

Overview of ASEAN-Republic of Korea Dialogue Relations

Introduction

1. ASEAN and the Republic of Korea (ROK) initiated sectoral dialogue relations in November 1989. The ROK was accorded a full Dialogue Partner status by ASEAN at the 24th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting (AMM) in July 1991 in Kuala Lumpur. Since the ASEAN-ROK partnership was elevated to a summit level in 1997 in Kuala Lumpur, relations between ASEAN and the ROK have broadened and deepened.
2. The relationship reached a new height with the signing of the Joint Declaration on Comprehensive Cooperation Partnership at the 8th ASEAN-ROK Summit on 30 November 2004 in Vientiane and the adoption of the ASEAN-ROK Plan of Action (POA) to implement the Joint Declaration at the 9th ASEAN-ROK Summit on 13 December 2005 in Kuala Lumpur.
3. The 13th ASEAN-ROK Summit on 29 October 2010 in Ha Noi agreed to elevate ASEAN-ROK dialogue relations from comprehensive cooperation to strategic partnership. In order to concretise the elevation, the Leaders adopted the Joint Declaration on ASEAN-ROK Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity and its Action Plan, which covers the period of 2011-2015. A new ASEAN-ROK Plan of Action to Implement the Joint Declaration on Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity for the period 2016-2020 was adopted at the Post-Ministerial Conference with the ROK held on 5 August 2015 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.
4. To facilitate closer cooperation and mutual understanding between ASEAN and the ROK, the ROK established its Mission to ASEAN in Jakarta in September 2012 and appointed its first resident Ambassador to ASEAN in October 2012.
5. In 2014, ASEAN and the ROK celebrated the 25th Year of ASEAN-ROK Dialogue Relations, with commemorative activities conducted in ASEAN Member States and the ROK. The ASEAN-ROK Commemorative Summit was held on 11-12 December 2014 in Busan, the ROK. The Commemorative Summit adopted the *Joint Statement on the 25th Anniversary of the ASEAN-ROK Dialogue Relations: Our Future Vision of ASEAN-ROK Strategic Partnership, "Building Trust, Bringing Happiness"* that renews the commitments of both sides to bring the ASEAN-ROK relations to new heights.

Political and Security Cooperation

6. ASEAN-ROK cooperation in the political and security fields has been strengthened by regular dialogue through existing mechanisms such as the ASEAN-ROK Summit, Ministerial Meetings, ASEAN-ROK Dialogue and Senior Officials Meetings. The ROK has been engaged in ASEAN-led mechanisms, including the ASEAN Plus Three (APT), the East Asia Summit (EAS), ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), and ASEAN Defence

Ministerial Meeting Plus (ADMM Plus).

7. The ROK acceded to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC) at the ASEAN-ROK Ministerial Meeting on 27 November 2004 in Vientiane.

8. The ROK became a participant of the ARF since its inception in 1994 and plays an active role in its evolution since then. The ROK co-chaired the ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Maritime Security (ISM on MS) with Indonesia and the United States for the period of 2012-2014. Furthermore, the ROK co-chaired the 18th ARF Heads of Defence Universities/ Colleges/ Institutions Meeting with (HDUCIM) Myanmar which was conducted on 22-25 September 2014 in Seoul.

9. The ROK has taken an active role in the ADMM-Plus in fostering practical cooperation in its six priority areas, including humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR), maritime security, military medicine, counter terrorism, peacekeeping operations, and humanitarian mine action. For the period of 2014-2017, the ROK is co-chairing the ADMM-Plus Experts' Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations (EWG on PKO) with Cambodia.

10. The ASEAN-ROK Joint Declaration for Cooperation to Combat International Terrorism was signed by the Foreign Ministers of ASEAN and the ROK at the margins of the 38th AMM in July 2005 in Vientiane. The ASEAN-ROK Senior Officials' Consultations on Transnational Crime (SOMTC+ROK Consultations) was held for the first time on 9 June 2006 in Bali, Indonesia. At the 9th SOMTC + ROK Consultation in June 2015 in Siem Reap, ASEAN and the ROK finalised an ASEAN-ROK Work Plan on the Cooperation on Combating and Preventing Transnational Crimes. At the 10th SOMTC+ROK on 25 May 2016, the two sides agreed to revise the said Work Plan taking into account the new ASEAN-ROK Plan of Action 2016-2020.

11. ASEAN and the ROK have commenced the anti-narcotics cooperation through the implementation of six projects on the Knowledge Transfer Programme on Narcotics Crime conducted from 2007 to 2013. The projects aimed to strengthen the criminal investigation capabilities of ASEAN Member States. At the ASEAN-ROK Commemorative Summit in December 2014, both sides agreed to enhance cooperation in combatting transnational crimes such as illicit drugs.

