms such as the ASEAN Institute for Peace and Reconciliation (ASEAN-IPR), in accordance with its Terms of Reference (ToR).
- g) Explore potential collaboration in the four priority areas of the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP): maritime cooperation, connectivity, the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030, economic and other possible areas of cooperation, and the seven priority areas of the EU Strategy for Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific: sustainable and inclusive prosperity; green transition; ocean governance; digital governance and partnerships; connectivity; security and defence; and human security, all in accordance with the principles of the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia, the ASEAN Charter, and the AOIP.

1.3. Combat terrorism, transnational crimes, address other non-traditional security issues

- a) Support the implementation of the ASEAN Plan of Action in Combating Transnational Crime (2016-2025) and implement the ASEAN-EU Work Plan to Combat Terrorism and Transnational Crime (2022-2024) as well as their successors.
- b) Convene the ASEAN Plus EU Senior Officials Meeting on Transnational Crime (SOMTC+EU) Consultations in the margins of the annual SOMTC on a regular basis, in accordance with SOMTC processes, to promote dialogue and cooperation on ways to tackle different aspects of transnational crimes of mutual concern.
- c) Work together and exchange best practices in the implementation of the ASEAN Convention on Counter Terrorism (ACCT); the 2017 ASEAN Comprehensive Plan of Action on Counter-Terrorism (ACPOA on CT); and the ASEAN Plan of Action to Prevent and Counter the Rise of Radicalisation and Violent Extremism (2018-2025) and its implementing Work Plan in countering terrorism and preventing violent extremism.

- d) Explore the participation of ASEAN Member States in operational activities of the European Multidisciplinary Platform Against Criminal Threats (EMPACT), where and when appropriate.
- e) Promote cooperation on the implementation of the ASEAN Convention Against Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (ACTIP) and the ASEAN Plan of Action Against Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (APA) as well as on issues related to people/migrant smuggling in ASEAN and the EU.
- f) Promote cooperation on the implementation of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) and its Protocols thereto.
- g) Enhance cooperation with a view to supporting the implementation of the ASEAN Work Plan on Securing Communities Against Illicit Drugs (2016-2025).
- h) Facilitate dialogue between ASEANAPOL and Europol, with a view to enhancing their cooperation through the conclusion of a Working Arrangement.
- i) Promote cooperation on capacity-building to support ASEAN's efforts in developing an integrated, region-wide and comprehensive border management system, with a view to strengthening ASEAN's capacity in the fight against transnational crime.
- j) Enhance regional cooperation and build ASEAN Member States' capacities to detect, prevent and repress illicit trafficking of wildlife, timber and waste, including pursuant to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, and other relevant conventions and agreements to which all ASEAN Member States are parties.
- k) Jointly build on the work accomplished since the adoption of the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism (1999), of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2462 (2019), as well as on the collective international experience developed by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), the FATF-Style Regional Bodies (FSRBs), Financial Stability Board (FSB), International Financial Institutions (IFIs), Basel Committee on Banking Supervision (BCBS), and continue to develop the capacity and enhance cooperation among financial intelligence or authorised units and other relevant agencies involved in anti-money laundering and counter-terrorism financing efforts, to better detect, analyse and investigate terrorism financing and the laundering of proceeds of crime in accordance with the FATF's standards, through capacity-building workshops and seminars to combat International Economic Crime, such as on money laundering and proliferation financing.

- l) Enhance dialogue and cooperation to facilitate cross-border cooperation to address cybercrime, including support for ASEAN Member States through capacity-building, as well as awareness raising programmes.
- m) Strengthen cooperation on countering disinformation and misinformation.

1.4. Enhance maritime security cooperation

- a) Enhance dialogue and exchange of views, experiences and best practices in maritime-related issues including through the regular conduct of the ASEAN-EU High Level Dialogue on Maritime Security Cooperation, and within the ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Maritime Security (ISM on MS) as well as sharing knowledge and expertise in the sustainable joint management of marine resources.
- b) Underline the importance of the respect for the rule of law, sovereignty and territorial integrity of States, maritime security and safety, freedom of navigation and overflight, peaceful resolution of disputes, in accordance with the universally recognised principles of international law, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and the relevant standards and recommended practices by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and the International Maritime Organization (IMO).
- c) Strengthen cooperation on maritime security such as in combatting sea piracy, armed robbery against ships, hijacking and arms smuggling, including through the enhancement of maritime law enforcement cooperation in accordance with international law, including the 1982 UNCLOS.
- d) Strengthen cooperation on maritime domain awareness, maritime safety, including on passenger ship safety and seafarer training and welfare, as well as on search and rescue (SAR), including by exchanging best practices on the implementation of the ASEAN Declaration on Cooperation in Search and Rescue of Persons and Vessels in Distress at Sea, through activities such as exchange of information, technological cooperation, capacity-building projects, and exchange of visits of relevant ASEAN and EU officials, as well as on safe maritime shipping, in consultation with the relevant sectoral bodies.

