For Immediate Release

FACT SHEET

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The United States and ASEAN: Expanding the Enduring Partnership

U.S. engagement with the ten member states of ASEAN has never been stronger. The United States welcomed the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific, and its close complementarity with America’s Indo-Pacific Strategy, as well as the regional approaches of our allies and partners. The United States aims to uphold sovereignty, transparency, good governance, ASEAN centrality, and a rules-based order, in conjunction with all our allies and partners. Across the four priority areas of the ASEAN Outlook – economic, infrastructure, maritime, and connectivity – ties with the United States have grown ever closer.

Economic Cooperation

- In 2018, U.S. ASEAN two-way trade in goods and services was $334 billion, with U.S. exports of $123 billion.
- U.S. investment in ASEAN reached $271 billion in 2018, more than the U.S. has directed to China and Japan combined.
- The United States and the ASEAN Secretariat announced the opening of negotiations to link the ASEAN “Single Window” with the U.S. Automated Commercial Environment (ACE) System, which governs all trade in goods entering the United States. Making this link will further facilitate $272 billion in two-way trade in goods between the United States and ASEAN.
- The first ASEAN-U.S. Cyber Policy Dialogue, held on October 3 during Singapore International Cyber Week, promoted shared approaches to cyber-security, digital trade, and 5G.

Sustainable Infrastructure Development
• The United States is collaborating with other nations to establish the Blue Dot Network, a multi-sector platform that will provide a globally recognized seal of approval for high-quality infrastructure projects.

• Announced in 2018, the Infrastructure Transaction and Assistance Network (ITAN) Transaction Advisory Fund will provide legal advisory services and technical assistance to ASEAN countries to assess potential infrastructure projects. Specific projects will be announced by the end of 2019. The Department of State invested $47.9 million in the ITAN this year.

• The Digital Connectivity and Cybersecurity Partnership (DCCP) supports communications infrastructure development through private led partnerships by promoting transparent regulatory policies for open competitive markets. DCCP also builds partners’ capacity to address shared security threats, along with capacity building and commercial engagement activities. The Department of State and USAID provided $26.5 million in funding this year for the DCCP.

Maritime Cooperation

• The inaugural ASEAN-U.S. Maritime Exercise, co-hosted with Thailand, featured eight navy and coast guard ships and over 1,000 sailors from all 11 countries.

• Next January, the Southeast Asia Maritime Law Enforcement Initiative’s (SEAMLEI) Commanders’ Forum will bring together regional Coast Guard commanders for discussions and workshops focused on: countering illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing; information sharing through regional maritime fusion centers; and countering maritime security threats.

• Earlier this year, the United States co-hosted the inaugural ARF marine debris workshop, as well as a maritime law enforcement cooperation table-top exercise on countering illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing.

• The United States, in coordination with the UN International Maritime Organization, is organizing a workshop on port safety to combat maritime terrorism in the Indo-Pacific.

Connectivity

• The U.S.-ASEAN Smart Cities Partnership (USASCP), announced by Vice President Pence in November 2018, seeks to connect U.S. public and private sectors with 26 member cities in the ASEAN Smart Cities Network to solve challenges of rapid urbanization. With an initial investment of $10 million, USASCP is developing smart city solutions and strengthening regional cybersecurity capability and capacity.

• The U.S. Department of Transportation, with $2.1 million in support of USASCP, is leading five projects sharing best practices between U.S. and ASEAN cities to create smart public transportation. The five ASEAN-U.S. match-ups will be announced in late 2019, with projects beginning in early 2020.

• Starting in early 2020, the Water Smart Engagements (WiSE) Program will pair three ASCN cities with U.S. cities, districts, and utilities for the purpose of increasing water security in the ASEAN region.
• The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) announced the launch of the **ASEAN Policy Implementation (API) Project.** With an initial commitment of $2 million, USAID will strengthen ASEAN centrality by supporting ASEAN member state implementation of ASEAN policies under the ASEAN Economic Community. USAID will identify and pursue concrete needs and opportunities for supporting the implementation of targeted ASEAN policies at the member state level.

• The United States announced the launch of the **U.S.-ASEAN “Innovation Circle,”** group of 24 innovators and thought leaders – two from each ASEAN country, Timor-Leste, and the United States – who will run a grass-roots competition seeking solutions to regional challenges in: digital economy; women’s entrepreneurship; socially responsible business; and fostering start-up environments.

• The 6th **Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative (YSEALI) Summit 2019** in Phuket, Thailand brought together 150 YSEALI emerging leaders from across the region. The first-prize community project pitch competition winner, **WeAble,** will use seed funding to offer vocational training to 1,000 people with disabilities in four cities in Indonesia.

• The **U.S.-ASEAN Internship Program** currently lists 372 internships at 12 U.S. companies in seven ASEAN countries and continues to expand.

*Connectivity in the Mekong*

The United States continues to promote infrastructure, energy, and the digital economy through programs launched under the U.S. Indo-Pacific Strategy in the strategically important Mekong region. Our engagement has delivered tangible improvements to the lives of the people of the Mekong region through, and we are set to grow our engagement and expand its scope.

In August, Secretary Pompeo announced an additional $45 million in resources to expand engagement in the region.

• **Japan-U.S. Mekong Power Partnership (JUMPP):** $29.5 million to promote and develop principles-based, sustainable Mekong regional energy infrastructure.

• The dedication of $14 million to counter transnational crime and trafficking in drugs, people, and wildlife.

• A partnership with experts from the World Bank, Australia, France, and Japan to conduct dam safety reviews for 55 dams in Lao PDR.

• Support for energy and infrastructure projects to advance liquefied natural gas import terminal sites and gas-to-power projects in Vietnam, and wind and solar power generation.

• A U.S. partnership with the Republic of Korea to apply satellite technology to better assess trends in flooding and droughts, in support of the Mekong River Commission.

• Support for **Ayeyawady-Chao Praya-Mekong Economic Cooperation Strategy (ACMECS)** as a development partner, and aligning LMI and other Indo-Pacific Strategy-funded projects with ACMECS goals.
For further information please contact EAP-Press@state.gov, or visit the U.S. Mission to ASEAN website at https://asean.usmission.gov/.

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