12. With a view to further deepening mutual understanding between ASEAN and the ROK at the track II level, the annual Korean- ASEAN Cooperation Forum has been held since 2006.

13. In further strengthening the ASEAN-ROK relations and advancing the ASEAN-ROK cooperation towards a strategic partnership, the ASEAN-ROK Eminent Persons Group (EPG) was established by the Leaders of ASEAN and the ROK at the 11th ASEAN-ROK Summit on 21 November 2007 in Singapore. The EPG convened four meetings in 2009 and its final report was submitted to the 12th ASEAN-ROK Summit in October 2009 in Thailand. The report proposed a set of recommendations to further

advance and deepen ASEAN-ROK relations, including strategies and guiding principles, and key elements of the partnership. The recommendations contained in the EPG Report were taken on board in developing the Joint Declaration on ASEAN-ROK Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity and its Action Plan, which were adopted at the 13th ASEAN-ROK Summit in October 2010 in Ha Noi, Viet Nam.

Economic Cooperation

17. Economic interdependence through trade and investment relations between ASEAN and the ROK has deepened amid a global economic slowdown. The total value of ASEAN and the ROK two-way trade declined from US\$131.4 billion in 2014 to US\$122.9 billion in 2015. Nevertheless, the ROK remains as the fifth largest trading partner of ASEAN.¹ Foreign direct investment (FDI) flow from the ROK to ASEAN grew steadily. The ROK's FDI to ASEAN rose from USD 1.7 billion in 2011 to USD 4.3 billion in 2013 and USD 5.7 billion in 2015. This makes the ROK as the 5th largest investment partner of ASEAN.²

18. The Framework Agreement on Comprehensive Economic Cooperation between ASEAN and the ROK was signed in Kuala Lumpur on 13 December 2005. To achieve the objectives of the Framework Agreement, the ASEAN-Korea Trade in Goods (AKTIG) Agreement was signed on 24 August 2006 and took effect in 2007; meanwhile, the ASEAN-ROK Trade in Services Agreement was signed on 21 November 2007 in Singapore and came into force on 1 May 2009; and the ASEAN-ROK Investment Agreement was signed on 2 June 2009 and took full effect on 1 September 2009. Subsequently, the ASEAN-ROK Free Trade Area (AKFTA) came into effect on 1 January 2010.

19. At the 9th ASEAN Economic Ministers (AEM) – ROK Consultations on 29 August 2012, the Ministers adopted the Work Programme for Further Liberalisation which comprises a review of further possible reduction of the number of goods in the Sensitive Track, conditions governing the reciprocal arrangement and development of a comprehensive package to promote trade as well as facilitate utilisation of the AKFTA. In addition, the Ministers launched the AKFTA website (<http://akfta.asean.org>) and seminar kit on AKFTA as part of the effort to promote the AKFTA.

20. At the ASEAN-ROK Commemorative Summit, the Leaders agreed to target USD 200 billion of two-way trade volume by 2020, including maximizing the use of the ASEAN-Korea Free Trade Agreement (AKFTA) and to effectively utilise the ASEAN-Korea Centre in order to enhance ASEAN-ROK economic linkages.

21. The Third Protocol to Amend the AKTIG Agreement has been signed by all Parties to the Agreement as of 22 November 2015 and entered into force on 1 January 2016 for

¹ ASEAN Trade Statistics Database as of 10 June 2016.

² ASEAN FDI Database as of 3 June 2016.

Thailand and the ROK, 11 February 2016 for Myanmar, 6 April 2016 for Singapore, 10 June 2016 for Lao PDR, 14 July 2016 for the Philippines, and 26 July 2016 for Malaysia. The Third Protocol introduced new commitments on Customs Procedures and Trade Facilitation, and gave legal effect to the inclusion of the Parties' line-by-line Tariff Reduction Schedules to the TIG Agreement. The Joint Impact Assessment of the ASEAN-Korea Trade in Services (AKTIS) Agreement had been concluded in 2014. The Study recommended scopes for possible enhancement of the ASEAN-Korea Trade in Services Agreement, additional sectors for further liberalization, and other possible areas of economic cooperation.

22. The ROK continues to support the implementation of cooperation projects under the purview of the ASEAN-Korea Working Group on Economic Cooperation (AK-WGEC) through the ASEAN-Korea Economic Cooperation (AKEC) Fund. So far 66 projects from 2006-2017 were approved through AK-WGEC to support the implementation of the AKFTA.

23. The ASEAN-Korea Business Council was launched during the 1st ASEAN-Korea CEO Summit in December 2014. The 2nd AKBC Meeting was convened in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on 20 November 2015. The 3rd AKBC Meeting was held on the sidelines of the 13th AEM-ROK Consultations in August 2016, in Vientiane, Lao PDR.

