



P R E S S R E L E A S E

SPECIAL SESSION OF THE ASEAN LABOUR MINISTERS ON OSH, IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE XXI WORLD CONGRESS ON SAFETY AND HEALTH AT WORK

3 SEPTEMBER 2017, SINGAPORE

ASEAN Labour Ministers convened a special session on Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) in conjunction with the XXI World Congress on Safety and Health at Work in Singapore, on 3 September 2017. The meeting was attended by the Labour Ministers from ASEAN Member States, the ASEAN Secretary-General, the Director-General of the International Labour Organisation (ILO), and the President of the International Social Security Association (ISSA).

2. The ASEAN Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to improve occupational safety and health (OSH) for the region's workers, with the signing of an ASEAN Statement on Improving OSH for Sustainable Economic Growth (**Annex A**). The Statement captured the ASEAN Member States' intent to raise OSH standards through reviewing safety regulation, building OSH capabilities, and deepening collaboration, among others.

3. The signing of the Statement clearly indicates that all ASEAN Labour Ministers commit to seriously improve OSH at the workplace,” said H.E. Dr. Khampheng Saysompheng, Minister of Labour and Social Welfare of Lao PDR and Chair of the ASEAN Labour Ministers Meeting (ALMM). “Occupational safety and health is human rights of workers. Improving safety and health at work supports productivity and living condition of workers, and contribute to poverty eradication and national socio-economic development,” he added.

4. Mr Sam Tan, Minister of State for Manpower, Singapore, shared how Singapore would contribute to boosting OSH standards in ASEAN. He said, “Singapore is committed to work with ASEAN member states to enhance OSH capabilities. Specific areas would be training for OSH inspectors, building companies’ expertise in risk management through BizSafe, and developing accreditation frameworks for OSH training providers.”

5. Mr Guy Ryder, Director-General of the ILO, also highlighted that “The ILO is working with ASEAN countries to build a generation of safe and healthy workers. To reach that goal, safety and health must go hand in hand with education, training and skills development. We are pleased to support the collaboration among ASEAN labour ministers to make occupational safety and health a priority, particularly through ASEAN-OSHNET, a model regional network for cooperation among national OSH institutions. Our common efforts will boost proactive safety

and health policies that are key to productivity, competitiveness and sustainable development”

6. In closing, H.E. Le Luong Minh, Secretary-General of ASEAN, said “This year we commemorate the 50th anniversary of ASEAN. In this spirit, the signing of the Statement today is timely. The Statement is a reflection of ASEAN Member States’ understanding and commitment to decent work which is pivotal in sustaining long-term economic growth.” He added, “The Statement concretely shows the collective resolve of ASEAN Member States to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030 and the ASEAN Vision 2025. We need to continue expanding the scope and terrain of occupational safety and health efforts, as well as exploring technologies and innovations to identify and prevent occupational risks.”



**ASEAN LABOUR MINISTERS' STATEMENT ON
IMPROVING OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH
FOR SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH**

WE, the Labour Ministers of Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (hereinafter referred to as "**ASEAN**"), namely Brunei Darussalam, the Kingdom of Cambodia, the Republic of Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, the Republic of the Philippines, the Republic of Singapore, the Kingdom of Thailand and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam on the occasion of the XXI World Congress on Safety and Health at Work 2017 – Special Session of ASEAN Labour Ministers on Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) held in Singapore;

WELCOMING the progress achieved through international and national cooperation and initiatives to improve safety and health at work in ASEAN;

COMMENDING the continued support for the work of the ASEAN Occupational Safety and Health Network (ASEAN-OSHNET) to improve OSH in the ASEAN region;

RECOGNISING the commitment of individual ASEAN Member States to promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all as set out in the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and, in line with the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Vision 2025 of an ASEAN Community that engages and benefits the people and is inclusive, sustainable, resilient, and dynamic;

RECOGNISING ALSO that a robust OSH framework provides a strong foundation in supporting the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community's goal of lifting the quality of life of its people by putting their welfare and well-being as its priority;

RECALLING the aspirations of the Seoul Declaration on Safety and Health at Work adopted by the Safety and Health Summit on 29 June 2008 and the Istanbul Declaration on Safety and Health at Work adopted on 11 September 2011;

RECALLING ALSO that every worker has a right to a safe and healthy working environment;

