

SPEECH BY

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**On the occasion of
The 4th Meeting of ASEAN Soil and Nutrient
Management Experts Group
For the ASEAN Guidelines on Soil and Nutrient
Management (SNM)**

**11 -12th May 2016
At Bilik Permai,
Department of Agriculture and Agrifood
Brunei Darussalam**

BISMILLAHIRRAHMANNIRRAHIM

Chairperson of the Experts Group

ASEAN Delegates

Directors, Senior Officers,

Ladies and Gentlemen

ASSALAMMUALAIKUM WARAHMATULLAHI

WABARAKATUH

And

A very good morning!

It is indeed a great honour and pleasure for Brunei Darussalam to have the opportunity to host the 4th Meeting of ASEAN Soil and Nutrient Management Experts Group for developing the ASEAN Guidelines on Soil and Nutrient Management (SNM). As such, I would like to welcome and extend my deep appreciation to all the ASEAN 2 delegates, Regional Coordinator of German International Cooperation (GIZ) for ASEAN Sustainable Agrifood Systems (ASEAN -SAS), Bangkok, Thailand and guests for giving your time and commitment to attend this important meeting here in Brunei Darussalam.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As we are aware of the fact that, the current land use practices together with harsh climatic conditions and population pressure have led to soil degradation, loss of soil fertility, declining crop yields and malnutrition, and subsequent declining in livelihood. Further, I would like to highlight that an enhancement in productivity of food crop is unlikely to be achieved without ensuring that crops have adequate and balanced supply of nutrients.

Rehabilitation of the productive capacity of soil for crop production is the key issue and addressed in **ASEAN Sustainable Agrifood Systems (ASEAN SAS)**. If soil quality is poor, it cannot function effectively, thus incapable to sustain a productive agriculture. However, there is good scope to achieve through integrated approach to conserve and manage soil and nutrient. This will have enormous impact on sustainability of agriculture and food production in the region and based on the different soil and nutrient management practices followed among the ASEAN Member States. The establishment of Regional mechanism for cooperation and coordinating on soil and nutrient management at regional level will significantly benefit the ASEAN Member States.

The initiative on "Development of Regional Guidelines on Soil and Nutrient Management" launched in 2014, is a very significant Development. This emphasises the need for good cooperation among ASEAN Member States to establish a regional working group to develop a set of recommendation on soil and nutrient management for the region. It is expected that ASEAN Guidelines on Soil and Nutrient Management will provide regionally coordinated guidance to facilitate decision makers in formulation of policy recommendations on soil and nutrient management, that will promote sustainable agrifood systems in the region.

It is understood, that in the past, the experts group has made good progress through preliminary discussions and documented, relevant technical information from each member states through several meetings at country level followed by regional level. The current meeting will facilitate in reviewing, of the inputs documented from member 5 states and its incorporation in framing ASEAN guidelines on Soil and Nutrient Management.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I wish the members have a fruitful discussion, sharing experiences and lesson learnt on the management of soil nutrient in promoting sustainable

agrifood systems in the region. I am confident that the outcomes of the meeting, will help in formulating the ASEAN Soil and Nutrient Management guidelines on which, can be implemented by all ASEAN Member States for sustainable use of land for agriculture production besides taking care of the environmental issues.

Finally, let me take this opportunity once again to extend my warmest welcome to all the ASEAN delegates and guests and to thank the German International Cooperate Regional Coordinator for making these 6 meetings possible. I wish you all have a memorable stay in Brunei Darussalam.

With the kalimah BISMILLAHIRRAHMANNIRRAHIM, I declare the 4th Meeting of ASEAN Soil and Nutrient Management Experts Group for developing the ASEAN Guidelines on Soil and Nutrient Management (SNM) open.

Thank you very much

**WABILLAHITAUFIKWALHIDAYAHWASSALAMUALAIKUM
WARAHMATULLAHIWABARAKATUH**