



MINISTRY OF NATURAL RESOURCES
AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

TEXT SPEECH

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**20TH MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES
TO THE ASEAN AGREEMENT ON TRANSBOUNDARY HAZE
POLLUTION (COP-20)**

LANGKAWI INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION CENTER (LICC)

3 SEPTEMBER 2025 (WEDNESDAY)

1. It is my great honour and privilege, as the President of the Twentieth Conference of the Parties to the ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution (AATHP), to warmly welcome all of you to this important meeting, here in Langkawi, Malaysia, together with the esteemed delegation participating virtually. I would also wish to express our appreciation to the ASEAN Secretariat for their invaluable support in facilitating the successful convening of this meeting.
2. This meeting marks a significant milestone in our collective journey since the adoption of the ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution in 2002. Over the past two decades, ASEAN has demonstrated leadership, resilience and commitment in addressing transboundary haze, one of the most persistent and complex environmental challenges faced by our region.
3. The urgency of our work cannot be overstated, for even in years when haze incidents are less severe, complacency is not an option. The fires and haze episodes of 1997, 2006, 2015, and 2023, which were driven by land clearing, agricultural expansion and exacerbated by natural climate phenomena, stand as stark reminders of the scale of the challenge before us.
4. Malaysia experienced transboundary haze incidents in July 2025, which serves as a reminder that despite the progress achieved, our task is far from complete. Transboundary haze is more than an environmental issue. It is linked to climate change, economic resilience, and the wellbeing of our people. Thus, our discussions today must also be seen in the context of the global climate agenda. The Paris Agreement urges all Parties to enhance climate action. For ASEAN, achieving a Haze-Free ASEAN by 2030 is not only consistent with our environmental commitments, but also contributes to global goals on emission reduction, biodiversity conservation, and sustainable development.
5. It is therefore incumbent upon us to ensure that our collective response is not reactive but preventive, not temporary but sustained. Our deliberations today must not only reaffirm ASEAN's strong commitment to the full and effective implementation of the

AATHP, but also reinforce the sustained exercise of political will and leadership. Too often, momentum intensifies only in moments of crisis and recedes once the skies clear. This cycle must be broken through consistent commitment at the highest levels.

6. Equally important is the positioning of science as the cornerstone of policy-making. Decisions anchored in sound evidence, credible data and trusted expertise will not only guide the right actions but also deliver tangible and lasting results.
7. In this regard, I also wish to call upon ASEAN Member States to strengthen our regional cooperation with dialogue partners, development agencies and international institutions. Stronger collaboration, knowledge-sharing and innovative financing are essential to support our initiatives in prevention, early warning, mitigation and capacity-building efforts.
8. As we look towards 2030, let us remember that a Haze-Free ASEAN is not merely an aspiration, but a collective responsibility to our people, our ecosystems and our future generations. The haze crisis is a recurring reminder that regional challenges require regional solutions, guided by solidarity and the spirit of One ASEAN.
9. I am confident that our discussions will provide a platform for meaningful dialogues, renewed commitments and concrete actions. Let us continue to uphold the ASEAN spirit of solidarity and shared responsibility, to achieve our collective vision.
10. With that, I look forward to a productive session and meaningful recommendations from this Twentieth COP Meeting. Together, let us demonstrate to the world ASEAN's unity and determination in addressing transboundary haze and its broader linkages to climate change and sustainable development.

Thank you.