24. On transport cooperation, ASEAN and the ROK agreed to enhance their cooperation in all modes of transportation, namely aviation, roadway, railway, sea, and inland waterway. The 2nd ATM+ROK Meeting held on 12 November 2010 in Bandar Seri Begawan endorsed the ASEAN-ROK Transport Cooperation Roadmap, which was revised and further adopted at the 5th ASEAN-ROK Transport Ministers Meeting in 2014 in Mandalay, Myanmar. The 7th ASEAN-ROK Transport Ministers Meeting held on 28 November 2016 in Manila, Philippines reaffirmed the commitment of both sides in further enhancing air transport connectivity between ASEAN and ROK.

25. ASEAN and the ROK have developed a platform of cooperation on connectivity through the meetings between the ASEAN Connectivity Coordinating Committee (ACCC) and the ROK's Task Force on ASEAN Connectivity. At the 2nd ACCC + ROK Meeting on 23 October 2014, both sides agreed to undertake internal consultations on potential flagship projects to be selected for implementation consideration. Areas of cooperation include construction of two missing links on the Singapore-Kunming Rail Link, regional inland waterways, and ASEAN-ROK air services agreement.

26. The number of Korean tourists arriving in ASEAN Member States reached 5.83 million in 2015, up 13.89 per cent from 5.02 million in 2014³. The number of ASEAN tourist arrivals to the ROK reached 1.6 million in 2015 which is the third largest number of foreign visitors to Korea after China and Japan⁴.

³ ASEAN Tourism Database as of 15 June 2017.

⁴ ASEAN-Korea Centre Overview as of 15 June 2017
(http://www.aseankorea.org/eng/ASEAN/ak_overview.asp)

27. The ASEAN-Korea Centre was established in 13 March 2009 in Seoul, the ROK. The Centre plays a pivotal role to increase the volume of trade, accelerate investment flow, invigorate tourism, and enrich cultural exchanges between ASEAN and the ROK.

28. On information and communication technology (ICT) cooperation, 12th ASEAN Telecommunications and Information Technology Senior Officials Meeting with the ROK held on 24 November 2016 endorsed the ASEAN-Korea 2017 ICT Work Plan proposed by the ROK, which includes (i) Connectivity; (ii) Innovation; (iii) Human Resource; (iv) IoT; (v) Big Data; and (vi) Artificial Intelligent (AI). and (vii) the AP-IS project.

29. On science and technology, ASEAN and the ROK agreed to further discuss the establishment of an ASEAN-ROK Innovation Centre (ARIC). The Centre aims to enhance innovation capacity, optimise human capital development and improve the capacity and capability of ASEAN MSMEs to be globally competitive. A feasibility study on the establishment of ARIC is being awaited.

Socio-Cultural Cooperation

32. On socio-cultural cooperation, a number of projects were accomplished in the areas of education, sport, culture, environmental protection, sustainable water management, disaster management, health, and people-to-people exchanges.

33. People-to-people exchanges continue to be an important area of ASEAN-ROK cooperation. Exchange programmes have been conducted in the areas of youth, media, culture, government officials, and academics with the funding support of the Future Oriented Cooperation Fund (FOCF).

34. The ASEAN-Korea Centre (AKC) has played a vital role in promoting trade, investment, tourism, cultural cooperation and people-to-people contacts between ASEAN and the ROK. In 2016, the ASEAN- Korea Centre (AKC) implemented 22 projects in including its flagship programs such as the ASEAN Trade Fair, the ASEAN Culinary Festival, the ASEAN Connectivity Forum, and the ASEAN-Korea Youth Network Workshop. In 2017, the AKC focuses on: (i) celebrating the 50th Anniversary of ASEAN; (ii) promoting the ASEAN-ROK Cultural Exchange Year; (iii) supporting sustainable development in ASEAN; (iv) reinforcing capacity-building elements; and (v) enhancing ASEAN awareness in the ROK.

35. In media cooperation, the ASEAN-ROK Media People Exchanges Programme has been conducted every year since 2012. The 2016 Korean media personnel visit to Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand was held on 20-26 November 2016 while the visit of ASEAN media personnel to Korea was held on 23-29 October 2016.

36. An ASEAN-ROK Film Community Establishment was successfully concluded in February 2012. Exchanges between Southeast Asian and Korean film leaders have been initiated by this project, i.e. One Asia in Film, offering an opportunity to Southeast Asian

countries to realise the importance of establishing film commissions. As part of the follow-up action to the outcome of the ASEAN-ROK Film Community Establishment Project, an ASEAN-ROK Film Leaders Incubator was implemented annually from 2012 to 2016. This project was aimed at discovering and nurturing human resources equipped with creativity and technological competency to establish a platform for film industry development in ASEAN.