1.5. Promote disarmament and non-proliferation

- a) Explore the strengthening of cooperation with the ASEAN Network of Regulatory Bodies on Atomic Energy (ASEANTOM) to build institutional capacity and technical competency, to support nuclear safety, security and safeguards and ensure its peaceful purposes.
- b) Support ASEAN's efforts to preserve Southeast Asia as a Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone and free of all other weapons of mass destruction as enshrined in the Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ Treaty) and the ASEAN Charter.

- c) Cooperate in areas of disarmament, non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction as well as arms control, and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and contribute to global efforts in this regard, including through the ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Non-Proliferation and Disarmament (ISM on NPD).
- d) Cooperate in combating illegal transfer of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW), in accordance with the UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, including through the timely exchange of information.
- e) Explore efforts to regulate or improve the regulation of international trade in conventional arms.
- f) Enhance cooperation in mitigating risks associated with chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) materials building on the achievement of the EU CBRN Risk Mitigation Centre of Excellence (CoE) Initiative and exploring collaboration with the Network of ASEAN CBR Defence Experts.
- g) Explore regional cooperation on dual use export control in accordance with respective laws and policies.

1.6. Promote the Women, Peace and Security Agenda

- a) Mainstream a gender perspective as a cross-cutting area of ASEAN-EU cooperation and promote collaboration to advance the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda in order to contribute to prevention and resolution of conflict, as well as to long-term peacebuilding.
- b) Enhance cooperation to build the institutional capacity for and commitment to WPS, especially capacity-building for women to ensure and promote their full, equal and meaningful participation in all stages of peace processes, including in critical leadership positions and increase the number of women as agents for peace, security and sustainable development through knowledge-building exercises, sharing of best practices, training, regional dialogues, and international engagement.
- c) Raise awareness of the WPS agenda among policy-makers as well as the general public, and encourage inter-regional discussions on issues of critical importance to the WPS agenda.

1.7. Promote peace-building initiatives

- a) Support ASEAN's initiatives to promote the Youth, Peace and Security (YPS) agenda by leveraging ASEAN-led mechanisms and entities, including the ASEAN-IPR, external partners, and other international and regional organisations as well as UN mechanisms to support the implementation of the YPS agenda, and build a culture of peace and conflict sensitivity.
- b) Support ASEAN's efforts to address humanitarian aspects of landmines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) in the region through the possible cooperation and collaboration with ASEAN Regional Mine Action Centre (ARMAC).

1.8. Promote cooperation on human rights and good governance

- a) Enhance the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms in accordance with relevant international and regional human rights instruments, to which all ASEAN and EU Member States are parties.
- b) Continue to hold ASEAN-EU Policy Dialogues on Human Rights.
- c) Strengthen the cooperation between ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) and the EU through training, regional dialogues, awareness raising activities, exchange of best practices and other capacity-building initiatives to enhance the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms.
- d) Strengthen cooperation between ASEAN and the EU to implement relevant UN conventions and instruments on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms to which all ASEAN Member States are parties, the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration (AHRD) and the Phnom Penh Statement on the Adoption of the AHRD.
- e) Strengthen the cooperation between ASEAN and the EU through sharing of experience, knowledge, and best practices and other capacity building initiatives to promote and support efforts in strengthening democracy, good governance, rule of law and judiciary systems.
- f) Promote further cooperation on combating corruption through, inter alia, encouraging the implementation of the UN Convention Against Corruption. In this respect, also promote the sharing of best practices.

1.9. Strengthen Institutional Relationships

- a) Encourage linkages between the ASEAN Member States' Parliaments and the European Parliament (EP), as well as between the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA) and the EP.
- b) Encourage linkages between the Committee of Permanent Representatives to ASEAN (CPR) and preparatory bodies of the Council of the European Union.

