

PRESS RELEASE

Brussels, 21 November 1978
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JOINT DECLARATION

A meeting at Ministerial level between the European Communities and their Member States and the Association of South East Asian Nations was held in Brussels on 20 - 21 November 1978.

Those participating in the meeting were:

On the ASEAN side:

His Excellency Mr Mochtar Kusumaatmadja
Minister for Foreign Affairs of Indonesia

His Excellency Tengku Ahmad Rithauddeen
Minister for Foreign Affairs of Malaysia

His Excellency General Carlos P. Romulo
Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Philippines

His Excellency Mr S. Rajaratnam
Minister for Foreign Affairs of Singapore and

His Excellency Dr Upadit Pachariyangkun
Minister for Foreign Affairs of Thailand

On the European side:

His Excellency Mr Hans-Dietrich Genscher
Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic
of Germany and President of the Council

His Excellency Mr H. Simonet
Minister for Foreign Affairs of Belgium

His Excellency Mr Henning Christophersen
Minister for Foreign Affairs of Denmark

His Excellency Dr Otto Graf Lambsdorff
Minister for Economic Affairs of the Federal Republic of Germany

His Excellency Dr Klaus von Dohnanyi
Minister of State of the Federal Republic of Germany

His Excellency Mr Louis de Guiringaud
Minister for Foreign Affairs of France

His Excellency Mr M. O'Kennedy
Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ireland

His Excellency Mr Angelo Sanza
Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of Italy

His Excellency Mr Gaston Thorn
Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Luxembourg

His Excellency Dr C.A. Van der Klaauw
Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands

His Excellency The Rt. Hon. Dr David Owen
Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs

His Excellency Mr Roy Jenkins
President of the Commission of the European Communities

His Excellency Mr Wilhelm Haferkamp
Vice-President of the Commission of the European Communities

His Excellency Mr Mochtar Kusumaatmadja acted as
spokesman for ASEAN

His Excellency Mr Hans-Dietrich Genscher and His Excellency
Mr Roy Jenkins acted as spokesmen for the European
Communities and their Member States

His Excellency Datuk Ali Bin Abdullah, the Secretary-
General of the ASEAN Secretariat was present.

The ASEAN Foreign Ministers and the Foreign Ministers of the Member States of the European Community exchanged views on current regional and international issues and developments. They reaffirmed their commitment to world peace, international cooperation and understanding, economic development and social justice. The discussions took place in a spirit of friendliness and understanding.

The Foreign Ministers of the Member States of the European Community welcomed the favourable development of ASEAN as a regional organization committed to economic growth, social progress and cultural development. They recognized ASEAN as a factor of stability and balance which contributes to the maintenance of peace in South-East Asia.

The Foreign Ministers of the Member States of the European Community reaffirmed their support for ASEAN's efforts to achieve self-reliance, progress and stability on the basis of economic, social and cultural cooperation.

The Foreign Ministers of the member states of ASEAN recognized the work of European integration and the role played by the Europe of the Nine as a factor of economic and political stability and as an element of balance in international relations. They welcomed the outward-looking character of this integration exemplified by the desire of the member states to cooperate with ASEAN.

The Foreign Ministers of the Member States of the European Community and ASEAN underlined the importance which they attach to the pursuance and development of relations and reaffirmed their common will to broaden the scope of their cooperation on the basis of equality, respect and mutual benefit. They also agreed that this cooperation should serve their people by promoting greater prosperity, social justice and human rights.

The Foreign Ministers of the Member States of the European Community expressed their support for ASEAN's efforts to establish cooperation and peaceful relations among all countries of South-East Asia. They also welcomed the endeavours of the member states of ASEAN to develop their relations beyond the South-East Asian region.

The Foreign Ministers of ASEAN and of the Member States of the European Community viewed with serious concern the unabated flow of Indochinese refugees to the ASEAN countries. Conscious of the international implications of the problem as well as its humanitarian aspects, the Foreign Ministers of the member states of ASEAN and the European Community which have already taken steps to resolve this problem, held the view that international efforts for the expeditious resettlement of the refugees require further international consideration and deserve wider support.

The Foreign Ministers of the Member States of the European Community and ASEAN expressed their desire to promote, by appropriate measures, mutual understanding between the peoples of ASEAN and the European Community in the context of their concern to bring them closer to one another.

