

CO-CHAIRS' PRESS RELEASE
9th ASEAN-PACIFIC ALLIANCE MINISTERIAL MEETING

1. The 9th ASEAN-Pacific Alliance Ministerial Meeting was held on September 22nd, 2026, on the sidelines of the 81st Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in New York City, USA. The Meeting was co-chaired by Secretary of Foreign Affairs of the United States of Mexico, H.E. Roberto Velasco Álvarez, in his capacity as Pro Tempore Presidency of the Pacific Alliance for 2026 and Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Thailand, H.E. Vijavat Isarabhakdi, in his capacity as Country Coordinator for ASEAN-Pacific Alliance Relations for 2026.
2. The Secretary and the Vice Minister reaffirmed ASEAN's and the Pacific Alliance's unwavering commitment to multilateralism, the rules-based multilateral trading system, and regional integration. They underscored the continued relevance of inter-regional cooperation in mutually beneficial areas, including trade and investment, digital economy initiatives –such as the ASEAN Digital Economy Framework Agreement (DEFA) and regional digital transformation –the green economy, MSME competitiveness, sustainable development, tourism, cultural, academic and people-to-people exchanges.
3. The Ministers took note of recent developments in ASEAN, including the 48th ASEAN Summit and the 59th ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting. The Ministers welcomed progress under the Philippines' ASEAN Chairship in 2026, including the successful convening of the High-Level Conference of the High Contracting Parties to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC) to commemorate the TAC's 50th anniversary, progress in maritime cooperation including the adoption of the ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on Maritime Cooperation, and the conclusion of negotiations on the ASEAN Digital Economy Framework Agreement (DEFA). They also noted updates on the implementation of ASEAN 2045: Our Shared Future and its four Strategic Plans, and the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) Work Plan V (2026-2030), as well as progress under the ASEAN Smart Cities Network (ASCN) and ASEAN's sustainable development cooperation, and encouraged the Pacific Alliance to explore opportunities for cooperation in these areas.
4. The Ministers took note of developments in the Pacific Alliance in 2026, under its Pro Tempore Presidency, including progress in promoting women's economic empowerment, youth development, MSME competitiveness, digital transformation, sustainable fisheries, tourism, culture, cybersecurity, trade facilitation, and regional economic integration. They welcomed initiatives such as the Ministerial Declaration on Culture, the 2026 Investor's Guide to Tourism, the Roadmap for the Economic Empowerment for the Youth, the Student and Academic Mobility Platform and Youth Volunteer Programme, the Cooperation Fund, and ongoing initiatives on sustainable tourism, MSME development, digital security, and trade facilitation; and further noted efforts to strengthen external engagement, including closer engagement with Asia-Pacific partners and work to advance regional and global value chain integration.

5. The Ministers took note of the progress of the ASEAN-Pacific Alliance Work Plan (2021-2026) and welcomed its extension until the end of 2027 to complete remaining activities, including the ASEAN-Pacific Alliance Cultural Week, The Technical Dialogue on Plastic Waste Management, the MSMEs technical assistance initiative, and the proposal for a webinar on youth employability.
6. The Ministers welcomed the launch of the ASEAN-Pacific Alliance Cultural Week as concrete deliverable and underscored the importance of developing a more focused and action-oriented successor Work Plan (2028-2032), while ensuring alignment with the ASEAN 2045: Our Shared Future and the Pacific Alliance Vision 2030.
7. The Ministers highlighted the importance of continuing work to define the successor Work Plan for 2028-2032. They also emphasized the need to strengthen digital economy cooperation, including through exploring complementarities between the ASEAN Digital Economy Framework Agreement (DEFA) and the Pacific Alliance Regional Digital Market Roadmap. The Ministers also identified potential areas for cooperation that could be considered, including artificial intelligence, regional and global value chains, MSME development, trade, investment, the blue and green economies, such as carbon markets and trading and hydrogen capacity-building, as well as science, technology, and innovation, including women in STEM.
8. The Ministers underscored Singapore's progress towards Associated State status and the Pacific Alliance–Singapore Free Trade Agreement as a precedent for other ASEAN Member States to strengthen ties with the Pacific Alliance.
9. The Ministers expressed support for exploring opportunities to strengthen people-to-people connectivity through education, research and youth exchanges, including through the possible the establishment of an ASEAN-Pacific Alliance Youth Fellowship Programme to promote youth empowerment, and reiterated their commitment to pursuing regional integration and inter-regional cooperation initiatives, looking forward to further strengthening a practical, focused and results-oriented partnership that delivers tangible outcomes for the peoples of both regions.