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"KEYS ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE 11TH ASEAN SUMMIT IN KUALA LUMPUR"

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Secretary-General of ASEAN

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Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Assalamualaikum and a very good afternoon to you.

I wish to commend ASLI for organising the 3rd ASEAN Leadership Forum. This Forum is indeed very timely and useful in keeping the interested public abreast of developments and progress of ASEAN, particularly in the ever fluid and evolving world order. It would also serve as a useful mechanism for the public to provide their opinions and ideas on ASEAN; their perception on how the Association is doing, how much it has progressed and how it should move forward.

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

2. ASEAN has indeed come a long way from the day it was established. The 11th ASEAN Summit and Related Summits that Malaysia hosted last December in Kuala Lumpur attested to this. The whole affair was a resounding success. The Leaders made important decisions that would have a direct impact on the future of ASEAN as an organization. Among others, they signed the Kuala Lumpur Declaration on the Establishment of the ASEAN Charter, which paves the way for the future enhancement and strengthening of ASEAN as an organization. The document also provided for the appointment of the Eminent Persons Group on the ASEAN Charter. The EPG has been given the mandate to examine and provide practical recommendations on the direction for ASEAN and nature of the ASEAN Charter relevant to the ASEAN Community as envisaged in the Bali Concord II and beyond.

3. In this connection, the EPG will take stock of achievements and progress of ASEAN in its 38 years of experience and existence, the challenges and shortcomings that ASEAN has had to contend with over the years as well as the vision and direction of ASEAN beyond the year 2020. The ASEAN Charter will serve as the legal and institutional framework for ASEAN, aimed at enabling the building of a strong, prosperous, and caring and sharing ASEAN Community that is cohesive, successful and progressing in the 21st century. The work of the EPG is progressing well. The Group is expected to submit its report to the 12th ASEAN Summit in Cebu.

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4. We can recall that in 2003, ASEAN agreed that the envisioned ASEAN Community, to be achieved by 2020, would be supported by three main pillars, which are the ASEAN Security Community, ASEAN Economic Community and ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community. Plans of Action for each of the three pillars have been adopted for the development of these three sub-communities. ASEAN also adopted the Vientiane Action Programme (2004-2010) as an instrument to realise the end goal of the ASEAN Vision and the Declaration of ASEAN Concord II. The VAP focuses on the three pillars and the Narrowing of the Development Gap. The VAP continues the community building efforts carried out under the 1998-2004 Hanoi Plan of Action.

5. The fastest growing pillar appears to be the ASEAN Economic Community. The ASEAN Free Trade Area came into force in January 2005. At the same time, FTA negotiations are also being undertaken with China, Japan, the Republic of Korea, India, Australia and New Zealand. These negotiations are targeted to be completed within 2 years. The United States has also expressed interest to begin FTA negotiations with ASEAN. At the last Summit in Kuala Lumpur, ASEAN Leaders considered the possibility of advancing the target date of achieving the ASEAN Economic Community from 2020 to 2015. In order to do this, ASEAN will need to be bold and visionary in pushing for further and faster integration within ASEAN.

6. The multifaceted challenges that we all face throughout the world makes the common pursuit for security and stability more imperative. In this respect, the ASEAN Security Community has achieved commendable progress. ASEAN has engaged both Dialogue and non-Dialogue Partners in this area of cooperation through the ASEAN Regional Forum. While some countries have acceded to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia, we now see others interested in doing so. This will certainly complement our pursuit of an ASEAN Security Community.

7. The developments and uncertainties in the world today demands an increased level of interdependence among us. These external factors would also assure the active and continuous progress of the ASEAN Security Community and ASEAN Economic Community. The promotion of the third pillar, the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community, however, would have to come from within ASEAN.

8. ASEAN Member Countries have come to realise that despite all the progress that ASEAN has achieved in the political, security and economic areas over the past 38 years, ASEAN remains a little known entity to its peoples at large. In spite of the many activities having been undertaken in this area under the Hanoi Plan of Action, a lot more clearly needs to be done. ASEAN thus has taken the decision to embark on efforts to increase public awareness of the organization and how, over the years, it has affected the lives of its peoples. As a start, on ASEAN's 38th anniversary on 8 August 2005, ASEAN Member Countries undertook a concerted effort towards achieving this objective through various measures including televising speeches by the respective ASEAN Leaders on the eve of the anniversary and through the raising of the ASEAN flag in all ASEAN capitals.