2. ECONOMIC COOPERATION

2.1. Expand trade, business and investment

- a) Convene regular ASEAN Economic Ministers' (AEM)-EU Trade Commissioner Consultations, and regular meetings of the ASEAN-EU Senior Economic Officials (SEOM-EU).
- b) Encourage further dialogue and cooperation in the field of economic policy and social policy, with a view to mitigate the economic impact of external shocks and contribute to sustainable and inclusive growth, social cohesion, and labour market stability including decent work and core labour standards.
- c) Assess progress made so far and pending issues in the draft Framework setting out the parameters of a future ASEAN – EU Free Trade Agreement (FTA), and explore ways to move forward the work of the Joint Working Group (JWG) for the development of a Framework setting out the parameters of a future ASEAN-EU FTA, taking into account bilateral FTAs between several ASEAN Member States and the EU.
- d) Explore alternative avenues and initiatives to deepen ASEAN-EU engagement on trade, including digital trade, and investment.
- e) Strengthen the capacity of ASEAN Member States through various initiatives and mechanisms to facilitate cross-border trade in the region, including the ASEAN Customs Transit System (ACTS), the ASEAN Single Window (ASW), and the Trade Experts Study and Dialogue.
- f) Continue to support ASEAN's regional economic integration agenda, including through the provision of technical assistance activities that contribute to capacity building and sustainable economic growth and ASEAN's efforts in addressing emerging challenges through robust national and regional mechanisms that address economic shocks and other emerging trade-related issues.

- g) Support the effective implementation of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) Blueprint 2025, and the EU Global Gateway priorities.
- h) Promote cooperation on supply chain resilience and sustainability to further strengthen sustainable trade and investment relations between ASEAN and the EU taking into account the important role of raw materials.
- i) Explore further possible cooperation on the European standards for the construction sector (Eurocodes) with the ASEAN Buildings and Construction Working Group (BCWG).
- j) Encourage cooperation between the EU-ASEAN Business Council and the European Chambers of Commerce as well as national EU-ASEAN Business Associations located in member states of the EU and ASEAN, respectively.

2.2. Enhance Cooperation in Intellectual Property

- a) Promote cooperation on intellectual property through existing strategies and mechanisms within ASEAN and the EU, including support for the implementation of the ASEAN Intellectual Property Rights Action Plan (AIPRAP) 2016-2025 v2.0.
- b) Support the various task forces under the ASEAN Working Group on Intellectual Property Cooperation (AWGIPC) such as the Patents Task Force (PTF), Industrial Design Task Force (IDTF), Trademarks Task Force (TMTF), and the ASEAN Network of IP Enforcement Experts (ANIEE) in implementing their respective priorities and deliverables.
- c) Strengthen the intellectual property regimes of ASEAN Member States.
- d) Enhance the promotion, protection, and enforcement of intellectual property rights especially in the digital environment through the exchange of information and best practices.
- e) Support the development of protection for Genetic Resources and Traditional Knowledge and Folklore (GRTKF) and geographical indications (GI).

2.3. Strengthen the role of the private sector and Public-Private Partnership

- a) Encourage public-private sector dialogue and business-to-business engagement, with the aim of effectively representing both ASEAN and EU business interests.
- b) Share best practices between ASEAN Member States and EU Member States and promote cooperation on Public Private Partnership (PPP) in support of the Sustainable Development Goals and regional integration.

- c) Encourage the development of quality infrastructure investment and its contribution towards affordable, reliable and sustainable connectivity, with due consideration to the G20 Principles for Quality Infrastructure Investment.
- d) Encourage continued private sector engagements between ASEAN and the EU, in particular through the ASEAN-EU Business Summit, ASEAN-EU Health Summit, and the ASEAN Economic Ministers' dialogue with the EU-ASEAN Business Council, and support the implementation of their recommendations.
- e) Promote PPP for the development of Transport, Energy and ICT infrastructure in ASEAN Member States and knowledge sharing of PPP cooperation for infrastructure development between relevant ASEAN and EU Member States.
- f) Strengthen cooperation on promoting public and private investment in areas of mutual interest in support of sustainable development, including through the NDICI-Global Europe Instrument and Team Europe initiatives.

2.4. Strengthen Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises

- a) Share best practices and experience in financing, innovation, sustainability and developing resilient and competitive Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), and encourage further exchanges on policy and regulatory frameworks including in the digital economy.
- b) Support the implementation of the strategic goals identified in the ASEAN Strategic Action Plan for SME Development (SAP SMED) 2016-2025 and the EU SME Strategy for a sustainable and digital Europe, exchanges of best practices, in order to create more globally competitive and resilient MSMEs.

