

JOINT DECLARATION

FOURTH ASEAN-EC MINISTERIAL MEETING

Bangkok, 24-25 March 1983

The Fourth Meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the Member States of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the European Community (EC) was held in Bangkok on 24 - 25 March 1983.

2. H.E. Air Chief Marshal Siddhi Savetsila, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand, Chairman of the ASEAN Standing Committee acted as spokesman for ASEAN.

3. H.E. Mr. Hans-Dietrich Genscher, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Germany, President of the EC Council of Ministers, and H.E. Mr. Wilhelm Haferkamp, Vice-President of EC Commission, acted as spokesmen for the European Community and their Member States.

4. The constructive and wide-ranging exchange of views of current international and regional political and economic problems was reflected in the excellent atmosphere which habitually characterizes these meetings. Their discussion also demonstrated a common concern over these issues of regional and global nature and the urgent need to resolve them.

5. The Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to the principles of the UN Charter and noted with satisfaction the friendly cooperation between their countries in the UN and other international organisations. They also noted with grave concern the fact that in many parts of the world force was still being used in violation of the UN Charter and resolutions which call for respect for the principles of sovereign equality of states and self-determination of peoples, for non-interference and non-intervention in the affairs of states, and for refraining from

the threat or the use of force against the territorial integrity of any state. The Ministers pledged themselves to continue to support this universal organisation and to consult closely to resolve issues of mutual interest to the member states of the EC and ASEAN. The Ministers exchanged view on current international problems and urged all nations to co-operate to find durable and just solutions to these outstanding issues which critically affect world peace, in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the United Nations. They also discussed the recent Non-Aligned Summit and agreed that the principles of non-alignment are an important factor for international stability.

6. The Ministers paid special attention to the areas of instability in Asia. In particular they expressed concern over the armed interventions by foreign powers in two independent and non-aligned countries in Asia, namely Kampuchea and Afghanistan. They deplored the continued presence of Vietnamese armed forces in Kampuchea and those of the Soviet Union in Afghanistan and the constant refusal of Vietnam and the Soviet Union to heed the appeals of the international community for a withdrawal of their troops. Both cases constitute a violation of international law and a continued threat to international peace and security and to the stability of the region. They have also caused untold suffering to the peoples of Afghanistan and Kampuchea and have imposed severe burdens on neighbouring states as a result of the heavy flow of refugees.

7. The Ministers deplored the illegal military occupation of Kampuchea by Vietnamese forces and the continuing conflict in that country which has further intensified the rivalry between major powers in the region. The Ministers reiterated their support for Resolutions 34/22, 35/6, 36/5 and 37/6 which were adopted by impressive and

increasing majorities at the UN General Assembly calling for the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Kampuchea, the restoration and preservation of its independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity and the right of the Kampuchean people to determine their own destiny free from outside interference or coercion.

8. The Ministers expressed their continued full support of the principles and the terms of the Declaration of the International Conference on Kampuchea, inter alia, calling for the total withdrawal of Vietnamese forces from Kampuchea, the right of the Kampuchean people to determine their own destiny through the UN supervised general elections, an independent neutral and non-aligned Kampuchea which poses no threat to any of its neighbours and the commitment by all states to non-interference and non-intervention in the internal affairs of Kampuchea as the basis of any just and lasting political settlement of the Kampuchean problem. To this end, they reiterated their stand that no assistance should be given to Vietnam of such a nature as to sustain and enhance the Vietnamese occupation of Kampuchea.

9. The Ministers noted that the formation of the Coalition of Democratic Kampuchea under the Presidency of Samdech Norodom Sihanouk constituted a significant step in the search for a comprehensive political settlement. In this connection, the Ministers were impressed by the overwhelming endorsement the international community gave to the Democratic Kampuchea Coalition during the 37th UN General Assembly.

10. The Ministers commended the Ad Hoc Committee of the International Conference on Kampuchea for its efforts to bring about a peaceful solution and urged Vietnam and other states concerned to cooperate with the efforts undertaken so far. The Ministers acknowledged that the legitimate security concerns of all states in the region had to be taken into consideration.

11. The EC Ministers expressed their appreciation of the efforts of ASEAN in the search for a comprehensive political settlement of the Kampuchean problem. They recognized that the ASEAN member countries were motivated by the desire to create conditions conducive to the realization of a Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality (ZOPFAN) in Southeast Asia.

12. Both sides expressed their deep concern over the serious refugee problem in the area. Although the overall caseload has been somewhat reduced mainly through resettlement, a large number of refugees remain in the ASEAN countries of first refuge, particularly in Thailand where there are over 160,000 Vietnamese, Laotian and Kampuchean refugees and displaced persons in holding centres and close to 300,000 Kampucheans along the Thai-Kampuchean border. The Ministers stressed the need for the international community to accept the principle of international burdensharing to provide appropriate durable solutions to the problems of refugees and displaced persons in Southeast Asia through the increase in resettlement opportunities for these unfortunate people in third countries. They also called upon the countries of origin to co-operate with UNHCR in the speedy implementation of the voluntary repatriation programme.

