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Reaffirming Australia's Defence partnership with ASEAN

10 November 2021

Defence Ministers from Australia and Southeast Asia have come together virtually for the ASEAN-Australia Informal Defence Ministers' Meeting.

Minister for Defence, the Hon Peter Dutton MP, said he was pleased to reaffirm Australia's commitment to ASEAN.

"ASEAN sits at the heart of the Indo-Pacific and Australia is proud to be ASEAN's oldest Dialogue Partner and a long-standing partner for defence cooperation," Minister Dutton said.

"Australia is also a strong supporter of the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific, which aligns with our vision for an open, inclusive and resilient region based on sovereignty and international law.

"We remain committed to the principles in the Outlook, including ASEAN centrality, openness, transparency, inclusivity, good governance, a rules-based framework and respect for sovereignty and international law.

"We look forward to working closely with ASEAN partners to set out how the Outlook applies from a defence perspective.

"I thank Brunei for hosting the meeting, and for its stewardship as the ASEAN Chair over the last year."

Minister Dutton outlined developments in Australia's defence partnership with the region, including expansion of the resident Defence Attaché and Adviser network to all ASEAN member states and the roll-out of training on peacekeeping and Women, Peace and Security.

Minister Dutton also briefed counterparts on AUKUS. He stressed AUKUS was not a defence alliance or security pact and did not change Australia's strategy. He confirmed AUKUS was a framework for sharing technology and capability, and would complement Australia's network of international partnerships, including ASEAN.

During the meeting, Minister Dutton announced Australia would become the first Plus partner to join ASEAN's Direct Communications Infrastructure, which is designed to play an important role in crisis management.

Following a successful inaugural cohort of students, and consistent with the ASEAN for Australia Futures Initiative, Minister Dutton also announced a doubling of the ASEAN-Australia Defence Postgraduate Scholarship Program.



[\(/minister/peter-dutton\)](#)

The Hon Peter Dutton MP [\(/minister/peter-dutton\)](#)

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