2.5. Strengthen Cooperation in Transport, Energy, Digital Economy and Technology

- a) Continue cooperation and exchange best practices on regional transport issues to support the implementation of the Kuala Lumpur Transport Strategic Plan (ASEAN Transport Strategic Plan) 2016-2025, especially in relation to digitalization and sustainability of regional transport.
- b) Implement the ASEAN-EU Comprehensive Air Transport Agreement (AE CATA), the first ever region-to-region agreement, with a view to enhancing air connectivity between ASEAN and the EU.

- c) Promote jointly the development of the ASEAN Single Aviation Market including the enhancement of aviation safety, security, and air traffic management consistent with the ICAO's Standards and Recommended Practices.
- d) Promote achieving the strategic objectives of the ASEAN Plan of Action on Energy Cooperation (APAEC) Phase II: 2021-2025 towards enhancing energy connectivity and market integration in ASEAN to achieve energy security, accessibility, affordability, and sustainability as well as to accelerate energy transition and strengthen energy resilience through greater innovation and cooperation, including but not limited to policy and regulatory exchanges or technical assistance in priority areas to be mutually agreed.
- e) Cooperate in the implementation of the ASEAN Digital Masterplan 2025 and its follow-up in priority areas as mutually agreed, including through policy and regulatory exchanges or technical assistance, in areas such as cybersecurity, digital data governance, governance in the use of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) technologies, sustainable development of digital services, digital services to connect business and to facilitate cross-border trade, measurement of the digital economy through the development of the ASEAN Digital Index (ADIX), as well as other ICT priorities.
- f) Promote further cooperation in ASEAN digital transformation agenda, including in the area of digital economy integration and secure and resilient digital infrastructure, as guided by the ASEAN Leaders' Statement on Advancing Digital Transformation in ASEAN, the Bandar Seri Begawan Roadmap: An ASEAN Digital Transformation Agenda to Accelerate ASEAN's Economic Recovery and Digital Economy Integration, the ASEAN Digital Integration Framework Action Plan (DIFAP) 2019-2025 and the Work Plan for the Implementation of ASEAN Agreement on Electronic Commerce 2021-2025, as well as taking into account the EU Digital Compass Strategy.

2.6. Enhance cooperation in sectors on food, agriculture, fisheries, aquaculture and forestry

- a) Enhance the exchange of information on food security and global food markets, and explore options to work together towards building fair, sustainable, healthy and environmentally friendly food systems regionally and globally.
- b) Enhance cooperation in sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) matters of mutual interests, including, but not limited to, knowledge-sharing, exchange of best practices and expertise on inspections and the implementation of the precautionary principle and ensuring food safety in accordance with the ASEAN Post-2015 Health Development Agenda (APHDA 2021-2025).

- c) Strengthen fisheries cooperation, including among others, supporting efforts to combat Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing, promote sustainable fisheries management and aquaculture development, improve the management of aquatic animal health, promote climate resilient aquaculture or fisheries technologies and approaches, protection of habitats, marine mammals, and other threatened species, disaster risk prevention and management and climate change adaptation, and address marine debris in the context of fisheries.
- d) Support relevant activities under the ASEAN Network for Combating IUU-fishing (AN-IUU) in accordance with its Cooperation Framework, Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure (CFTORROP).
- e) Continue cooperation on Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) and Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT).
- f) Promote cooperation by sharing best practices on improving the circularity of agriculture, including the applications of ecosystem-based approaches, agro-ecology, nature-based solutions and other innovative approaches in agriculture and forestry.
- g) Cooperate on sustainable commodity production and consumption in forestry and agriculture products, including facilitation of exchange of experience.
- h) Enhance capacity in the development and implementation of decarbonisation measures in the food, agriculture and forestry sector.
- i) Continue the holding of the Joint Working Group on Palm Oil between relevant ASEAN Member States and the European Union as per the agreed Terms of Reference.

2.7. Enhance cooperation on research and innovation, Science and Technology

- a) Continue dialogue between the ASEAN Committee on Science, Technology and Innovation (COSTI) and the EU to promote cooperation in Science, Technology and Innovation.
- b) Continue cooperation in promoting the findings of the Mid-Term Review in the implementation of the ASEAN Plan of Action on Science, Technology and Innovation (APASTI) 2016-2025 as a building block for ASEAN-EU Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) cooperation.

