



JOINT MEDIA STATEMENT

The Eighth Session of the ASEAN Community Statistical System Committee 9-11 October 2018, Singapore

1. The Eighth Session of the ASEAN Community Statistical System (ACSS) Committee, or ACSS8, hosted by the Singapore Department of Statistics, was held on 9 to 11 October 2018 in Singapore. Mr. Lam Yi Young, Deputy Secretary of the Ministry of Trade and Industry, Singapore, delivered the welcome remarks. The Session was chaired by Ms. Wong Wee Kim, Chief Statistician of the Singapore Department of Statistics. Ms. Wanpen Poonwong, Deputy Director General of the Thailand National Statistical Office, served as the Co-chairperson.
2. Aligned with the overall ASEAN Singapore 2018 tagline of *“Resilient & Innovative”*, and as part of our continuous commitment to further enhance regional statistical cooperation and respond proactively to emerging statistical requirements, we adopted the following theme for our 2018 ACSS work programme:

“Innovation in Statistics Collection, Compilation, Dissemination and Communication to Meet Increasing Data Requirements of the ASEAN Community”

Key Deliverables of the 2018 ACSS Work Programme

3. In meeting the increasing statistical requirements of ASEAN regional policy makers for monitoring ASEAN regional integration, we continued our statistical programmes aimed at providing timely and comparable international merchandise trade statistics, foreign direct investment statistics and international trade in services statistics. We also endorsed the multi-year work plans of the recently established ACSS Working Group on System of National Account and Working Group on ASEAN Sustainable Development Goal indicators.
4. In addition, we adopted the ACSS Protocol for New Data Request from ASEAN Sectoral Bodies to guide the prioritisation of new statistical indicator requirements. Due consideration was given to the statistical capacity of ASEAN Members States and the allocation of resources for provision of statistics in a timely manner.
5. We endorsed the updated list of ASEAN Statistical Indicators to incorporate the new priorities from the various ASEAN Sectoral Bodies, including new areas of statistics on ASEAN Sustainable Development Goal indicators and System of National Account indicators. The ASEAN Statistical Indicators are regularly reviewed to address emerging statistical requirements of key regional data users and ensure the continued relevance of statistical indicators compiled by the ACSS.
6. In recognising the considerable benefits of more Open Data practices through easier access to official statistics for informed policy planning, decision making, research and analyses at the ASEAN regional and national levels, we adopted the Concept Note on



the ACSS Open Data Initiative for Statistics. The concept note will serve as a reference in implementing Open Data Initiative initially at the regional level and further assess possible implementation at the national level.

7. We noted with appreciation the development of the “ASEAN Statistical Highlights 2018” publication with good visualisations and storytelling elements to better communicate to users our key regional statistics. The special publication, for distribution at the 33rd ASEAN Summit in November 2018, will further enhance the visibility and usefulness of ASEAN statistics. We also welcomed the launching of a new ASEAN Statistics category in the SingStat Mobile Application by the Singapore Department of Statistics. Users can now access widely-used ASEAN statistics while on-the-go through the SingStat Mobile App which is available for free download on mobile devices.

Key Achievements at the National Level

8. We commended the efforts of the ASEAN Member States in striving to meet increasing data requirements at the national level, through the development of new indicators and the further strengthening of statistical capacity and cooperation. Recent initiatives included:
 - i) Brunei Darussalam’s continued efforts to ensure efficiency of statistical processes through the National Statistical Committee focussing on optimising integration between ministries and government departments in the collection, compilation and dissemination of quality, current and timely statistics;
 - ii) Cambodia’s conduct of cascading forum on the outcomes of the ACSS meetings to Cambodia National Statistical System;
 - iii) Indonesia’s activities in preparation of the National Strategy for the Development of Statistics to (i) create a more efficient, effective and reliable National Statistical System involving stakeholders at the national and provincial levels, and (ii) meet the challenges of the Fourth Industrial Revolution and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Indonesia;
 - iv) Lao PDR’s (i) revised statistical law to support increasing data needs for planning and policy making, (ii) newly approved strategy for Sustainable Development of National Statistical System 2016-2025 and Vision 2030, and (iii) enhanced monitoring of the National Socio-Economic Development Plans and SDGs with strong mandate given to the Lao Statistics Bureau;
 - v) Malaysia’s establishment of a Technical Committee to facilitate the coordination of SDG matters at the national level, and efforts to accelerate the implementation through a) strengthening the institutional mechanisms for SDG implementation; b) conducting studies on data readiness and gap analysis; c) initiating data collection; d) reviewing achievement; and e) monitoring and reporting;



