

**July 25, 1998**

## **JOINT DECLARATION FOR A DRUG-FREE ASEAN**

WE, the Foreign Ministers of the ASEAN Member Countries representing Brunei Darussalam, the Republic of Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, the Union of Myanmar, the Republic of the Philippines, the Republic of Singapore, the Kingdom of Thailand, and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam;

RECOGNIZING that the alarming growth of the illicit global drug trade, which includes narcotics and psychotropic substances, continues to adversely affect the welfare of nations and their peoples including those of the ASEAN;

CONCERNED that illicit drug abuse and trafficking seriously endangers the development programmes of ASEAN Member Countries, especially in relation to the region's youth;

APPREHENSIVE that unabated drug abuse continues to endanger the moral fabric of the family which is the basic unit of our societies;

FULLY AWARE that the illicit drug trade, which is inextricably linked to other transnational crimes including money laundering and arms smuggling, could escalate to such a level where perpetrators can pose serious political and security threats to the region;

ENCOURAGED by the growing resolve in the international community to prevail over the deleterious nature of illicit drugs in light of the United Nations Decade on Drug Abuse (1991-2000), as well as the continuing interest of ASEAN Dialogue Partners in providing assistance to the Southeast Asian region in solving this menace;

REALIZING the necessity of continually assessing and strengthening ASEAN's thrusts against illicit drug abuse and trafficking;

MINDFUL of the importance of strengthening institutional linkage between the various ASEAN mechanisms involved in the fight against illicit drug trafficking and other transnational crimes, particularly the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime, the ASEAN Finance Ministers' Meeting, the ASEAN Finance Officials Meeting, the ASEAN Senior Law Officials Meeting, the ASEAN Chiefs of National Police, the ASEAN Directors-General of Customs, the ASEAN Directors-General for Immigration and the ASEAN Secretariat;

RECOGNIZING the extensive work of the ASEAN Senior Officials on Drug Matters (ASOD), particularly in their effort to implement the ASEAN Three Year Action Plan on Drug Abuse Control and the Work Programme to Operationalise the aforesaid Plan in the priority areas of drug education, drug information, prevention within the community, treatment, rehabilitation and law enforcement;

RECALLING the decision of the Fifth ASEAN Summit in Bangkok in December 1995 to further enhance cooperative efforts against drug abuse and illicit trafficking, with special emphasis being given to demand reduction programmes and information exchange and dissemination, with the aim of creating a drug-free ASEAN;

RECALLING FURTHER that the ASEAN Vision 2020 adopted by the ASEAN Heads of State/Government at the Second Informal Summit held in December 1997 in Kuala Lumpur envisioned a Southeast Asia free of illicit drugs, free of their production, processing, trafficking and use, well before 2020;

RECALLING FURTHER the ASEAN Declaration on Transnational Crime, signed on 20 December 1997 in Manila, Philippines, which aimed, among others, to expand the scope of Member Countries' efforts against transnational crimes including illicit drug trafficking;

SUPPORTIVE of the major decisions of the Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly, devoted to the fight against the illicit production, sale, demand, traffic and distribution of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and related activities, held in New York in June 1998;

KEEPING IN MIND the substantive declarations previously adopted by the ASEAN Foreign Ministers on the problem of illicit drug trafficking and abuse, particularly the ASEAN Declaration of Principles to Combat the Abuse of Narcotic Drugs, signed in Manila on 26 June 1976, and the ASEAN Foreign Ministers Joint Statement on the International Problem of Drug Abuse and Trafficking adopted in Kuala Lumpur, 9 July 1985;

CONVINCED that a drug-free ASEAN is attainable through enhanced and concerted regional cooperation in the political, social, and institutional domains;

HAVE RESOLVED, IN A SPIRIT OF AMITY AND COOPERATION, TO ACHIEVE A DRUG-FREE ASEAN THROUGH THE FOLLOWING MEASURES:

1. Seek all modalities to eradicate illicit drug production, processing, trafficking and use in ASEAN by the year 2020.
2. Strengthen and promote linkage among existing regional institutional mechanisms involved in the fight against drug abuse and trafficking, such as the ASEAN Senior Officials on Drug Matters (ASOD), ASEAN Chiefs of National Police (ASEANAPOL), the ASEAN Senior Law Officials Meeting (ASLOM), the ASEAN Sub-Committee on Youth (ASY) and the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime, the 1993 MOU countries on Drug Control, and the ASEAN Secretariat.
3. Enter into collaborative undertakings, in the interest of continued development and upgrading of human resources, with ASEAN Dialogue Partners to help curb illicit drug abuse, production, and trafficking in the region, particularly in the areas of law enforcement, intelligence, rehabilitation and treatment, alternative development, preventive education, preventive information, community participation, research and human-resource development.
4. Seek the review of jurisprudence related to illicit drug abuse and trafficking and move for the passage of stricter laws on these crimes against society.
5. Upgrade and expand regional and national data banks on illicit drugs, to include more information on illicit drug production and trafficking, existing drug control activities, programmes and legislation, evaluation methodologies and resource experts.
6. Expand awareness, education and rehabilitation programs among the region's youth, including the work program on Skills Training for Out-of-School Youth, to