



**PRESS CONFERENCE STATEMENT  
FOR THE ASEAN TOURISM FORUM (ATF) 2025  
20 JANUARY 2025, JOHOR BAHRU HOTEL**

Good afternoon and welcome, media members, esteemed colleagues, and distinguished guests.

It is an honour to speak at the ASEAN Tourism Forum (ATF) 2025, held alongside Malaysia as ASEAN Chairman from 15 to 20 January in Johor Bahru. With the theme "Unity in Motion: Shaping ASEAN Tourism Tomorrow," this forum focuses on fostering sustainable, resilient, and inclusive tourism in Southeast Asia, reflecting our commitment to building a fair and sustainable ASEAN community. As the Chair, Malaysia is dedicated to incorporating environmentally sustainable and socially inclusive values across economic and social initiatives.

**ATF 2025 Theme and Vision**

The theme, "Unity in Motion: Shaping ASEAN Tourism Tomorrow," highlights collaboration among Member States to transform the region's tourism industry. It highlights ASEAN's cultural and physical connections and focuses on building a resilient, innovative, and sustainable tourism sector. This aligns with Malaysia's goal to make

ASEAN a global leader in sustainable and inclusive tourism through partnerships and forward-thinking initiatives.

Malaysia proudly shares the key outcomes of ministerial meetings held from 19 to 20 January 2025 at the DoubleTree by Hilton Johor Bahru. These discussions focused on strengthening tourism cooperation, enhancing regional integration, and promoting sustainability. Let me share the highlights:

### **The 28th Meeting of ASEAN Tourism Ministers (M-ATM)**

The ASEAN Tourism Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to the ASEAN Tourism Strategic Plan (ATSP) 2016-2025, with 70% of its activities completed. They discussed plans for the 2026-2030 ASEAN Tourism Strategy, focusing on sustainability and resilience. In 2024, ASEAN welcomed over 123 million visitors, a 30.6% increase from 2023. Key achievements include the launch of the "ImaginASEAN Metaverse Game," progress in cruise tourism, and the adoption of the ASEAN Sustainable Event Management Standard. The ASEAN Tourism Ministers highlighted the importance of improving human resources, promoting sustainable tourism, and strengthening crisis communication.

During the meeting, Malaysia proposed standardizing ASEAN Tourism Performance using visitor data to generate more accurate and comprehensive data regarding their economic contributions.

Also, to strengthen the ASEAN-Australia relationship, Malaysia suggested establishing an ASEAN-Australia Mechanism.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

### **The 24th Meeting of ASEAN, China, Japan, and Republic of Korea Tourism Ministers (M-ATM+3)**

The ASEAN Plus Three region saw over 190 million visitors in 2024, showing a strong recovery. About 70% of the APT Tourism Cooperation Work Plan 2021-2025 is complete. Key efforts include China supporting rural tourism, Japan promoting resilience and sustainability, and Korea contributing through the KOPIST Programme. Ministers stressed the need to develop the 2026-2030 Work Plan, focusing on joint marketing and sustainable tourism.

### **The 12th Meeting of ASEAN-India Tourism Ministers (M-ATM+India)**

The ASEAN-India partnership marked 2025 as the ASEAN-India Year of Tourism, strengthening cultural ties and connectivity. India's USD 5 million support for the ASEAN-India Tourism Work Plan 2023-2027 was acknowledged. Discussions focused on cruise tourism, air and maritime links, and sustainable tourism. Ministers highlighted preserving cultural heritage and promoting community-based tourism as key priorities.

### **The 4th Meeting of ASEAN-Russian Federation Tourism Ministers**

ASEAN and Russia reaffirmed their commitment to stronger tourism ties. They focused on cultural exchange, sustainability, and capacity-building. Key priorities include improving tourism education, sharing best practices, and using digital technology to boost resilience. Ministers highlighted the need for mutual learning and innovative solutions for emerging challenges.

## **TRAVEX 2025**

The TRAVEX, held from 15 to 17 January 2025 at Persada Johor, brought together 323 buyers, 221 sellers, 221 exhibitors, and 100 media representatives. It showcased the tourism sector's recovery and growth potential. Attendees participated in productive discussions, networking, and idea sharing to shape the future of tourism in Southeast Asia.

Malaysia, as ASEAN Chair, is pleased to announce that the Philippines will take over the ASEAN Chairmanship and host the ASEAN Tourism Forum (ATF) in 2026. With its rich culture and vibrant tourism, the Philippines will continue advancing ASEAN's tourism goals and collaboration.

The ASEAN Tourism Forum 2025 highlights ASEAN as a strong and dynamic tourism destination. The outcomes of these meetings and partnerships strengthen the region's tourism, promote mutual understanding, and support sustainability. Malaysia remains

committed to working together for an inclusive and sustainable future for ASEAN tourism.

Thank you.