



FINAL

**HIGH-LEVEL FORUM ON
REDUCING VULNERABILITY IN THE FACE OF CRISIS
19-20 February 2009, Jakarta, Indonesia**

RECOMMENDATIONS

We, the participants of the High-Level Forum on Reducing Vulnerability in the Face of Crisis, from Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Japan, Republic of Korea, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam;

Acknowledge that the current financial crisis is not the first for Asia and that it is now having greater impact on the ASEAN+3 Countries at various levels given the differing contexts and at the same time commonalities by which the financial crisis is affecting the region;

Acknowledge that new vulnerable groups have emerged and the vulnerabilities are deepening in our societies as the social impact of the financial crisis spreads;

Mindful that the challenges faced by the ASEAN+3 Countries due to the current financial crisis should be addressed comprehensively through a cross-sectoral regional plan;

Recognise the need for urgent collective responses and coordination between the finance and relevant social ministries of the ASEAN+3 Countries in addressing the social impact of the financial crisis;

Recognise that good practices are being undertaken in some of the ASEAN+3 Countries and that these could then be scaled-up and replicated in other countries as a response to the current financial crisis;

Agree to recommend the following collective actions which are imperative to mitigate the impact of the current financial crisis on the vulnerable groups in ASEAN Member States:

1. Establish an ASEAN Crisis Impact Team comprising experts from finance and relevant social sectors and will be responsible to:
 - Share information, experiences and lessons learned in identifying those affected by the financial crisis; implement policies and programmes responding to the financial crisis; and evaluate the impact of these interventions;

- Provide technical assistance and offer recommendations to the governments of ASEAN Member States in reducing vulnerabilities brought about by the financial crisis, such as food insecurity in the region and inadequate social protection schemes;
 - Identify ways in which ASEAN Member States could access and gain their share of global resources to reduce these same vulnerabilities; and
 - Stimulate joint efforts among ASEAN Member States and collaboration with the private sector, non-governmental organisations, international organisations and other stakeholders in identifying and implementing economic and social responses to the financial crisis.
2. Call upon the ASEAN Finance Ministers to include in the agenda of their Meeting on April 2009 the review of financing for social protection as an integral part of each country's stimulus package/s. This review is aimed at integrating the social impact assessment with the analysis of the financial crisis under the crisis response component of the ASEAN Finance Peer Review Mechanism. The Finance Ministers will also review the existing economic policies and its impact on the emerging vulnerable groups, and, to address the inflexible budget processes that constraints the quick response mechanism and the policies on remittances of overseas migrant workers.
 3. Encourage ASEAN Member States to ensure that their stimulus packages:
 - Include an impact assessment and distributional analysis to determine and monitor effectiveness. The ASEAN Crisis Impact Team shall act as a knowledge broker and advocate the necessary analytical underpinning and quantitative modelling; and
 - Be sufficiently funded to ensure that the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals will not be deviated and that the governments' social spending will not decline. The international partners are recommended to at least maintain their aid levels and support the monitoring and evaluation of the stimulus packages in ASEAN Member States.
 4. Call the relevant ASEAN Bodies to review and manage the social impact of the financial crisis on the vulnerable groups. This will entail modelling the tracking systems for returning migrant workers. This may be achieved by holding a regional workshop on the impact of financial crisis on the migrant workers.
 5. Launch the "ASEAN Voices in Crisis" as an ASEAN initiative that will be led by the ASEAN Secretariat in order to gather, publicise and disseminate the perspectives and voices of ASEAN citizens who are facing the crisis, the impact of measures put in place to assist them, including the related community-based programmes.

6. Work closely with the ASEAN Dialogue Partners and relevant international organisations, such as the Asian Development Bank, World Bank, International Finance Corporation and UN Agencies, to determine the most effective way that these institutions can respond to reducing the vulnerabilities brought about by the financial crisis.

 7. Call upon Indonesia as the only ASEAN country represented in the G20 to deliver the following recommendations during the London G20 Summit given the urgency of a collective response for the crisis-affected ASEAN Member States:
 - Call for the adoption of a dedicated global fund to address vulnerabilities and enable ASEAN Member States to reduce these same vulnerabilities among their citizens;
 - Call for the development of a global early warning system to identify early the impending impact of a crisis to the vulnerable groups; and
 - Call for an enhancement of the roles of the IMF and MDBs to better meet the needs of ASEAN Member States in reducing vulnerabilities.
-