

## Joint Media Statement

The 5<sup>th</sup> Session of the ASEAN Community Statistical System (ACSS) Committee

3-5 November 2015, Cyberjaya, Malaysia

*The 5<sup>th</sup> Session of the ACSS Committee, hosted by Department of Statistics Malaysia (DOS Malaysia), was held on 3-5 November 2015. **Datuk Dr. Abdul Rahman Hasan**, Chief Statistician of DOS Malaysia chaired the meeting with **Dr. Samaychanh Boupha** of Lao Statistics Bureau as the co-chair.*

### Introduction

1. We, the Heads of the National Statistical Office (NSO) of the ASEAN Member States (AMS) gather today in Cyberjaya, Malaysia to reaffirm our mission to produce relevant, timely and comparable statistics towards the vision of a responsive ACSS providing high quality statistics in support of the establishment of the ASEAN Community.
2. We support enhancing statistical capacity of the AMS and ASEAN Secretariat to better meet the challenges of a more diverse and more detailed aggregated data requirements as ASEAN integration deepens and as the effective monitoring of regional integration remains paramount.

### Institutional Strengthening, Enhancement of ACSS and its Sustainability

3. We welcome with appreciation the acknowledgement of the ACSS Committee's inclusion as a sectoral body in the ASEAN Charter, as adopted by the Committee of Permanent Representatives to ASEAN in September 2015. We will continue to uphold our role in the ACSS in support of informed and evidence-based decision and policy making in ASEAN.
4. We note with satisfaction the efforts of the NSOs in establishing and adopting frameworks and institutional mechanisms to further strengthen and enhance the ACSS, including the review and amendment of statistics law in some of the AMS and the development and alignment of the National Strategy for the Development of Statistics in support of the initiatives in the ACSS Strategic Plan 2016-2025.
5. We welcome the efforts to implement the ACSS Code of Practice (CoP) on Institutional Environment, Statistical Process and Statistical Output as important means of ensuring trust, accountability and highest professional standards in the development, production, dissemination and communication of ASEAN statistics. We are encouraged by the pilot self-assessment exercise on the Institutional Environment dimension of the ACSS CoP undertaken by all the NSOs. We look forward to the self-assessment of the Statistical Process and Statistical Output dimensions of the ACSS CoP, and reaffirm our commitment to adhere to the UN Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics as upheld by the key principles of the ACSS CoP.
6. We are pleased to endorse the ACSS Strategic Plan 2016-2025 in supporting the call by the Committee of the Whole that all the ASEAN Economic Community sectoral bodies extend their strategic plans to 2025. The 10-year ACSS Strategic Plan 2016-2025 builds

on the key strategic goals and initiatives of the 5-year ACSS Strategic Plan 2016-2020 adopted at the 4<sup>th</sup> Session of the ACSS Committee in October 2014. In addition, the ACSS Strategic Plan 2016-2025 recognises the need for a review of the Broad Framework for the Sustainable Development of ASEAN Statistics to include new data requirements identified by the ASEAN Community, the need for the provision of more detailed aggregated data in support of regional policy making, as well as the importance of international statistical developments in the areas of the sustainable development goals (SDG), open data, big data, and the use of geospatial data. We take note of the urgency for the countries to provide comments on the initial list of SDG indicators.

### **Improvement of the Response to Greater ASEAN Data Needs**

7. We are mindful of the growing demand and emerging data needs in the ASEAN as well as in the global community. We fully support the importance of statistical information in monitoring and assessing the impact of the initiatives drawn in the ASEAN Community Blueprints. We encourage support to the endeavours of the UN Statistical Commission, as the highest body in the international statistical system, on the broader measures of progress, including the framework for post-2015 development agenda and other emerging issues. Towards this end, the Committee appeals for strong cooperation and coordination within the National Statistical System (NSS) in the implementation of ASEAN Statistical Indicators (ASI) Consolidated Template. The ASI Consolidated Template is updated regularly to effectively respond to current and emerging data needs arising from the ASEAN Community Post-2015 Vision, Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity, the ASEAN Framework Agreement on Equitable Economic Development and post-2015 development agenda on SDG.
8. We appreciate that an efficient and responsive ACSS requires communication and consultation between data users and producers at the national and regional levels to determine statistical priorities of the ASEAN Community Blueprints.