13. The Ministers deplored the recent military attacks by Vietnamese armoured and artillery forces against the Nong Chan border encampments, schools and hospitals built for Kampuchean civilians by international relief agencies at the Thai-Kampuchean border. These attacks constituted violations of the fundamental principles of humanitarianism and the UN Charter.

14. The EC Ministers commended the ASEAN countries, which are still facing a serious influx of refugees for their efforts to alleviate the sufferings of refugees by granting first refuge and assistance on humanitarian ground. They also noted that the ASEAN countries deemed the extension of first refuge depends on commitment of resettlement in third countries and the avoidance of residual problems.

15. The ASEAN Ministers expressed their sincere thanks and appreciation to the EC countries for their invaluable bilateral assistance as well as their assistance to the United Nations Humanitarian Programmes for Indochinese refugees in the ASEAN countries.

16. The Ministers paid tribute to WFP/UNBRO, UNHCR, ICRC and other intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations for their indispensable contribution to the alleviation of the refugee problems of the area. They stressed the need for the continuing support of the United Nations Humanitarian Programmes along the Thai-Kampuchean border, in the holding centres, as well as the assistance to the Thai Government in the relief and rehabilitation of the affected Thai villagers.

17. The Ministers, recognizing with deep concern that the Soviet military occupation of Afghanistan has entered its fourth year and like the illegal occupation of Kampuchea, is another instance of the subjugation of small independent states by foreign powers through the use of force in open violation of international law, appealed to all states to respect the sovereignty, territorial integrity, political independence and non-aligned character of Afghanistan. They were particularly concerned with the continued flow of refugees from Afghanistan resulting from Soviet military operations. The Ministers strongly urged the creation of the necessary conditions for the Afghan refugees to return voluntarily to their homes in safety and honour. They also noted that all appeals by the United Nations, the Islamic Conference and the Movement of Non-Aligned countries for the withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan and a political solution enabling the Afghan people to determine freely their own form of government have been ignored by the Soviet Union.

18. They agreed that the situation in Afghanistan remains a major cause of international tension and continues seriously to affect the stability of the region and of the world as a whole. The EC Ministers referred to the proposal of the Ten of June 30th, 1981, which was reaffirmed on December 4th, 1982, for a comprehensive political settlement. The ASEAN Ministers supported this statement.

19. The Ministers appreciated the efforts undertaken by the Secretary-General of the United Nations aimed at a political solution based on the principles of the United Nations' Resolutions including the total withdrawal of foreign troops.

20. The Ministers discussed the present dangerous situation in the Middle East. The EC Ministers informed their colleagues about the statement of the European Council of 22 March, 1983. The ASEAN Ministers informed the Meeting about the decisions adopted by the Non-Aligned Summit at New Delhi.

21. The Ministers stressed the urgency for a Middle East peace settlement and called on all parties to the dispute to seize the present opportunity for progress towards a comprehensive just and lasting peace.

22. The Ministers expressed their satisfaction at the continuing development of contacts between parliamentarians of the two regions following the visit of an ASEAN Inter-parliamentary Organisation delegation to the European Parliament in November 1982.

23. The Ministers recognized the importance of the cultural ties between the peoples of the two regions and agreed that there was a need to promote and enhance these ties between ASEAN and the Community.

24. In a general exchange of views on the world economic and financial situation ASEAN and the Community agreed that the present difficulties had once again clearly demonstrated the economic interdependence which existed among all members of the international community. The Ministers reaffirmed their belief that in such an increasingly interdependent world, a global, integrated and comprehensive approach to international economic issues was essential. Both sides therefore agreed on the necessity to work together and to seek solutions which effectively reflected the mutual benefits and common

interest and the responsibility of all parties concerned. The Ministers also agreed that it was only through increased international cooperation that there would be a recovery of the world economy. They therefore pledged themselves to continue to consult and cooperate closely to resolve outstanding issues in GATT, UNCTAD, international financial institutions, and in other international fora for the revival of the world economy and the promotion of growth and development. The Ministers also recognised the value of regional cooperation through which their countries could effectively overcome an increasing number of common problems.

