

**OPENING REMARKS OF THE MINISTER OF HEALTH
BRUNEI DARUSSALAM AT THE 6TH ASEAN-CHINA HEALTH
MINISTERS MEETING**

BY

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH
BRUNEI DARUSSALAM

Delivered during the

7th September 2017, Bandar Seri Begawan



- Your Excellencies, Fellow Ministers and Heads of Delegates
- Your Excellency Mr Vongthep Arthakaivavatee, Deputy Secretary General
- Fellow delegates and invited guests
- Ladies and Gentlemen

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته

and Good Afternoon

1. It is my great pleasure to be here this afternoon with all of you and it is an honour for Brunei Darussalam to be the host country to this Meeting. On behalf of the Government of Brunei Darussalam, I would like to express our gratitude to colleagues from fellow ASEAN Member States and colleagues from the People's Republic of China for your participation in our meeting this afternoon.

2. This year marks the 26th year of ASEAN-China dialogue relations and the health sector has benefited immensely from this partnership. This partnership has been cemented through the *Memorandum of Understanding on Health Cooperation Between the People's Republic of China and the Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations* that was established in 2012. Through this MOU, we have a firm foundation for a strategic partnership based on the principles of good friendship, and mutual cooperation on our areas of common interest.

3. Our continued collaboration is testament to the importance that our countries place on health and a recognition that the value of health capital exceeds any other form of capital. We strongly believe that developing and maintaining the vitality of health systems in the region and promoting regional cooperation in health, not only will we enhance people's health, but it also add a vital contribution to economic and social development in our region.

4. For this to happen more effectively, we need to transform our conceptualisation of health and healthcare from a 20th century model in which the government is the provider of healthcare, to a 21st century world in which we empower the people to become active healthcare citizens. One key tool that we can harness in this approach is the use of technology. Technology is an enabler that can allow people to have data and information to make informed choices about their health and can empower them to better manage their health, care and treatment. Although the potential is obvious, many of us are still learning how we can best operationalise and make use of these new tools in the interests of human health and wellbeing. Therefore, I look forward with interest to the round table discussion later this afternoon where we may have a chance to learn and to share our experiences.

5. I hope that we will have a productive and fruitful meeting ahead. I am sure that our discussion today will build on the excellent partnership work being undertaken, and that we can continue with the momentum and drive to make the real change we need. I hereby declare the 6th ASEAN-China Health Ministers Meeting officially open.

Thank you.