### **Enhancement of Dissemination, Communication, Visibility, and Use of ASEAN Statistics**

9. In our efforts to promote the visibility and expand the use of ASEAN statistics, we are pleased to endorse the ACSS Communication Strategy. We acknowledge the leadership of BPS-Statistics Indonesia in the development of the Strategy as we constantly highlight the need for collective action to gain better support and investment to further statistical development. We appreciate the determination of the ACSS to enhance the communication of ASEAN statistics through the use of data messaging and data visualisation tools, such as infographics; and the appropriate issuance of press releases at the national and regional levels.
10. We note the progress in the development of Glossary of Terms for Laymen to be published at the ASEANstats webpage. We expect that the Glossary will promote greater appreciation, understanding and use of ASEAN statistics among our major regional stakeholders and the data users in general.
11. We recognise the importance of communicating the outcomes of the ACSS Committee Meetings and the need to develop further the implementation plan.

### **Catching Up and Narrowing Development Gap**

12. We are grateful to the EU-COMPASS Project in strengthening the statistical system of AMS particularly Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Viet Nam (CLMV) in the areas of International Merchandise Trade Statistics, Statistics of International Trade in Services (SITS) and Foreign Direct Investment Statistics (FDIS). We also appreciate the support provided by EU-COMPASS to CLMV under the access to higher education in Statistics programme, in collaboration with the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA).
13. We take note of the efforts of the AMS in furthering the ASEAN-Help-ASEAN initiative in capacity building activities for CLMV. In particular, we express our gratitude to DOS Malaysia, Bank Indonesia, and Bank of Thailand for providing resource persons in the FDIS and SITS workshops this year; and BPS-Statistics Indonesia and PSA for the first peer review of the NSS exercise conducted at the National Institute of Statistics Cambodia this year under PARIS 21. We also appreciate BPS-Statistics Indonesia, DOS Malaysia, PSA, Singapore DOS, NSO Thailand and General Statistics Office of Viet Nam for their assistance in providing training on infographics to Cambodia, Lao PDR and Myanmar this year. We encourage stronger collaboration between the sub-regional groups in forming a pool of regional experts in specific areas of statistical priority. We appreciate the ASEAN Secretariat's assistance in facilitating and mobilising knowledge, technical, and financial resources for the CLMV from development partners.
14. We value our cooperation with other international organisations namely the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), ASEAN Australia Development Program (AADCP) Phase II, ASEAN Australia New Zealand Free Trade Area (AANZFTA) Economic Cooperation Work Programme, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), International Labour Organisation (ILO), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), International Monetary Fund (IMF), Eurostat and other development partners in our pursuit of quality and timely ASEAN statistical products and services. The Meeting calls for development partners to continue their technical assistance for narrowing development gaps in statistical fields especially in the CLMV.

### **Hosting of the Meeting**

15. We sincerely thank the Government of Malaysia, through the DOS Malaysia, for its strong support to the enhancement of ACSS and its warm hospitality and excellent arrangements during this 3-day event.
16. We look forward to the 6<sup>th</sup> Session of the ACSS Committee, to be chaired and hosted by Lao Statistics Bureau in Vientiane, Lao PDR in November 2016.

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**ASEAN Community Statistical System (ACSS) Committee**

1. BRUNEI DARUSSALAM: **Mr. HJ ABD AMIN BIN HJ HASHIM**
2. KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA: **Mrs. HANG LINA**
3. REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA: **Dr. SURYAMIN**
4. LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC: **Dr. SAMAYCHANH BOUPHA**
5. MALAYSIA: **DATUK Dr. ABDUL RAHMAN HASAN**
6. THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR: **Dr. WAH WAH MAUNG**
7. REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES: **Mr. CANDIDO JOVE ASTROLOGO, JR**
8. REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE: **Mr. TANG HSIU CHIN**
9. KINGDOM OF THAILAND: **Ms. NUANNAPA THANASAK**
10. THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIET NAM: **Mr. PHAM QUANG VINH**
11. ASEAN SECRETARIAT: **Dr. AHMAD ZAFARULLAH**

Cyberjaya, 05 November 2015