- c) Enhance cooperation of STI centres of excellence and the various Science and Technology (S&T) stakeholders, via the Horizon Europe, EU's Framework Programme and relevant ASEAN mechanisms as well as in coordination with national programmes in ASEAN and the EU, in areas of mutual interest.
- d) Continue cooperation in promoting the mobility of scientists and researchers between ASEAN and the EU through exchange programmes, such as the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions, joint research projects and other appropriate arrangements in accordance with the respective laws, rules, regulation, and national policies.
- e) Support the implementation of sectoral initiatives in relation to green technologies.
- f) Encourage collaboration in the area of space cooperation between ASEAN and the EU on developing, deploying and using global space-based infrastructures, services, applications and data, including making best use of services provided by the EU's Galileo satellite navigation system and the EU's Copernicus Earth-observation system, and the implementation of other knowledge exchange and technology transfer programmes.
- g) Explore projects in consultation with the relevant ASEAN sectoral bodies and best engineering practices and innovation, on marine finance, marine science and technology.

2.8. Enhance cooperation on Competition Policy and Consumer Protection

- a) Share best practices and experience in enforcing competition law and consumer protection law and foster engagements between the ASEAN Experts Group on Competition (AEGC), the ASEAN Committee on Consumer Protection (ACCP), and the EU.
- b) Continue to promote secondments of ASEAN competition officials to the European Commission and competition authorities of EU Member States.
- c) Explore the possibility of secondments of ASEAN consumer protection officials to the European Commission and the consumer protection authorities of the EU countries.

3. SOCIO-CULTURAL COOPERATION

3.1. Enhance people-to-people exchanges and cooperation in the areas of education, science and culture

- a) Promote and strengthen people mobility between ASEAN and the EU, including student, faculty and researcher mobility through scholarships, internship programmes, and programmes for youth volunteers, youth workers, social workers and para-social workers, and support the development and voluntary implementation of regional and inter-regional frameworks, tools and mechanisms to strengthen capacity of ASEAN Member States.
- b) Maximise cooperation on student and youth exchange and mobility in ASEAN and the EU through programmes of mutual interest and increase educational exchanges through Erasmus+ programme, as well as national programmes in ASEAN and EU Member States.
- c) Exchange views and information on best practices on the provision and recognition of educational services, as well as academic and professional qualifications.
- d) Develop joint degree programmes and joint research studies between ASEAN and EU Member States.
- e) Strengthen collaboration between international educational organisations in ASEAN Member States and the EU to, among others, achieve universal access to quality education, enhance digital transformation in education and prepare students for the future of work, in areas in line with the ASEAN Work Plan on Education 2021-2025.
- f) Promote initiatives and programmes that enhance cultural understanding and awareness between ASEAN and the EU and its Member States.
- g) Strengthen the collaboration between EU higher education associations and member institutions with the ASEAN University Network (AUN), through the conduct of specific training and courses such as undergraduate and postgraduate studies for students and youths through Erasmus+ programme, as well as other programmes in EU member States.
- h) Explore the possibility of establishing a Network of ASEAN-EU Think Tanks to serve as a Track 1.5 mechanism and provide intellectual support, promote academic exchanges and expert dialogues in view of enhancing the ASEAN-EU strategic partnership.
- i) Explore cooperation in the prevention and combating of the illicit trade in cultural property.

3.2. Enhance cooperation to address health priorities, including public health emergencies and pandemics

- a) Enhance cooperation on health priorities related to promoting healthy lifestyles, responding to all health hazards and emerging threats, strengthening health systems and access to care.
- b) Strengthen coordination and cooperation in addressing the challenges of communicable diseases and emerging infectious and zoonotic diseases including pandemics; and potential health threats or outbreak due to disasters.
- c) Enhance the effectiveness of regional surveillance and response towards Emerging Infectious Diseases (EID), including tropical diseases, for better preparedness against major disease outbreaks.
- d) Strengthen both regions' preparedness for, and capacity to respond effectively to, current and future public health emergencies.
- e) Continue supporting, as appropriate, the ASEAN's pandemic response and recovery efforts.
- f) Reaffirm continued support for vaccine security and self-reliance in the region, including vaccine multilateralism and fair, equitable, timely and affordable access to safe and effective vaccines under the multilateral COVAX Facility.
- g) Consider supporting ASEAN in establishing a comprehensive and integrated approach to pharmaceutical regulation through the finalisation of the ASEAN Pharmaceutical Regulatory Framework (APRF) document and in developing legal instruments to implement the APRF.

3.3. Promote gender equality, well-being, rights and welfare of women, children, the elderly/older persons, persons with disabilities and migrant workers

- a) Collaborate with the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC), ASEAN Committee on Women (ACW), and ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Social Welfare and Development (SOMSWD) to promote gender equality as well as the promotion and protection of the rights of women and children, especially those in vulnerable situations including the elderly/older persons, persons with disabilities, women living with HIV/AIDS, migrant workers, ethnic minority groups, where applicable, internally-displaced persons, and women at risk or victims of sexual and gender-based violence, and promotion of women's full, equal and meaningful leadership and participation, in line with their respective mandates and work plan.

