

Full Speech – Draft

**WELCOME REMARKS BY
DATUK SERI DR. ABDUL FATTAH ABDULLAH
PRESIDENT OF ANGKASA &
ASEAN CO-OPERATIVE ORGANIZATION (ACO)**

**CLOSING OF ASEAN COOPERATIVE DIALOGUE
(ACD) 2025**

**14TH MAY 2025
SUNWAY RESORT HOTEL, SUNWAY CITY,
PETALING JAYA, MALAYSIA**

Assalamualaikum Warahmatullahi
Wabarakatuh,

**YB Dato' Sri Ramanan Krishnan.
Deputy Minister of Entrepreneur and
Cooperative Development,**

**Honorable Ministers,
Government Officials,
Cooperative Leaders,
Esteemed Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

1.As we come to the end of the ASEAN
Cooperative Dialogue (ACD) 2025, I would

like to thank everyone for being here and taking part in this important gathering. Over the past two days, we have shared ideas, discussed challenges, and explored new opportunities together. Through these meaningful conversations, one thing has become very clear — cooperatives should no longer be left behind in ASEAN's economic plans.

2. Tonight, our commitment to strengthening the cooperative movement is witnessed by none other than, **YB Dato' Sri Ramanan Krishnan.**

Deputy Minister of Entrepreneur and Cooperative Development. His presence shows that more people now see cooperatives as an important part of building the economy, improving communities, and bringing ASEAN countries closer together.

Ladies and gentleman

3. In many ASEAN countries, small and medium businesses have received good support from the government through incentives, funding, and policies. But for cooperatives, this support is still growing and needs more attention. This is not only in Malaysia, but also in other ASEAN countries.

4. Because of this, we may have missed some good opportunities as cooperatives were not always part of the main economic plans. In the future, we hope cooperatives can be given a bigger role to help develop the economy and improve the lives of people in our region.

5. At the same time, I would like to sincerely commend the government of Malaysia, led by YAB Dato' Sri Anwar Ibrahim, the Prime Minister of Malaysia, for his clear commitment and support in uplifting the cooperative movement, especially through ASEAN platforms. His leadership gives us new confidence and encouragement to continue strengthening cooperatives together in this region.

6. Cooperatives have shown their value in many areas such as agriculture, financial services, retail, and even in digital innovation. We have contributed to economic growth and community development. However, there is still room for cooperatives to be more involved in policymaking and national economic planning. We believe with stronger collaboration and continuous engagement, cooperatives can play an even bigger role in supporting the government's efforts to build a more inclusive and resilient economy.

7. The discussions we had during this dialogue must translate into action. We cannot afford to let this momentum slip away. We must work hand in hand with our governments, apex bodies, and regional partners to ensure that cooperatives receive the recognition, funding, and policy support they rightfully deserve.

8. As the President of ACO, I urge all ASEAN member states to unite behind our accreditation process. ACO must be

recognized as the official cooperative body of ASEAN, just as other economic sectors have their respective representatives. This will allow us to engage directly with ASEAN leaders, propose cooperative-friendly policies, and ensure that we are no longer left behind.

9. I call upon all of you—government leaders, apex bodies, and cooperative organizations—to stand with us and commit to making cooperatives a priority in national and regional economic planning.

10. If we succeed in this mission, we will not only uplift millions of cooperative members across ASEAN, but we will also build a more inclusive, resilient, and people-centered economy.

11. With that, I extend my deepest gratitude to our honorable Deputy Minister, our esteemed government leaders, and all delegates for their commitment to this cause. Let us move forward together, stronger and more united than ever before.

12. Thank you, and I look forward to seeing the cooperative movement reach new heights in ASEAN.