

**REMARKS BY
H.E. Dr. Kao Kim Hourn, Secretary-General of ASEAN**

**At the 7th High-Level Brainstorming Dialogue on Enhancing Complementarities
between the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and the United Nations 2030
Agenda for Sustainable Development**

***Policy Perspectives - Enhancing Complementarities between the ASEAN
Community Vision 2025 and the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable
Development***

31 March 2023, Bangkok, Thailand

Excellency, Mr. Don Pramudwinai, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Thailand,

Excellency, Ms. Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana, Under-Secretary General of the United Nations and Executive Secretary of ESCAP,

Excellencies, ministers, and high-level officials representing the ASEAN Member States,

Representatives from ASEAN's Dialogue, Development and Sectoral Partners, UN Agencies, and other external partners,

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Good afternoon.

1. I congratulate Excellency Mr. Don Pramudwinai and Excellency Ms. Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana as co-chairs of the 7th High-Level Brainstorming Dialogue. Through the years, the HLBD has consistently provided the much-needed platform for high-level policy discussions on strategies to advance sustainable development cooperation in ASEAN.
2. I commend the strong leadership of Thailand as the ASEAN Coordinator for Sustainable Development Cooperation. Earlier today, the 2nd ASEAN Ministerial Dialogue on Accelerating Actions to Achieve the SDGs was successfully conducted, and co-chaired by Thailand and the Philippines. The joint statement from the Ministerial Dialogue underscored the urgency for stronger cooperation among stakeholders and better policy coherence at regional and national levels in order to achieve the SDGs.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

3. Let me offer some views on enhancing the complementarities between the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development.

4. First, with seven years left before 2030, it is imperative that we accelerate actions to achieve the SDGs, which includes recovering lost ground due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
5. There is much optimism for the region's strong recovery. On the economic front, foreign direct investment inflows rebounded in 2021 to US\$174 billion, returning to pre-pandemic levels. The IMF also projected that ASEAN's economy will grow by 6.0% in 2023, outpacing the projected global GDP growth rate.
6. Our challenge is to translate the economic gains into tangible and positive impact for the peoples of ASEAN, especially those hit hardest by the pandemic – the most vulnerable and marginalised in our society.
7. In this regard, a whole-of-ASEAN approach is imperative where inclusive and sustainable development principles and approaches are integrated in sectoral work plans and strategies.
8. On this, I echo the key message from the *3rd ASEAN Forum on SDG with National Development Planning Agencies* held yesterday, which called on doubling down efforts particularly on strengthening data systems and institutions, investing in climate action, and pursuing innovative and sustainable financing for SDG implementation, among others.
9. Second, I wish to touch on the *ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP)* which reinforces ASEAN Centrality in implementing the *Complementarities Initiative*. ASEAN plays a central and strategic role in a closely integrated and interconnected Indo-Pacific region that we envisage as a region of development and prosperity for all.
10. Mainstreaming the Outlook is one of Indonesia's priorities as the ASEAN Chair for 2023, where SDGs serves as one of its main pillars. This resonates well with the ASEAN Chair's theme of "ASEAN Matters: Epicentrum of Growth"
11. The AOIP outlined specific areas of cooperation, including on SDGs, that provides a strong platform for broader cooperation with ASEAN's partners in the region and beyond. Through the AOIP, ASEAN can further demonstrate its commitment to sustainable development, and enhance its leadership at the international and global community.
12. Third, ASEAN is currently in the process of shaping the ASEAN Community Post-2025 Vision. An overarching theme prevailing in the ongoing discussions is achieving sustainability in all its dimensions and an ASEAN Community that is green, equitable, and adaptive to new and emerging challenges, as well as thrives, healthy and resilient for the current and future generations.
13. I would like to encourage us all to maximise the Post-2025 Visioning exercise to ensure that inclusive and sustainable development goes beyond achieving the 2030 SDGs targets, and this should serve as a prevailing principle and guide for continued community building efforts in the region.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

14. In closing, it is with much hope and confidence that we continue to maximise this platform to exchange lessons learnt and best practices. More importantly, let us seize the opportunity to reaffirm our partnerships to accelerate the achievement of the SDGs.

Thank you.