- b) Support exchange of experience and best practices on policies and programmes on gender mainstreaming across all sectors, where appropriate, and promote gender analysis and women's perspectives in regional initiatives across sectors including on decent work, social protection, building resilience, economic empowerment of women, and WPS, and also enhance gender equality in education.
- c) Strengthen cooperation in capacity building, research and raising awareness in areas of orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration, as well as in the areas of labour and employment, gender and criminal justice dimension of trafficking in persons to ensure the protection and promotion of the rights of migrant workers in line with national competences.
- d) Promote dialogue and exchange of best practices on issues related to migration, including the protection of children, and enhance cooperation on these issues in the UN and relevant regional and international platforms, as appropriate.
- e) Support cooperation to promote, protect, and mainstream the rights and welfare of persons with disabilities and older persons, particularly targeting the poor and persons in vulnerable situations and those suffering from multiple disabilities, and including support for their caregivers.
- f) Support cooperation and sharing of best practices on social protection, particularly for migrants and persons in vulnerable situations, through existing mechanisms such as the ASEAN Training Centre for Social Work and Social Welfare (ATCSW).
- g) Support cooperation and sharing of experiences and best practices on ageing so as to ensure systemic integration of ageing issues across all policy fields and at all policy levels.
- h) Share best practices and measures for addressing the health needs for migrant workers, as covered by the ASEAN Consensus on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers, in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly for the social protection of caregivers, medical frontliners, and seafarers, including but not limited to the non-discriminatory access to health care, vaccines, and testing.
- i) Support the exchange of experiences and best practices on policies and programmes on child protection in order to prevent and protect them from forced labour, neglect and all forms of violence, including domestic violence and online abuse and exploitation.
- j) Support the exchange of best practices and policies on protection of elderly/older persons from abuse, especially the most vulnerable, and promote adequate awareness across all sectors of society, while ensuring that there are adequate action pathways in place, supported by a legal framework which protects the victims.

- k) Support cooperation and exchange of best practices on mainstreaming aging, policies on protection of elderly/older persons from abuse, healthy and active ageing, and ageing with dignity, as well as social services and income security for elderly/older persons.

3.4. Enhance cooperation on Crisis and Disaster Management

- a) Enhance dialogue and cooperation between EU and ASEAN to support the implementation of the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) Work Programmes through exchange of knowledge, best practices and capacity-building on different aspects of disaster resilience, including early warning.
- b) Support the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on disaster management (AHA Centre) including through capacity building activities organised with the support of the Integrated Programme in Enhancing the capacity of AHA Centre and ASEAN Emergency Response Mechanism (EU SAHA project) and through the consolidation of increased operational links with the European Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC), as well as by identifying areas of joint cooperation reflected in the ASEAN Declaration on One ASEAN One Response: ASEAN Responding to Disasters as One in the Region and Outside the Region.

3.5. Address regional and global environmental challenges and promote sustainable development

- a) Regularly conduct the ASEAN-EU Dialogue on Sustainable Development as a platform to discuss and promote cooperation on sustainable development, and enhance complementarities between the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as well as to support the work of the ASEAN Centre for Sustainable Development Studies and Dialogue (ACSDSD) to promote sustainable development cooperation in ASEAN. The ACSDSD can support ASEAN efforts in terms of research, capacity building, consultation and network of cooperation within ASEAN and between ASEAN and external parties on sustainable development issues, in accordance with its TOR.
- b) Conduct ASEAN-EU High-Level Dialogue on Environment and Climate Change as a platform to strengthen policy dialogue and advance ASEAN-EU cooperation on environmental, climate change, and sustainable development issues.
- c) Exchange best practices in the areas of poverty reduction and rural development, in line with the ASEAN Framework Action Plan on Rural Development and Poverty Eradication 2021-2025 and ASEAN Master Plan on Rural Development.