- vi) Myanmar's enforcement of the statistics law and regulations, promotion of user-provider relations and statistics literacy, improvement of statistics cooperation mechanism, implementation of the National Strategy for Development Statistics Action Plan, and development of the National Indicator Framework for Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan;
 - vii) Philippines' adoption of the Philippine Statistical Development Programme 2018-2023 which laid out (i) the priority medium term statistical development programmes, (ii) the SDG flow of information from data source to submission for global monitoring, (iii) the development of the initial list of core regional indicators for subnational monitoring and the localisation of the SDGs, and (iv) the various advocacy programmes on statistics;
 - viii) Singapore's development of new indicators and more disaggregated statistics for policy studies and analyses, such as (i) proportion of online retail sales which provides useful insights on online retail activity in the digital economy; and (ii) new services components in Singapore's balance of payments and annual trade in services statistics;
 - ix) Thailand's development of its first National Water Information Database to support government decision for water resources development and management planning, and successful conduct of survey on water use, drought and flood area using technology; and
 - x) Viet Nam's (i) development of an ASEAN Indicator System to improve data availability, and (ii) finalisation of the Viet Nam SDG indicators as the basis for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the Viet Nam SDGs.
9. We welcomed the innovations in data collection, compilation, dissemination and communication that the ASEAN Member States are considering, in preparation for their upcoming Population and Housing Census, Economic Census and Agriculture Census. In particular, we are encouraged by the adoption of register-based approach that maximises the use of administrative data, the use of Big Data such as geospatial information and mobile positioning data. We also acknowledged the efforts in providing respondents with a more positive survey experience via multi-modal data collection. We also welcomed the plans by ASEAN Member States to communicate and disseminate Census findings in an engaging manner through data visualisation.
10. With the adoption of the Monitoring and Evaluation System of the ACSS Strategic Plan 2016-2025 at the Seventh Session of the ACSS Committee in October 2017, the first round of the assessment was reported in 2018. We are encouraged by the preliminary self-assessment results and look forward to continued use of the tool to monitor progress in the outcomes of regional statistical cooperation. The 2018 results will form the baseline for future annual progress monitoring.
11. Following the establishment of the Terms of Reference for Cooperation in Statistical Information Sharing between the ACSS and the National Bureau of Statistics of the



People's Republic of China, we noted the successful release of the third issue of the Statistical Yearbook of China-ASEAN at the Fourth China-ASEAN Statistics Forum held on 13 September 2018 in Nanning, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, China.

Appreciation for Development Partners and International Organisations

12. We appreciated the contribution of the European Union (EU)-ASEAN Capacity Building Project for Monitoring Integration Progress and Statistics (COMPASS) in providing Technical Assistance to support the ACSS and ASEAN integration monitoring. The EU-ASEAN COMPASS, which commenced in 2014, will conclude in December 2018. The project has contributed to strengthening the ACSS institutional framework, improving the availability and comparability of key statistics for monitoring ASEAN regional integration, narrowing the gaps in statistical capacity between ASEAN Member States, and strengthening the capacity of the ASEAN Integration Monitoring Directorate to monitor the progress of ASEAN regional integration.
13. We welcomed the upcoming support from the ASEAN Regional Integration Support by the EU (ARISE) Plus Programme for initiatives in the ACSS work plans. Expected outcomes of the programme include further strengthening of the coordination function of the ACSS and improvements to national and regional statistical capacities to meet increasing statistical demands from ASEAN Sectoral Bodies.
14. We thanked the International Organisations, namely the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), International Labour Organisation (ILO) and Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) for their participation and informative sharing of experiences and best practices on conducting the Population and Housing Census, Economic Census or Agriculture Census. We appreciated their support on our journey as a responsive ACSS providing relevant, reliable and timely statistics in support of the ASEAN Community.

The Handover of the ACSS Chairmanship

15. We expressed our sincere gratitude to the Government of Singapore, through the Singapore Department of Statistics, for its excellent chairmanship, warm hospitality and impeccable arrangements for the Eighth Session of the ACSS Committee.
16. We welcomed the ACSS Chairmanship of the Thailand National Statistical Office in 2019.

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ASEAN Community Statistical System (ACSS) Committee

1. BRUNEI DARUSSALAM: **Ms. Mariah Yahya**
2. KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA: **Mrs. Hang Lina**
3. REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA: **Mr. Mohammad Ari Nugraha**
4. LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC: **Dr. Samaychanh Boupha**
5. MALAYSIA: **Dr. Mohd Uzir Mahidin**
6. THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR: **Mr. Than Zaw**
7. REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES: **Ms. Minerva Eloisa Peña Esquivias**
8. REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE: **Ms. Wong Wee Kim**
9. KINGDOM OF THAILAND: **Ms. Wanpen Poonwong**
10. THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIET NAM: **Mr. Nguyen Bich Lam**
11. ASEAN SECRETARIAT: **Dr. Ahmad Zafarullah**

Singapore, 11 October 2018