

Speech at the 5th High-Level Brainstorming Dialogue on Enhancing Complementarities between the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

(Delivered by Mr. Ke Yousheng,
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Mr. Chair, Distinguished delegations,
Ladies and gentlemen,

It's my pleasure to participate in today's dialogue. I would like to thank Thailand and UNESCAP for co-hosting this event, and I wish it a fruitful outcome.

Poverty eradication and people's livelihood has always been top priorities for the Chinese Communist Party and the Chinese government. In the past 8 years, nearly 100 million impoverished people have all been lifted above the current poverty line - a complete victory in eradicating absolute poverty never achieved in China's history. We successfully met the poverty alleviation target set out in the 2030 Agenda 10 years ahead of schedule. In total, 770 million rural residents have shaken off poverty over the past 40 years, accounting for more than 70% of the world total. This is a significant contribution to

global development and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. How did China achieve this? I have 5 thoughts to share.

First, integrated planning. Poverty alleviation has always topped the agenda of the Chinese Communist Party and the government. It's incorporated into the national development plan and the work program of governments at all levels with sound mechanism. The government coordinates enormous financial resources with a strong focus on poverty alleviation, having pooled earmarked funds up to 1.6 trillion yuan over the past 8 years.

Second, a people-oriented approach. The well-being of people has been always at the center of our work. The commitment is leaving no one, no village behind. With great efforts, China has established the world's biggest education system, social security system, and medical system. The average life expectancy of Chinese people has increased from 35 to 77 years.

Third, whole-of-society mobilization. The government, the private sector, and the communities are making concerted efforts in close partnership. In recent years, digital technology boosted e-commerce, which operates in a cross-sector and cross-region manner. With it, agricultural products found better markets, domestically and even abroad.

Fourth, targeted strategy. Policies are tailored to different

villages, households and individuals. Capacity building has made poverty alleviation a “blood-making” process instead of “blood-transfusion”. We stepped up efforts to improve education in poor areas, so that poverty caused by lack of education doesn’t carry onto the next generation.

Fifth, dedication and commitment. Nationwide we have set up 255,000 task forces, sent 3 million government workers to poor rural areas, selected 2 million officials on the county level and millions more on the village level to fight against poverty. Among them, 1800 officials devoted their lives to poverty eradication cause.

China’s achievement in poverty alleviation has not come easily. It’s a result of the joint efforts and hardworking of the CPC, the government and the people. Going forward, China is entering into a new development phase. We are initiating a dovetailing drive of rural vitalization to better promote quality and sustainable development.

Ladies and gentlemen,

As close neighbors and indispensable partners for common prosperity, China and ASEAN have built strong ties of unity, friendship and cooperation, among which poverty alleviation and sustainable development sit on the top. China has been the biggest trade partner of ASEAN for 12 years straight, and now

ASEAN takes over from the European Union as the biggest trader partner of China. Between us, connectivity building, economic cooperation and people-to-people exchange is strengthening. Our fruitful cooperation has significantly improved our people's livelihood, and made huge contribution to poverty alleviation. Facing the challenge of COVID-19, we help and support each other in defense. In this regard, China prioritized the supply and donation of vaccines to ASEAN countries, including Thailand, Cambodia, the Laos, the Philippines and Indonesia.

We also carried out a number of cooperation programs for development, including the China-ASEAN Forum on Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction for 14 consecutive years, the village-based poverty alleviation pioneering projects in Cambodia, Myanmar and the Laos, IAI capacity building projects tailored to the needs of CLMV countries as well as projects in areas of health, agriculture, environment, disaster management, connectivity, digital economy, etc.

2021 marks the 30th Anniversary of the establishment of China-ASEAN Year of Sustainable Development Cooperation. Domestically China will kick off the implementation of the 14th Five-Year Plan, while ASEAN will continue to forge ahead in line with the ASEAN Community Vision 2025. Let's join hand and build a closer community with a shared future, usher in the

next 30 years with brighter prospects, and better implement the 2030 Agenda!