



**CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT OF THE  
21<sup>ST</sup> ASEAN-CHINA SUMMIT TO COMMEMORATE  
THE 15<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF ASEAN-CHINA STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP**

**SINGAPORE, 14 NOVEMBER 2018**

1. The 21<sup>st</sup> ASEAN-China Summit was held in Singapore on 14 November 2018. The Meeting was chaired by H.E. Lee Hsien Loong, Prime Minister of the Republic of Singapore, and attended by all Heads of State/Government of ASEAN Member States and H.E. Li Keqiang, Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China. The Secretary-General of ASEAN was also in attendance.

2. We noted with satisfaction that ASEAN-China relations continued to be strong, stable and mutually beneficial. We welcomed the commemoration of the 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the ASEAN-China Strategic Partnership and the various commemorative activities carried out by both sides to celebrate the milestone.

3. Both sides also welcomed the activities held by ASEAN and China to commemorate the ASEAN-China Year of Innovation 2018. We adopted the Joint Statement on ASEAN-China Science, Technology and Innovation Cooperation. ASEAN Leaders welcomed China's support for the ASEAN Smart Cities Network. We also looked forward to continued cooperation in digital economy and e-commerce. We underscored that technological advancements presented many opportunities for further collaboration, especially under our economic cooperation, which includes sharing of expertise in the digital economy and e-commerce to better integrate our micro, small and medium enterprises into the global economy.

4. We welcomed the substantive progress made in the implementation of the 2016-2020 Plan of Action to Implement the Joint Declaration on ASEAN-China Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity and agreed to further implement the Plan of Action to enhance effective cooperation in wide-ranging areas.

5. We were pleased to note that over the past fifteen years, the ASEAN-China Strategic Partnership has deepened cooperation between ASEAN and China and further strengthened our relations, contributing to regional peace and prosperity. In

this regard, we adopted the ASEAN-China Strategic Partnership Vision 2030, which will chart the future direction to further advance the ASEAN-China Strategic Partnership to new heights by forging closer cooperation for mutual benefit.

6. We agreed to further promote trade, market access, investment, and tourism flows. We noted with satisfaction that in 2017, China remained as ASEAN's largest trading partner with total merchandise trade at USD 441.6 billion. China also rose from being ASEAN's fourth largest external source of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) to third largest, with FDI flows amounting to USD 11.3 billion in 2017.

7. We welcomed the completion of the ratification of the Protocol to Amend the Framework Agreement on Comprehensive Economic Co-operation and Certain Agreements thereunder between ASEAN and the People's Republic of China (ACFTA Upgrading Protocol) and looked forward to the effective implementation of the Protocol by all Parties. We welcomed the completion of the Review of Product Specific Rules (PSRs) and looked forward to the timely implementation by the target date of 1 January 2019. We encouraged all Parties to continue efforts to deepen relations under the ACFTA, towards achieving greater economic and trade cooperation. These efforts will support the joint target of two-way trade of USD 1 trillion, and USD 150 billion in investments by 2020.

8. We welcomed the substantial progress made in the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) in 2018. We noted with satisfaction that the RCEP negotiations have advanced to the final stage, and we expressed our determination to conclude a modern, comprehensive, high quality, and mutually beneficial RCEP in 2019. We also expressed our commitment to uphold a global trade environment that is open, mutually beneficial, rules-based and inclusive through the RCEP.

9. ASEAN Leaders welcomed China's support for the implementation of the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity (MPAC) 2025. We welcomed further exploration of synergies between MPAC 2025 and the Belt and Road Initiative. We looked forward to the implementation of such cooperation in an open, inclusive, transparent and mutually beneficial manner. We also looked forward to enhancing cooperation on infrastructure with the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and Silk Road Fund. To enhance air connectivity, we looked forward to working towards the full liberalisation of the ASEAN-China Air Transport Agreement (AC-ATA), including a new Protocol 3 to expand Fifth Freedom Traffic Rights between ASEAN and China under the intra-package of Protocol 2, which will facilitate greater people-to-people and economic linkages and further enhance regional connectivity.

10. ASEAN Leaders welcomed the successful convening of the 15<sup>th</sup> China-ASEAN Expo (CAEXPO) held in Nanning, China from 12 to 15 September 2018, with the theme “Jointly Building the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Maritime Silk Road, Forging the China-ASEAN Community of Innovation”. We also noted the convening of the 11<sup>th</sup> ASEAN-China Prosecutors-General Conference in Brunei Darussalam from 14 to 15 August 2018 which, among others, focused on strengthening the region’s cyber resilience.

11. We noted with appreciation that the China-ASEAN Education Cooperation Week continued to be an important platform for fostering educational and cultural cooperation and exchanges. In this context, we welcomed the successful convening of the 11<sup>th</sup> China-ASEAN Education Cooperation Week in Guiyang, China from 25 to 27 July 2018 with the theme, “A New Beginning for Education Cooperation, A New Future for Cultural Exchange”. We welcomed the adoption of the ASEAN-China Work Plan on Cooperation in Culture and Arts 2019-2021 and the Work Plan on Enhancing ASEAN-China Cooperation through Information and Media 2018-2020. We also welcomed the designation of 2019 as the ASEAN-China Year of Media Exchanges.

12. ASEAN Leaders welcomed China’s continued support for ASEAN’s efforts to narrow the development gap among ASEAN Member States, including through the implementation of the Initiative for ASEAN Integration Work Plan III.

13. We underscored the important role and contribution of the ASEAN-China Centre in promoting trade, investment, tourism, education and cultural cooperation between ASEAN and China for mutual benefit. ASEAN Leaders also welcomed China’s establishment of the ASEAN-China Cooperation Fund (ACCF) Project Management Team, which will facilitate the implementation of cooperation activities and projects under the Fund. We noted the outcomes of the two Working Group Meetings on “ASEAN-China Strategic Partnership Vision 2030” and “ASEAN-China E-commerce for Regional Growth and Cooperation” by the Network of ASEAN-China Think-Tanks (NACT) in Beijing and Singapore respectively this year.

14. We appreciated China’s continued support for ASEAN Centrality in the evolving regional architecture, through various ASEAN-led mechanisms such as the ASEAN Plus Three (APT), East Asia Summit (EAS), ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), and ASEAN Defence Ministers’ Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus). We agreed to continue utilising these mechanisms to effectively respond to traditional, as well as non-traditional security challenges. We also welcomed the successful conduct of the ASEAN-China Maritime Exercise in 2018.

15. We underscored the importance of the full and effective implementation of the 2002 Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) in its entirety. We also warmly welcomed the continued improving cooperation between

ASEAN and China and were encouraged by the progress of the substantive negotiations towards the early conclusion of an effective Code of Conduct in the South China Sea (COC) on a mutually-agreed timeline. We noted the agreement among ASEAN Member States and China on a Single Draft COC Negotiating Text, looked forward to the completion of the first reading of the Single Draft COC Negotiating Text by 2019, and encouraged further progress towards an effective COC. We discussed the importance of promoting a rules-based order in the region, including through upholding international law including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). We reaffirmed the importance of maintaining and promoting peace, security, stability, safety and freedom of navigation in and overflight above the South China Sea, and recognised the benefits of having the South China Sea as a sea of peace, stability and prosperity. We reaffirmed the need to enhance mutual trust and confidence, exercise self-restraint in the conduct of activities and avoid actions that may further complicate the situation, and pursue peaceful resolution of disputes, in accordance with international law, including the 1982 UNCLOS.

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