37. In the area of youth, ASEAN and the ROK have conducted seven recurring projects from 1998 to 2016 including ASEAN-Korea Youth Exchange and Cultural Community Building Programme; ASEAN-Korea Frontiers Forum; ASEAN-Korea Youth Square; ASEAN-Korea Forum and Advanced Seminar; ASEAN-Korea Future-oriented Cooperation Project: Youth Exchange Programme; ASEAN-KOREA Youth Taekwondo Cultural Exchange Camp; and Korea-ASEAN Cooperation Project on Education and Exchange Program for Young Scholars in Women's Studies. These projects are intended to provide multi-cultural experience and to deepen partnership between ASEAN and Korea.

38. Cooperation in education is also progressing well and ten projects have, thus far, has been implemented. The ROK has convened seven Training Projects for ASEAN children's librarians from 2010-2016. This Training Project is aimed at developing children's library service and enhancing professionalism of children's librarians in ASEAN Member States. This program will recur in 2017.

39. The ROK also provided funding for ASEAN-ROK Scholarship for Korean Studies Programme coordinated by the ASEAN University Network (AUN) through the ASEAN-ROK Future Oriented Cooperation Fund (FOCF). Another scholarship project funded under FOCF entitled *Master's Degree Programme for ASEAN Specialists on Saemaul Community Development* is being implemented. The Project aims to provide a master degree programme for the public officials and experts working in the rural and community development programmes in ASEAN Member States.

40. The progress on the establishment of the ASEAN-ROK Cyber University, an initiative proposed at the ASEAN-ROK Commemorative Summit in June 2009, is also going well. The initiative was carried out by ASEAN University Network and Seoul Cyber University. CLMV Countries, and the ROK agreed in principle that the e-learning centers will be established in the following institutions: Institute Technology of Cambodia (ITC); National University of Laos (NUOL); University Technology (UT) in Myanmar and Hanoi University of Science and Technology (HUST) in Viet Nam.

41. ASEAN and the ROK implemented cooperative projects in the areas of social welfare and development with the focus on children, women, older people, people with disabilities and migrant workers. Under this initiative, twelve projects have been supported by the ROK through the ASEAN-ROK Special Cooperation Fund.

42. Cooperation to address the issue of land and forest degradation has been strengthened through a flagship project on Restoration of Degraded Forest Ecosystem in

the Southeast Asian Tropical Regions (AKECOP). Phases I to VIII of the AKECOP project were completed from 2000 to 2016 and it is now in Phase IX. AKECOP received the ROK's support through the ASEAN-ROK Special Cooperation Fund.

43. The Agreement between ASEAN and the ROK on Forest Cooperation (AFoCo) was signed and entered into force on 5 August 2012 for 2 years, and subsequently was extended in August 2014 for another two years, until August 2016. Projects and activities are on-going under the AFoCo to strengthen forest cooperation between both sides. The Agreement served as platform to foster cooperation in forestry and dialogue toward the establishment of Asian Forest Cooperation Organization (AFoCO). After 6 meetings of Dialogue-AFoCO, the Agreement on the Establishment of AFoCO was adopted in September 2015.

44. In the area of disaster management, a project entitled *ASEAN Science-Based Disaster Management Platform* commenced in 2015 to promote the involvement of science in policy development as well as to encourage policymakers in the research process of disaster management and risk reduction in ASEAN. The project received the ROK's support through the ASEAN-ROK Special Cooperation Fund. The Disaster Management Regional Symposium, which is apart of this project, was held in Jakarta 9-10 February 2017.

Narrowing Development Gap

47. The ROK has been supporting ASEAN efforts in narrowing the development gap through the implementation of the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) projects. The ROK contributed USD 5 million to support five IAI projects between 2003 and 2007, which were undertaken by KOICA. At the 12th ASEAN-ROK Summit, the ROK committed that it would continue to support the IAI and decided to contribute its second and third tranche of USD 5 million each, for IAI for the year 2008-2012 and 2013-2017, and also to double Official Development Assistance (ODA) to ASEAN by 2015, and to share its experiences in economic and social development by dispatching volunteers under its World Friends Korea initiative.

48. At the ASEAN-ROK Commemorative Summit in December 2014, the Leaders agreed to contribute to narrowing development gaps in the region through the implementation of the IAI Work Plan II 2009-2015 and its successor document and other sub-regional economic cooperation frameworks, including the Mekong-ROK Action Plan (2014-2017) adopted at the 4th Mekong-ROK Foreign Ministers' Meeting in July 2014 in Seoul, ROK.