- d) Enhance cooperation to contribute to the ASEAN Community Vision 2025.
- e) Support the implementation of Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) through technical assistance and capacity building.
- f) Strengthen cooperation to address the challenges posed by climate change through support to the implementation of relevant strategic priorities of ASEAN Programme on Sustainable Management of Peatland Ecosystems (APSMPE), ASEAN Working Group on Climate Change (AWGCC) Action Plan, and Paris Agreement adopted under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and the EU Green Deal, including green energy transition, among others.
- g) Strengthen support and cooperation to address climate change, extreme weather events and climate and environment-related issues such as water and air pollution, sea level rise, adaptation and mitigation of greenhouse gases (GHG) emissions, Measurement, Reporting and Verification (MRV), climate change impact, vulnerability, and adaptation assessment, climate change projection, climate finance, implementation of Nationally Determined Contributions, and long-term strategies.
- h) Explore collaboration to address environmental challenges in the framework of Copernicus.
- i) Strengthen support for ASEAN's efforts in the full and effective implementation of the ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution (AATHP), including through the establishment and operationalisation of the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Transboundary Haze Pollution Control, to effectively address land and forest fires in the region, such as through cooperation in the ASEAN-EU Sustainable Use of Peatland and Haze Mitigation in ASEAN (SUPA).
- j) Strengthen cooperation to address inter alia issues such as plastics pollution and marine litter, focusing efforts in particular on prevention and life-cycle approaches to promote circularity of plastics, in line with the ASEAN Regional Action Plan for Combating Marine Debris in the ASEAN Member States (2021-2025).
- k) Reduce the pressures on the oceans inter-alia through the fight against marine litter and pollution, including from land-based sources as well as maritime human activities under international obligations applicable to the Parties, and through adaptation and mitigation measures to enhance the resilience of the oceans and coastal communities to climate change.

- l) Encourage cooperation in addressing maritime-related issues in a comprehensive manner, including exploring projects in consultation with the relevant ASEAN sectoral bodies and best engineering practices and innovation, on marine finance, maritime connectivity, marine science and technology, marine environmental protection, biodiversity conservation, sustainable use of the oceans, seas and marine resources, disaster risk reduction and building resilience and mitigating the impact of climate change on the marine and coastal environment.
- m) Promote long-term conservation and sustainable use of the oceans and their resources, while protecting biodiversity and the marine environment, in areas to be mutually agreed, in accordance with UNCLOS.
- n) Strengthen cooperation on biodiversity conservation and sustainable management of biodiversity to contribute to the effective implementation of the future post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, as well as support biodiversity initiatives in the region particularly through the work of the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity.
- o) Cooperate to reduce deforestation and enhance sustainable forest and land use.
- p) Enhance cooperation on the concept of circular economy and encourage Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) models by exchanging experiences and best practices, strengthening knowledge management and stakeholder engagement, supporting capacity-building and technical assistance, and raising public awareness on measures covering the entire product life cycle: from production to consumption, waste management and the market for secondary raw materials, to further strengthen the implementation of SCP framework throughout the ASEAN region.
- q) Continue promoting sub-regional cooperation to support social-economic development, environmental protection and sustainable water management, drawing out from relevant EU experience, and promoting the sustainable management and use of inland and transboundary water resources, coastal and marine environment.
- r) Enhance cooperation on building resilience and mitigating the impact of climate change on the marine and coastal environment.

- s) Strengthen cooperation on biodiversity conservation, finance and management, and mainstreaming by continuing to support the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB) and biodiversity initiatives in the region, in particular through ASEAN-EU cooperation on biodiversity and natural capital as well as in the implementation of the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework (ACRF), specifically its Broad Strategy Five, and the upcoming post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework under the Convention on Biological Diversity.
- t) Support capacity-building in tackling growing challenges associated with climate change, extreme weather events, loss and damage, biodiversity loss and pollution.
- u) Enhance dialogues and exchange experiences to strengthen sustainable, inclusive, and responsible business practices.
- v) Strengthen cooperation on the promotion of decent work, including strengthening of workers' rights and improving working conditions, as a cross-cutting issue of sustainable development.

4. CROSS PILLAR COOPERATION

4.1. Cooperation on connectivity

- a) Continue policy dialogue to enhance sustainable connectivity in ASEAN, and between ASEAN and the EU in line with the ASEAN-EU Joint Ministerial Statement on Connectivity adopted in December 2020, including through the ASEAN Coordinating Committee on Connectivity (ACCC) and relevant EU counterparts.
- b) Enhance joint cooperation in the implementation of the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity (MPAC) 2025, taking into account the EU Global Gateway Strategy, including through exchange of best practices and support to capacity building activities, the strategic areas of sustainable infrastructure, digital innovation, seamless logistics, regulatory excellence and people mobility as well as strengthening synergies between MPAC 2025 and the EU's Global Gateway Strategy, including possible coordination with other ASEAN external partners.
- c) Continue support for work carried out by the ASEAN Catalytic Green Finance Facility under the ASEAN Infrastructure Fund to support sustainable infrastructure investment.