The Community welcomed the positive steps taken by ASEAN towards strengthening regional cooperation. The Community expressed its readiness to assist ASEAN regional cooperation programmes and to participate with ASEAN in regional development cooperation.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

ASEAN and the Community reaffirmed their determined support for international action leading to a new international economic order. They underlined the importance of achieving solutions to the outstanding problems and agreed to cooperate constructively in the coming international meetings on the outstanding issues in the North-South Dialogue, including UNCTAD V in Manila in May 1979.

They agreed on the need to arrive urgently at decisions to implement agreements reached during the Conference on International Economic Cooperation in May 1977 in particular insofar as commodity policy was concerned. The Ministers placed particular emphasis on the Integrated Programme for Commodities (IPC) and the early establishment of a Common Fund. They also agreed to cooperate closely in efforts to establish appropriate individual commodity agreements or arrangements.

ASEAN and the Community agreed on the necessity to maintain free trade conditions in order to promote a recovery in the world economy through expanding international trade. They confirmed their readiness to cooperate constructively to achieve satisfactory results in the MTN negotiations. The Community expressed its awareness of the special needs of the developing countries and particularly of ASEAN and reaffirmed its intention to seek provisions which would satisfy these needs.

REGIONAL INTEGRATION AND COOPERATION

ASEAN and the Community explained and assessed current developments in their respective regions. The Community emphasized moves to bring about a European Monetary System, the importance of the direct elections to the European Parliament in June 1979, and the progress of negotiations on the enlargement of the Community. ASEAN pointed out that

they had recently made significant progress in their regional cooperation. The Community indicated its willingness to offer all possible assistance in this respect.

ECONOMIC RELATIONS

ASEAN and the Community affirmed their mutual interest in and their firm intention of stimulating economic cooperation between the two regions.

TRADE

ASEAN expressed its concern over measures which had been or might be adopted by the Community and which would have the effect of inhibiting exports of particular importance to ASEAN. Referring to the significant growth in the ASEAN-Community mutual trade, the Community emphasized that recent measures are of a temporary nature and must be viewed against the background of the special situation in a few sectors.

Both sides agreed that, insofar as was possible, and as was at present the case, they would seek each other's views where measures were being considered which could have an adverse effect on trade between the two regions.

ASEAN expressed its need for improved access to the Community's market for ASEAN's manufactured, semi-manufactured and primary product exports and the Community took note of ASEAN's requests.

ASEAN urged that, in order to facilitate ASEAN's efforts to increase exports to the Community, the Community should remove or relax tariff and non-tariff barriers to trade and should also consider tariff reclassification and the streamlining of administrative procedures. ASEAN furthermore emphasized the importance of the Community's GSP to the economic development of the ASEAN member countries and urged the Community to further improve its GSP and to make it a permanent feature of its policy.

In respect of tariff matters, the Community reaffirmed the viewpoint it had made clear during the MTN negotiations, that it was seeking to bring about in all sectors a differentiated and more favourable treatment for developing countries such as ASEAN. In view of the value placed by ASEAN on the Community's generalized scheme of preferences for its economic development, the Community reconfirmed its already stated intention to extend such a scheme beyond the initial decade foreseen at its establishment, and undertook to consider favourably to the fullest possible extent requests for improvements which would be of importance to the economic development of the countries of ASEAN.

ASEAN expressed its appreciation for the assistance given by the Community in the past in the field of trade promotion. Both sides agreed that this was an important area of activity which needed to be expanded in order to assist the creation of additional trade between the two regions. The Community agreed that so far as possible ASEAN would be treated as a group in the context of the programmes initiated by the Commission of the European Communities.

COMMODITIES

The Community recognized the importance of ASEAN as a major supplier of many key commodities and expressed its willingness to examine, within a global context, what possibilities there were for guaranteeing the stabilization of the export earnings of the developing countries, including ASEAN, as a complement to other measures. Both sides undertook to consider favourably the possibility of promoting long-term arrangements among economic operators of the two regions for the supply of commodities.

INVESTMENTS

Bearing in mind the potentials of the ASEAN region and noting the important role of foreign investment in the development of the ASEAN economies and in accelerating and diversifying their industrial capacities, the Ministers agreed on the mutual interest of the Community and ASEAN in encouraging European investments in the ASEAN countries. In this connection, the Ministers agreed on the importance of investments by Community private sectors in industries including, among others, those which are labour intensive, those which rely on ASEAN's raw materials and those which would raise the technological capabilities of the ASEAN member countries.

