

ASEAN + India

3rd ASEAN + India Summit

Chairman's Statement: Deepening ASEAN-India Partnership

Vientiane, 30 November 2004

1. The ASEAN Leaders had a productive meeting with H.E. Dr. Manmohan Singh, Prime Minister of the Republic of India. They congratulated Prime Minister Singh for his assumption of the Prime Ministership, and welcomed him to the ASEAN-India Summit for the first time.
2. We held a productive meeting on various issues of mutual interest, including regional and international political and economic issues, ways to deepen ASEAN-India partnership and the future direction of the relations.
3. We recognise the growing and active role of India in major international economic and political affairs in the United Nations, its agencies and other multilateral fora. We agreed to cooperate in major regional and international fora for mutual benefit and to add a stronger voice and ensure equitable share of benefits for the developing countries. We noted India's foreign policy initiatives to forge closer and friendlier relations with the major powers and others.
4. The Leader of India welcomed the adoption by the ASEAN Leaders of the Vientiane Action Programme (VAP) to realise the goals of the ASEAN Vision 2020 and the Declaration of ASEAN Concord II. India expressed its support to the implementation of activities and projects under the VAP.
5. We acknowledged that the pluralistic and multi-cultural nature of our societies depended on the spirit of tolerance, peaceful co-existence and mutual respect for our diversity. We agreed that strengthening of our relations, rooted in long-standing and close historical and cultural ties, serves the fundamental interests of our peoples.
6. We expressed satisfaction on the progress made in ASEAN-India relations since the last two ASEAN-India Summits held in Cambodia in 2002 and Indonesia in 2003. We signed the "ASEAN-India Partnership for Peace, Progress and Shared Prosperity" and adopted its Plan of Action to expand and deepen our partnership and our cooperation in the new century.
7. We acknowledged that the signing of Partnership, India's accession to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia, the adoption of the ASEAN-India Joint Declaration for Cooperation to Combat International Terrorism reflected our determination and commitment to move forward the relationship in a substantive, comprehensive and purposeful manner contributing to regional peace and stability, and shared economic prosperity and development.
8. We noted with satisfaction the progress made thus far in the negotiations of the ASEAN-India Trade Negotiating Committee to establish an ASEAN-India free trade

area (FTA), which is part of the implementation of the ASEAN-India Framework Agreement on Comprehensive Economic Cooperation signed in Bali last year. We look forward to the early conclusion of these negotiations. We recognise that the ASEAN-India FTA would create new opportunities for strengthening and enhancing economic, trade and investment cooperation in the two regions.

9. We noted that ASEAN and India have agreed to an interim Rules of Origin for Early Harvest Programme (EHP). The Interim Rules of Origin will be based on a general rule of 40% of value-added with the ASEAN-proposed list of minimal processes, subject to reasonably short list of products where product specific rules will be negotiated and mutually agreed in time for the implementation of the EHP by 1 April 2005. The details of the Rules of Origin will be worked out by the ASEAN-India Trade Negotiating Committee.

10. The ASEAN Leaders expressed their sincere appreciation to India for its support and unilateral concessions to the CLMV and hoped that the CLMV would enjoy further continued cooperation and assistance from India with a view to effectively bridging the development gap among ASEAN members and between ASEAN and the outside world. In this connection, India offered to provide concessionary loans for social and development projects.

11. The ASEAN Leaders welcomed the convening of the Third ASEAN-India Business Summit held on 19-21 October 2004 in India and was pleased with the outcomes of the said Summit. We also noted the progress in implementing India's offer on Open Sky policy made at our last Summit in Indonesia.

12. We noted that regional trade arrangements in South, Southeast Asia and East Asia served as building blocks towards wider economic and development cooperation in Asia and acknowledged that ASEAN and India, working in partnership, could contribute immensely to linking these regional trade arrangements together to promote Asia's economic growth and prosperity.

13. The ASEAN Leaders expressed their appreciation to India for its support in the implementation of the projects under the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI), in particular, its support to establish an Entrepreneurship Development Centre (EDC) in each CLMV, aimed at promoting capacity building in the areas of entrepreneurship and skilled labour development, and fostering SMEs, trade and investment in the respective countries and the region. The first EDC was opened in Vientiane during the 10th ASEAN Summit and similar EDCs will be opened in Cambodia, Myanmar and Viet Nam in 2005.

14. The ASEAN Leaders welcomed India's continued support to ASEAN Member Countries in capacity building, particularly human resource development. The ASEAN Leaders welcomed the proposals of the Leader of India to further enhance cooperation in the areas of information and communications technology, space technology and application, including remote sensing, agriculture, and health and pharmaceuticals.

15. The ASEAN Leaders congratulated India for initiating and successfully organising the ASEAN-India Car Rally, which commenced on 22 November 2004 in Guwahati, India and will end in Batam, Indonesia. We officially flagged off the

rally in Vientiane on 30 November 2004 and noted that the rally has already generated public awareness of ASEAN-India relations and would promote connectivity, especially road transport and enhance trade, investment, tourism and people-to-people links between the ASEAN Countries and India. The ASEAN Leaders took note of India's proposal to jointly organise the rally on a regular basis.