

NEAT MEMORANDUM No. 16

NETWORK OF EAST ASIAN THINK TANKS (NEAT)

I. INTRODUCTION

The Network of East Asia Think Tanks (NEAT) is track two of the ASEAN Plus Three (APT) that supports the goal of community building in East Asia. East Asian countries seek to promote the welfare and well-being of its peoples by realizing the East Asian Vision of Peace, Prosperity and Progress. To advance peace and prosperity in the region, the East Asia community building process is to be based on universal values, including good governance, the rule of law, democracy, human rights, international law and norms. East Asian countries should promote these values as common goals.

NEAT Japan hosted the 30th NEAT Country Coordinators Meeting (CCM) on 10 May 2019 and 31st NEAT CCM and the 17th NEAT Annual Conference (AC) from 22 to 23 August 2019 in Tokyo, Japan. The theme of the 17th NEAT AC is “Sustainable Development and the Environment.” Representatives from ASEAN Plus Three (APT) countries participated in the meetings.

In 2019, NEAT organized two Working Group (WG) meetings on Networking Cultural Institutions for Socio-Cultural Connectivity in East Asia by NEAT Korea and Towards Building a Sustainable Society in East Asia by NEAT Japan. The detail appears in Annex 1,2. NEAT wishes to appreciate the respective NEAT member countries and participants for their highly valued efforts and contributions.

II. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the activities in 2019, NEAT respectfully submits recommendations in the following two areas for consideration of the APT leaders:-

1. Networking Cultural Institutions for Socio-Cultural Connectivity in East Asia;

In order to promote greater awareness and appreciation of East Asian traditions, heritage and cultures towards a common and shared identity. The recommendations are:

- a. To suggest the APT governments to support the establishment of ASEAN cultural institutions in the member countries
- b. To initiate a collaborative network for cultural institutions in East Asia including the ASEAN Cultural Center, the ASEAN Culture House, Singapore Heritage Society, and Myanmar Cultural Heritage Trust and other related institutions at the national and regional levels.
- c. To suggest that ASEAN Cultural Center and the ASEAN Culture House to coordinate the process of developing the network.

2. Towards Building a Sustainable Society in East Asia;

In East Asia, various emerging problems caused by severe environmental issues are hindering the construction of a sustainable societies and the development that follows. Therefore, it is necessary for East Asia to promptly address the environment issues, such as combating the ocean plastic pollution, and building smart cities. The following are key policy recommendations:

- a. To create an information-sharing platform for smart cities and ocean plastic wastes in ASEAN +3, and to share the examples of best practices to promote a sustainable society among member countries.

- b. To galvanize all the stakeholders such as public officers, entrepreneurs, industrialists, financiers, civil society organizations, and local people to participate in planning and building a smart and sustainable society.
- c. To educate all generations to be aware of health and environmental impacts of plastic debris and to enhance environmentally-friendly practices in daily life.
- d. To build "smart cities" by incorporating local culture and traditional wisdom into the blueprint of a sustainable community.
- e. To promote additional interdisciplinary and scientific research to precisely grasp current situations and future impacts of the marine debris.

IV. CONCLUSION

NEAT greatly appreciates serious consideration by the APT SOM, Ministers and Leaders of the recommendations in this Memorandum. We reiterate our continued support to build a smarter and environmentally friendlier East Asian community.