The Community confirmed its preparedness to continue sponsoring arrangements to establish contacts between economic operators in ASEAN and the Community. Both sides noted the success of the Community-ASEAN Conference on Industrial Cooperation held in Brussels in April 1977. They noted with approval that a second Conference will be held in Jakarta from 26 to 28 February 1979.

In the same context, it was agreed to promote the establishment of an ASEAN-Community trade and investment forum for relevant business organizations in the two regions. In addition, ASEAN would continue to take measures to promote private investment from the Community. ASEAN urged the continuation and intensification of the cooperation between the Commission and the ASEAN countries in the field of the promotion of joint venture collaboration and sub-contracting activities.

The Ministers expressed the view that it was desirable to further encourage such investments from the Community. The already favourable investment climate in the ASEAN countries would be improved by extending investment protection arrangements to all nine Member States of the Community and all five ASEAN countries. It was agreed to seek to implement this at an early date.

TRANSFER OF TECHNOLOGY. TRAINING PROGRAMMES AND SCIENTIFIC COOPERATION

The Ministers agreed on the importance, for the industrialization plans of the member countries of ASEAN, of increased transfer of technology from the Community to ASEAN. The Community undertook to intensify cooperation with ASEAN in this respect, including a continuation of the current programme of seminars on the subject of transfer of technology and an expansion of the training and educational assistance programmes for technicians and industrial workers from the ASEAN countries.

The meeting agreed on the particular importance of scientific cooperation between the two regions. In this context, it was agreed to make a joint study of the possibilities of establishing cooperation in science and technology between relevant institutions of ASEAN and the Community. The Community and its Member States confirmed their intention to encourage their scientific institutions to receive a number of ASEAN scientists both for advanced education and for research.

DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

ASEAN welcomed the extension of the Community's financial and technical assistance programmes in favour of the non-associated developing countries to cover also regional projects supplementary to the Community assistance to development projects in individual ASEAN member countries. The Community undertook to pay increased attention to ASEAN regional projects in future programmes.

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ASEAN welcomed, as a first step in this direction, the Community's decision to finance feasibility studies for an ASEAN Post-harvest Grain Research and Training Programme and an ASEAN Timber Industry Research, Development and Training Centre. ASEAN indicated its intention to create a suitable mechanism for facilitating the development of such projects.

The Community stated that it would seek a coordination of the development cooperation activities of the Community and its Member States in the ASEAN region especially in relation to ASEAN regional projects.

The Community acknowledged the economic and political importance of ASEAN projects in industrial and other sectors and confirmed its willingness to encourage the financing of such projects from financial sources within the Community and in particular from the European commercial banking sector.

The Community announced that the members of the grouping of public development financial corporations of the Member States of the Community which are able to operate in the ASEAN region had agreed to examine with the Commission and ASEAN ways and means for an involvement in ASEAN regional projects.

CULTURAL COOPERATION

ASEAN and the Community agreed to enhance cooperation in the cultural field which would include cooperation in education and information. Some Member States and the Commission of the European Communities promised to award more scholarships according to their capacities and to coordinate these in consultation with ASEAN.

FRAMEWORK OF COOPERATION

The Community recognized that ASEAN is a developing region and agreed that cooperation between ASEAN and the Community should be expanded in such a manner as to contribute to ASEAN's efforts in enhancing its self-reliance and economic resilience. The two sides noted that the work of the ASEAN-Commission Joint Study Group had strengthened relations between the two regional groupings. In this context, they noted the study on long-term cooperation between ASEAN and the Community which is currently in progress.

It was further noted that the establishment of a dialogue at Ambassadorial level between the Permanent Representatives of the Member States to the European Communities and the Commission of the European Communities and the ASEAN Ambassadors to the Communities, had led to an intensification of Community-ASEAN cooperation.

The Community stated that the Commission would open a delegation in Bangkok in the course of 1979. ASEAN welcomed this decision.

Against this background and that of the already prevailing economic cooperation between ASEAN and the Community, and in the light of the discussions which had taken place during the meeting, ASEAN and the Community agreed that it would be desirable to place the relations between the two groupings on a more formal footing and, to this end, it was agreed that exploratory discussions on the content of a possible cooperation agreement should shortly be started between the two sides.

The Ministers agreed that this ASEAN-Community Ministerial Meeting ushered in a new era in the relations between ASEAN and the Community and that it had been very useful and beneficial to both sides.