

ASEAN - AUSTRALIA *

JOINT PRESS RELEASE ELEVENTH ASEAN - AUSTRALIA FORUM Manila, 7 - 8 June 1988

The Eleventh ASEAN - Australia Forum was held in Manila on 7 - 8 June 1988. The Forum was opened by the Honorable Secretary Raul S. Manglapus. In his opening address Mr. Manglapus stated that he was proud to open the ASEAN - Australia Forum. He took cognizance of the fact that Australia was the first developed country to establish a formal dialogue with ASEAN. He stated that the last ASEAN Summit in Manila adopted certain measures which may be of interest to Australia. He expressed the hope that the ASEAN group will have a fruitful meeting with its Australian counterparts whom he considered very good friends and dialogue partners.

The Forum was attended by the Deputy Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Australia and the Directors General of ASEAN - Brunei Darussalam, ASEAN - Indonesia, ASEAN - Malaysia, ASEAN - Philippines, ASEAN - Singapore and the Deputy Director-General of ASEAN - Thailand and their respective delegations. The Secretary General of the ASEAN Secretariat, the Chairmen of COTT and COIME, and representatives from other ASEAN Committees were also present.

In the capacity of the Philippines as Country Coordinator of the ASEAN - Australia Dialogue, Ambassador Juanito P. Jarasa, Director General of ASEAN - Philippines, led the ASEAN delegations. The Australian delegation was led by Mr. Michael Lightowler, Deputy Secretary, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

The ASEAN - Australia dialogue was formally launched in Canberra, Australia in April 1974. The original objective of the dialogue was to promote regional cooperation and also mutual understanding and effective relations between ASEAN and Australia. The 10th ASEAN - Australia Forum was held in Broadbeach, Australia on 23 - 24 February 1986.

The Forum discussed a wide range of subjects and issues of interest to both ASEAN and Australia. It reviewed the dialogue relation and discussed its future direction. There was agreement that increased Australian investment would contribute to the economic growth in the region.

ASEAN informed the Australian delegation about the results of the Meeting of the ASEAN Heads of Government, which was held in Manila on

14 - 15 December 1987. The two sides discussed among other things the implications of the Summit decisions on trade and investment linkages and the opportunities for collaboration in science and technology between ASEAN and Australia.

Taking into account the decision of the ASEAN Summit that the involvement and participation of the private sector in the dialogue process should be encouraged, the Forum explored ways and means of achieving this objective.

The two sides discussed the international economic situation, with particular emphasis on the Uruguay Round, the work of the Cairns Group of Fair Traders in Agriculture and the situation in international commodity trade.

The two sides expressed concern at the threats to the international trading system arising from mounting protectionist pressure and noted their mutual interest in a continuation of the recent recovery in markets for many commodities. It remained important, however, to continue international efforts to liberalise access to markets of developed countries and significantly reduce levels of support and subsidies in agriculture.

In this regard, they agreed on the need to co-operate closely in seeking early concrete results from the Uruguay Round, bearing in mind the valuable contribution that the Cairns Group could provide to this process. They shared the view that tropical products is a priority subject in the negotiations and called for an early agreement by the mid-term review.

The two sides discussed trade issues of concern to ASEAN including Australia's anti-dumping procedures and the impact of the Closer Economic Relations Agreement with New Zealand on ASEAN's trade with Australia. There was an exchange of views on the Foreign Tax Credit System. The Australian side explained the changes announced in the Australian Government May Economic Statement.

The Forum discussed the implementation of the second phase of the ASEAN - Australia Economic Programme (AAECP) which will commence in July 1989 for a five-year period. ASEAN and Australia agreed on the general framework of AAECP Phase II and drafted a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for its implementation. It was agreed that the sectoral concentration of

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AAECP Phase II will be trade and investment promotion; science and technology and agro-based projects, with special reference to HRD. Australia agreed that human resources development would be an important aspect of activities in all sectors.

The Forum also deliberated on on-going projects, projects under FY 1988/89 and new project proposals which could be encompassed by AAECP Phase II.

The Forum was held in a cordial atmosphere

which reinforced the desire of both ASEAN and Australia to intensify their relationship which is now on its fifteenth year.

The delegations from Australia and the ASEAN member countries expressed their appreciation to the Government of the Republic of the Philippines for hosting the 11th ASEAN - Australia Forum and for the hospitality and courtesy extended to them.

The 12th ASEAN - Australia Forum will be held in Australia at a date to be mutually agreed upon.

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* [This document was provided by H.E. Romualdo A. Ong, Ambassador of the Philippines, Canberra].