25. ASEAN and the Community reiterated and stressed the need to maintain liberal and open trading conditions and to promote the recovery and expansion of the world economy, in particular through increased bilateral, regional and international trade. They would seek to ensure that GATT provided a continuing forum for negotiation and consultation, in which an appropriate balance of rights and obligations could be assured for all contracting parties and that the rules and procedures of the system were effectively and fairly applied, on the basis of agreed interpretations, for the economic development and benefit of all. The Ministers noted the worsening in the international trade situation. They recognised the dangers of recourse to protectionism. They further recognised that positive structural adjustment could contribute to the improvement of their economies. The Ministers reaffirmed the conclusions of the GATT Ministerial Meeting in November 1982 and resolved to support and improve the GATT system so that it

might contribute vigorously to the further liberalisation and expansion of trade based on mutual commitment and mutual advantage, taking into account the special position of developing countries. They also welcomed the commitment to overcome protectionist pressures and agreed to work together to implement the work programme and priorities for the 1980's as set out in the final text of the GATT Ministerial Declaration, aiming at improving the GATT trading system and achieving freer trade.

26. The Ministers welcomed the close cooperation that had developed between the two regions in recent years in the field of commodity arrangements. Both sides agreed that due regard be given to each other's interests when defining policies likely to have an impact on commodities. The Ministers underlined the need for equitable, remunerative and stable international prices for commodities in the world market. They emphasised their commitment to continuing efforts to ensure the effectiveness of the International Natural Rubber, Tin and Coffee Agreements in achieving their objectives. In particular, the Ministers agreed on the urgency of stabilising the international sugar market by adopting appropriate policies within the framework of a new international sugar agreement. In the light of the mutuality of interest between producers and consumers and the importance of cooperation between the two regional groupings in the field of commodities, they agreed that it was important for ASEAN and the Community to work together in promoting a continuing dialogue in this field. Both parties expressed their readiness to cooperate closely in establishing, where appropriate, individual commodity agreements or arrangements in the context of the Integrated Programme for Commodities (IPC).

27. The Ministers recognised the importance of the Common Fund as a key instrument of the Integrated Programme for Commodities and expressed the hope that the Agreement establishing the Common Fund for Commodities would soon be effectively implemented, and that it would evolve into an operationally viable financial institution.

28. In the context of the situation of the economies of developing countries, and recognising that this had a direct relationship to the depth and duration of the present world economic difficulties, ASEAN and the Community committed themselves to working for the success of the forthcoming Sixth Session of UNCTAD in Belgrade. To this end they agreed to continue close consultations on the Conference. Both sides recognised that UNCTAD VI would be an important occasion to consider the present problems affecting the world economy and hoped that the Conference would adopt policy recommendations which would lead to progress in areas of particular importance to developing countries. They also expressed the hope that the Conference would successfully lend further impetus to the North-South Dialogue and to the efforts to provide a new stimulus for world economic activities, together with an acceleration of the development of the developing countries.

29. Believing that the launching of the Global Negotiations on International Economic Cooperation for Development within the United Nations system would contribute to the solution of international economic problems by working towards the establishment of a new international economic order for the benefit of all, the Ministers agreed on the need to work closely together for the early launching of such Negotiations.

30. Recalling their previous joint declarations following the meetings in Brussels, Kuala Lumpur and London, the Ministers welcomed with satisfaction the continued development of the cooperation between ASEAN and the Community as reflected in the rapid expansion and diversification of activities in the context of the EC-ASEAN Cooperation Agreement, the significance of which they reiterated. Of particular importance were cooperation in the fields of science and technology, insurance, trade promotion, training and development cooperation. These activities had brought about a new momentum in relations between ASEAN and the Community. The Ministers agreed that the working measures adopted had translated into action the broad commitments contained in the Cooperation Agreement. This was a significant step in reinforcing mutually beneficial relations between the Community and ASEAN. The Ministers agreed to seek to continue this process of expansion into as many fields of mutual interest as possible. In this context they noted in particular the success of the Third Meeting of the Joint Cooperation Committee held in Pattaya, Thailand, in November 1982 which had given a particular emphasis to increased cooperation between the industrial and business sectors of the two regions. They welcomed the success of the recent Kuala Lumpur Industrial Sectoral Conference and looked forward to further actions in this field in 1983. They also looked forward to the development of a closer cooperation between financial institutions in the two regions.

31. The Ministers recognised the importance of economic and technical cooperation among developing countries as a means to promote the national and efficient use of human, material, financial and technology

resources available for the individual and collective welfare of the peoples of ASEAN and other developing countries. In this context, the Community welcomed the activities of ASEAN and undertook, within the framework of the Cooperation Agreement, to explore ways and means of supporting ASEAN in the field of Economic and Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries.

32. The Ministers welcomed the progress made in science and technology cooperation within the context of the Cooperation Agreement and emphasised the importance of continued and effective cooperation in this field.

33. The EC Ministers acknowledged ASEAN's status as a cohesive regional grouping which is playing an independent and positive role in working for peace and stability in Southeast Asia. For their part, the ASEAN Ministers expressed their appreciation of the positive role of the European Community in regard to the problems facing the world today. Both sides acknowledged that their respective efforts were reinforced by their close and friendly cooperation.
