



Chairman's Press Release
on
The Special Lunch on Sustainable Development
4 November 2019, Bangkok/Nonthaburi, Thailand

On 4 November 2019, during the 35th ASEAN Summit and Related Summits, H.E. General Prayut Chan-o-cha (Ret.), Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Thailand, as ASEAN Chair in 2019 and ASEAN Coordinator on Sustainable Development Cooperation, hosted and chaired a *Special Lunch on Sustainable Development*.

The Special Lunch was attended by the Heads of State/Government and representatives of ASEAN Member States and Australia, China, India, Japan, New Zealand, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation and the United States, as well as the Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund, as Guest of the Chair, and the Secretary-General of ASEAN.

The Special Lunch was an opportunity for Leaders to exchange views and generate practical ideas on how to advance sustainable development in ASEAN and the wider region, through partnerships within ASEAN and beyond, as a contribution to regional stability, prosperity and sustainability. Leaders shared their visions, experiences and best practices on how to promote sustainable development, leveraging on the expertise and technologies of ASEAN Member States and external parties. In these exchanges, a number of views were expressed.

Poverty eradication and narrowing development gaps were identified as key factors that would help ensure greater sustainability in economic growth and development, as were addressing the challenges of malnutrition and stunting, and promoting sustainable agriculture, food security and energy security.

Protection of the environment was likewise underscored as an important goal that needs to be mainstreamed into cooperation on sustainable development, with a focus on promoting sustainable oceans through effective marine debris, garbage and waste management, sustainable fisheries, among other things, and addressing the challenge of climate change through the implementation of the Paris Agreement, and enhancing cooperation on this issue.

Human capital development and capacity-building were seen as important drivers for sustainable development as well as key elements in the promotion of human security and preparing for the 4th Industrial Revolution. Strengthening of MSMEs, start-ups and local enterprises, particularly through greater efforts to promote financial inclusion and greater access to regional and global markets, was perceived as important to ensuring more inclusive growth and empowering communities.

The importance of translating shared visions into practical action, by strengthening relevant existing mechanisms, was emphasised. Promoting trilateral cooperation between ASEAN and two or more external partners to enhance regional cooperation on sustainable development, focusing on concrete projects and building capacities, was cited as one possible modality for realising concrete projects and activities. Public-private partnerships were seen as another.

It was suggested that the recently launched ASEAN Centre for Sustainable Development Studies and Dialogue, as well as other relevant ASEAN Centres in Thailand and in the region, could also play both a supportive and catalytic role in the ongoing efforts of ASEAN and its partners to promote sustainable development cooperation in the region, complementing efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and to attain the Sustainable Development Goals.

The Leaders appreciated Thailand's offer to convene a follow-up meeting on enhancing partnership for sustainable development next year to further discuss this issue.

Overall, the *Special Lunch on Sustainable Development* further reinforced the ASEAN Leaders' Vision Statement on Partnership for Sustainability and the East Asia Summit Leaders' Statement on Partnership for Sustainability, in the spirit of realising a people-centred ASEAN Community that leaves no one behind and looks to the future.

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