- d) Encourage cooperation to spur sustainable and green investments, including via exploring cooperation on sustainable finance taxonomies, and recognise the role of the public-private partnerships and multilateral as well as regional development banks to facilitate sustainable financing of sustainable connectivity, including through Team Europe Initiatives.
- e) Explore the possibility of exchanging lessons learned and best practices from the EU on the development of sub-regional and trans-regional connectivity initiatives, including the Mekong sub-region, Brunei-Indonesia-Malaysia-Philippines-East ASEAN Growth Area (BIMP-EAGA) and Indonesia-Malaysia-Thailand Growth Triangle (IMT-GT).

4.2. Smart Cities Cooperation

- a) Support the ASEAN Smart Cities Network (ASCN) in building a network of smart cities that are resilient, sustainable, low-emission, innovative and well-connected, using various means including technology to improve the lives of people in the region in an inclusive and sustainable manner, including through implementation of the ASEAN Sustainable Urbanisation Strategy, and exploring the possibility of partnerships with ASCN and ASCN cities in areas of mutual interest.

4.3. Cybersecurity Cooperation

- a) Enhance joint cooperation on the implementation of the ASEAN-EU Statement on Cybersecurity cooperation, addressing common challenges on cyber-related issues, including cyber-security and cybercrime, notably to advance responsible state behaviour in the use of ICTs, in particular through the implementation of the agreed norms of responsible state behaviour, building on the consensus reports adopted by the relevant UN Group of Governmental Experts (UNGGE) and the Open-ended Working Group on Security of and in the Use of Information and Communications Technologies (OEWG), as well as to implement practical capacity and confidence building measures, including through relevant ASEAN-led mechanisms.

4.4. Circular Economy

- a) Continue cooperation on circular economy and encourage sustainable consumption models including waste prevention by exchanging experiences on measures covering the entire product life cycle: from production to consumption, waste management and the market for secondary raw materials.

- b) Support efforts for cross-pillar implementation of the Framework for Circular Economy for the ASEAN Economic Community, through sharing of expertise and best practices, technology transfer as well as coordination of existing initiatives on circular economy across the ASEAN Community Pillars.
- c) Support the development of an ASEAN Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform as part of a joint initiative between ASEAN and the EU in facilitating the sharing of good circular economy practices across ASEAN and accelerating a circular economy transition in ASEAN Member States, including the development of national circular economy roadmap in ASEAN Member States, taking into account national circumstances.
- d) Continue to support engagement with stakeholders on Circular Economy through the ASEAN Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform and opportunities for circular businesses and MSMEs.

4.5. Cooperation in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)

- a) Promote cooperation between the ASEAN and EU through sharing of best practices on TVET-related initiatives to contribute to the advancement of TVET in the region, in line with the objectives of the ASEAN Technical and Vocational Education Council (ATC).

4.6. Initiative for ASEAN Integration and Narrowing the Development Gap in ASEAN

- a) Continue to contribute towards ASEAN's efforts in narrowing the development gaps among ASEAN Member States as well as between ASEAN and the rest of the world, including through the implementation of the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) Work Plan IV (2021-2025) in order to realise the ASEAN Community and regional integration, as well as taking into account existing sub-regional cooperation frameworks.
- b) Exchange expertise and best practices on sub-regional cooperation, including on sustainable development in the Mekong sub-region, on the basis of strong commitment by ASEAN, building on ASEAN's and the EU's relevant programmes and experiences and the data provided by the Mekong River Commission.

4.7. Safe Cross-Border travel

- a) Promote safe cross-border travel with a view to maintaining the level of engagement and dynamic of cooperation and economic activities between the two regions, especially in the event of global health crises and emergencies through, inter alia, the mutual recognition of the COVID-19 vaccination certificates of the Member States of ASEAN and the EU, and the promotion of their interoperability and compliance with relevant internationally accepted standards.

5. FOLLOW-UP OF THE PLAN OF ACTION

- a) ASEAN and the EU shall regularly review this Plan of Action through the appropriate existing mechanisms comprising ASEAN and EU officials, including through the ASEAN-EU Joint Cooperation Committee (JCC) and the ASEAN-EU Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM), with the assistance of the ASEAN Secretariat, on the basis of mutual consent.
 - b) A progress report of the implementation of the Plan of Action could be submitted to the biennial ASEAN-EU Ministerial Meeting.
 - c) The implementation of the present Plan of Action is a shared responsibility of ASEAN and the EU. It will be jointly taken forward by ASEAN and the EU.
 - d) The Plan of Action (2023-2027) does not, nor is it intended to, create any legal obligations on either side under domestic or international law.
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