9. In this spirit as well, Malaysia, as Chairman of the 39th ASEAN Standing Committee, decided to turn the focus onto the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community by adopting a people-oriented approach as its main agenda, with focus on students and youths. The theme of the 11th ASEAN Summit - "One Vision, One Identity, One Community" – reflects this aim and ASEAN's long-term goal. At Malaysia's initiative, the ASEAN Leaders agreed, at the Summit, with the proposal to organize ASEAN university games, youth peace corps, computer games and science Olympiad. The ASEAN Leaders also recognized that civil society would increasingly play an important role as ASEAN develops a people-centred ASEAN Community. In this respect, the Leaders supported the ASEAN Civil Society Conference, which was held for the first time on the sidelines of the 11th ASEAN Summit and Related Summits. The ASEAN Civil Society Conference will be held annually henceforth and its outcome reported to the Leaders.

10. The recent Summit saw another achievement in that ASEAN has matured from being a donor-recipient entity to one with ownership of its community building efforts through the endorsement of the ASEAN Development Fund by the Leaders. The Fund also drew contributions from some of the Dialogue Partners, namely India and Japan, which announced pledges during the recent Summits. Malaysia herself contributed US\$ 1.6 million to the Fund. The sum US\$1 million is contributed by each ASEAN Member Country to the Fund.

11. At the recent Summit, Malaysia also announced a contribution of US\$500,000 to support the smart schools project in the CLMV countries for the period 2006-2008. Through this proposal, we aim to provide ICT facilities and human resource development to assist the CLMV countries in capacity building. Including this amount, Malaysia's contribution to the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) since its inception in 2002 now totals RM14.4 million or USD3.8 million, making Malaysia the second largest contributor after Singapore. At the same time, we have also contributed a little over RM39 million or USD10.3 million to the IAI Work Plan through the Malaysian Technical Cooperation Programme.

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12. ASEAN was indeed formed on the basis of certain fundamental principles namely aimed at promoting peace, stability, security and prosperity in the region. Beginning with five countries, the Association has grown to ten countries, and now all ten are moving towards one ASEAN Community by the year 2020.

13. As ASEAN moves towards this goal, it is also looking at applying the same principles beyond ASEAN. We are interested in the development of an East Asian community, together with China, Japan and the Republic of Korea. The East Asian community was first developed as one of the recommendations of the East Asia Study Group in 2002 and later taken on board by the ASEAN Plus Three countries. This vision is further documented in the Kuala Lumpur Declaration on the ASEAN Plus Three Summit signed by the thirteen Leaders last December. The same model of the three fundamental pillars adopted for the ASEAN Community is also considered for the East Asian community.

14. While the concept is still at a very early stage, we believe that the various cooperative activities undertaken under the ASEAN Plus Three framework will serve as building blocks towards bringing us closer to this long-term goal. In this respect, the East Asia Summit is vital for the creation of an environment conducive for this purpose. This brings me to the next achievement of the 11th ASEAN Summit and Related Summits --- the successful convening and outcome of the first East Asia Summit.

15. The EAS brought together 16 countries with diverse interests but bound by geographical proximity to ASEAN in some ways to discuss geopolitical and geostrategic issues which can be vital for confidence building, particularly given the prevailing security challenges facing the world today. By signing the Kuala Lumpur Declaration on the East Asia Summit, the Leaders agreed that the EAS would be a forum for dialogue on broad strategic, political and economic issues of common interest. While the ASEAN Plus Three process will be the main vehicle in building the East Asian community, the EAS would play a significant and complementary role in community building in the region. We hope that the regular interaction among the Leaders would promote cooperation and amity and facilitate the realisation of a peaceful, stable and prosperous East Asia.

16. The EAS also precipitated the accession of Australia to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia. I believe that this is a very important development which would further enhance peace, security and stability in the region. It has been ASEAN's policy to encourage as many countries as possible outside Southeast Asia to accede to the TAC in order to promote the TAC as a diplomatic instrument governing inter-state relations among ASEAN countries and between ASEAN and non-Southeast Asian countries. To date, seven of the ten ASEAN Dialogue Partners have signed the TAC. I am hopeful that the remaining Dialogue Partners and other countries would express their desire to do the same in the future.