REAFFIRMING ASEAN's collective resolve to accelerate OSH developments and enhance standards, performance and capabilities in ASEAN through measures to address emerging risks and hazards in the evolving business environment and new technologies;

RECOGNISING that OSH is an integral part of a country's development and encouraging a more action-oriented approach be taken to raise OSH standards through the ASEAN-OSHNET Plan of Action (2016-2020);

DO HEREBY:

Strive to take the following actions to protect the safety, health and welfare of workers in the ASEAN region:

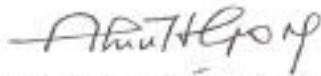
1. Raise OSH standards through developing and regularly reviewing occupational safety and health legislation for adequate coverage of the working population and relevance to the changing economic and social environment;
2. Build OSH inspection capabilities and capacities to ensure that inspectorates are adequately resourced and skilled to enforce their respective OSH legislation;

3. Strengthen risk management capabilities in ASEAN which provides the foundation to improve OSH standards;
4. Enhance the collection of OSH data through improving the ASEAN-OSHNET scorecard;
5. Promote sharing of experiences, best practices and knowledge in OSH through international and ASEAN-OSHNET conferences, workshops and training sessions;
6. Improve private sector OSH capability, by adherence to safety accreditation frameworks for companies and expanding the categories of the ASEAN-OSHNET Awards;
7. Encourage the participation of employers' organisations and workers' organisations in optimizing OSH standards and performance;
8. Improve productivity efficiently by means of new technology at workplace which reduces workplace hazards;
9. Reduce the social costs of injury and illness by improving the OSH performance as well as to contribute to a sustainable economic growth;
10. Increase collaboration with key partners, such as the International Labour Organization (ILO) and Plus Three Countries, which have traditionally provided continuous support.

We task the ASEAN Senior Labour Officials Meeting (SLOM) with the support of ASEAN-OSHNET to implement this Statement, including mobilising appropriate resources, in accordance with the national laws, regulations and policies of Member States.

Done in Singapore on the Third Day of September in the Year Two Thousand and Seventeen, in a single original copy in the English language.

For Brunei Darussalam:



H.E. PEHIN DATO ABU BAKAR APONG
Minister of Home Affairs

For the Kingdom of Cambodia:



H.E. DR. HUY HAN SONG
Secretary of State of Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training

For the Republic of Indonesia:



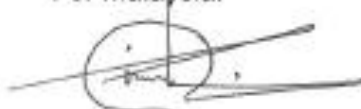
H.E. MUHAMMAD HANIF DHAKIRI
Minister of Manpower

For the Lao People's Democratic Republic:



H.E. DR. KHAMPHENG SAYSOMPHENG
Minister of Labour and Social Welfare

For Malaysia:



H.E. DATO' SRI (DR) RICHARD RIOT JAEM
Minister of Human Resources

For the Republic of the Union of Myanmar:



H.E. THEIN SWE
Union Minister for Labour, Immigration and Population

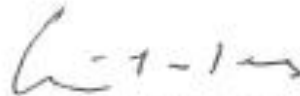
For the Republic of the Philippines:



H.E. SILVESTRE H. BELLO III

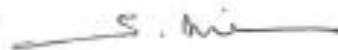
Secretary of the Philippines' Department of Labor and Employment

For the Republic of Singapore:



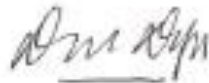
H.E. LIM SWEE SAY
Minister for Manpower

For the Kingdom of Thailand:



GENERAL SIRICHAJ DISTAKUL
Minister of Labour

For the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam:



H.E. DOAN MAU DIEP
Vice Minister of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs

ANNEX B: Key initiatives implemented under ASEAN OSHNET

1. ASEAN-OSHNET Conference

First held in 2014, the ASEAN-OSHNET conference is held annually to raise the profile of Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) within the region. This conference brings together government officials, international OSH experts and business leaders to share insights about developments and best practices that are affecting today's OSH landscape. The conference aims to be the regional platform for stakeholders to come together, network and exchange knowledge and experiences to improve OSH.

2. ASEAN-OSHNET Awards

Introduced in 2015, the awards was the first of its kind for OSH in ASEAN. The awards aims to showcase, recognise and reward companies who have excellent OSH achievements in ASEAN e.g. strong OSH culture and performance. The awards also serve to build a positive image for ASEAN in the process of attracting foreign investments. Award-winners will share their best practices at future ASEAN-OSHNET Conferences.