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Press Release

AICHR-EU Dialogue on Disinformation and Misinformation

Singapore, 29 January 2024 – The ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR), in collaboration with the European Union (EU), convened a dialogue on Disinformation and Misinformation in Singapore on 29 January 2024.

The Dialogue consisted of panels aimed at sharing experiences on the impact of disinformation and misinformation, including on the promotion and protection of human rights in ASEAN and the EU. The panelists presented different approaches to counter disinformation and misinformation, with a view towards broadening the regional discussion and ASEAN-EU collaboration on promoting human rights, tolerance and cohesion. The Dialogue contributed to fostering a shared understanding of the global challenge of disinformation and misinformation and discuss ways of tackling the challenge in full respect of human rights.

Disinformation and misinformation are among the biggest challenges facing societies all over the world today. Notwithstanding the positive impact of receiving and sharing information and ideas through the media, and online exchange of ideas and viewpoints, it is also crucial to ensure that all perspectives are presented, based on verifiable facts, to prevent growing social intolerance and polarisation at individual and group levels.

The Dialogue brought together over 50 key stakeholders, including representatives of AICHR, the EU, the ASEAN Secretariat, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), private sector, academia, media and policy researchers. Panellists from Singapore and ASEAN Member States shared on the threats disinformation and misinformation pose to societies today and the legislative and non-legislative measures that has been introduced by governments in Southeast Asia to combat these threats. Experts from the EU and European institutions shared insights and the EU's experience in "identifying, preventing and countering disinformation and foreign information manipulation and interference (FIMI)" with a multi-layered approach and in full respect of the right to freedom of expression and access to information, notably by developing an EU FIMI Toolbox. They also shared two key achievements in the area of regulation with the adoption of the Digital Services Act and the Code of Practice on Disinformation.

The Plan of Action to Implement the ASEAN-EU Strategic Partnership (2023-2027) seeks to strengthen cooperation on countering misinformation and disinformation. It also seeks to strengthen the cooperation between AICHR and the EU through training, regional dialogues, awareness raising activities, exchange of best practices and other capacity-building initiatives. This Dialogue with a broad range of stakeholders in ASEAN and the EU delivers on the AICHR interest and request made during the EU-



ASEAN Policy Dialogues on Human Rights and will serve to enhance the overall ASEAN-EU Policy Dialogue on Human Rights.

The Dialogue was hosted by AICHR Singapore in cooperation with the EU Delegation to ASEAN and supported by the Enhanced Regional EU-ASEAN Dialogue Instrument (E-READI).

About the European Union (EU)

The European Union (EU) is an economic and political union of 27 Member States. Together, the EU has built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development while maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedom. In 2012, the EU was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for advancing the goals of peace, reconciliation, democracy and human rights in Europe. The EU is the world's largest trading bloc, and the world's largest source and destination of foreign direct investment. Collectively, the EU and its Member States are the largest donors of Official Development Assistance (ODA), providing more than half of ODA globally.

The 27 Member States of the EU are: Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Ireland, Greece, Spain, France, Croatia, Italy, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Hungary, Malta, Netherlands, Austria, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Finland and Sweden.

For more information about the EU and its relations and cooperation with ASEAN, access:

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About ASEAN

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) was founded on 8 August 1967 and constitutes ten Member States: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam. On 31 December 2015, the ASEAN Community was formally established. The ASEAN Secretariat is based in Jakarta, Indonesia. For more information about ASEAN, access: asean.org

About AICHR

The ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) was inaugurated by the ASEAN Leaders on 23 October 2009 at the 15th ASEAN Summit in Cha-Am Hua Hin, Thailand. This was further enhanced with the promulgation of the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration (AHRD), adopted in November 2012 with the Phnom Penh Statement on the Adoption of the AHRD signed by ASEAN Leaders. The establishment of the AICHR demonstrates ASEAN's commitment to pursue forward-looking strategies to strengthen the regional cooperation on human rights. The AICHR is designed to be an integral part of ASEAN organisational structure and an overarching institution with overall responsibility for the promotion and protection of human rights in ASEAN. For more information about AICHR, access: aichr.org

About E-READI

The Enhanced Regional EU-ASEAN Dialogue Instrument (E-READI) is an EU-financed programme that facilitates cooperation and dialogue between the EU and ASEAN in policy areas of joint interest. Drawing on the EU's experience of regional integration, E-READI further strengthens both the ASEAN regional integration process as well as the overall ASEAN-EU strategic partnership.