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17. The 11th ASEAN Summit and Related Summits had also served to fortify relations between ASEAN and its Dialogue Partners. All the Dialogue Partners involved reaffirmed their commitment to ASEAN and ASEAN's efforts at community building and narrowing the development gap. The Dialogue Partners also stated their continued recognition and support for ASEAN's role in the driver's seat.

18. Various initiatives and proposals were adopted or considered by the ASEAN Plus One Summits, aimed at strengthening and consolidating ASEAN's relations with the Dialogue Partners. Notable among these are the following:

- ASEAN and China agreed to commemorate 15 years of relations in 2006. Many commemorative activities will be implemented throughout the year, including the convening of an ASEAN-China Commemorative Summit. ASEAN is also planning to celebrate 10 years of ASEAN Plus Three cooperation and 30 years of dialogue relations with the United States and the European Union in 2007.
- For the first time, ASEAN and Japan came out with a Joint Statement for their Summit, which outlined many new initiatives and measures for a stronger strategic partnership.
- ASEAN and the Republic of Korea adopted the Plan of Action to Implement the Joint Declaration on Comprehensive ASEAN-ROK Cooperation Partnership which will give structure and allow us to gauge the progress of cooperation as well as periodically improve and enhance cooperation between the two sides. ASEAN has developed Plans of Action or Work Programme with almost all its Dialogue Partners. At the 39th AMM/PMC this coming July, we are scheduled extend this arrangement to the US and Canada as well. These Plans of Action are drawn up in line with the VAP.
- ASEAN and India recognized each other's potential economic benefits and agreed to strengthen their economic partnership through expediting the conclusion of their FTA negotiations.

19. There was also the common outcome in all the eight Summits, which was the recognition to pay immediate attention to the impact of the unstable world oil prices and the increasing global threat of avian flu. Collectively, the Leaders agreed on the need to build upon, improve and enhance existing mechanisms or create new mechanisms, where necessary, to deal with these two issues in the energy and health sectors.

20. In the energy sector, the Leaders agreed to work together to ensure energy security in the region through, inter alia, energy efficiency and conservation, alternative sources of energy such as bio-fuels and hydroelectric, and oil stockpiling. Meanwhile, in the health sector, the Leaders agreed for cooperation through having a common regional approach and sharing of resources, as well as creating a stockpile

of medicines. In this respect, Malaysia announced its intention to establish the Regional Avian Influenza Research and Reference Centre (NAIRRC) and the Regional WHO Collaborating Centre for Influenza. The East Asia Summit also issued the East Asia Summit Declaration on Avian Influenza Prevention, Control and Response.

21. The 11th ASEAN Summit and Related Summits also recorded history with the convening of the Inaugural ASEAN-Russia Summit. The Summit not only elevated the level of ASEAN-Russia relations to the highest level, it also produced two major documents, which are the ASEAN-Russia Joint Declaration on Progressive and Comprehensive Partnership and the Comprehensive Programme of Action to Promote Cooperation between ASEAN and Russia for the period 2005-2015. The Leaders also endorsed the signing of the ASEAN-Russia Agreement on Economic and Development Cooperation by the Foreign Ministers prior to the Summit.

22. With these outcome documents, ASEAN and Russia relations are poised to enter into more substantive cooperation with activities to be undertaken in various sectors including traditional and non-traditional security, health, energy, tourism, agriculture, education, disaster management and emergency response, human resource development and people-to-people interaction. Russia is an important strategic partner. I believe regular exchanges at the highest level between ASEAN and Russia would contribute to further strengthening the peace, stability, security and prosperity of the region, in particular, and the world at large. Malaysia favours the idea of making the ASEAN-Russia Summit a regular event.

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23. The 11th ASEAN Summit and Related Summits have been a success in many ways. There was the full participation of all the Leaders concerned. This reflects their commitment towards and support for ASEAN and the principles it stands by. From the feedback that we have received, the other Leaders and delegates viewed the 11th ASEAN Summit and Related Summits a success.

24. I am confident that the 11th ASEAN Summit and Related Summits have further advanced ASEAN's objectives and interests. ASEAN will indeed be able to continue forging ahead towards achieving its objectives and becoming a regional force which will continue to contribute to the improvement of the standard of living of its peoples as well as contribute to the general peace, stability, security and prosperity of the region and the world at large.

25. I am certain your discussions over the past two days have been very useful and would add greater value to the efforts in bringing ASEAN closer towards reaching these goals.

Thank you.