

**OPENING REMARKS FOR
SG DATO LIM JOCK HOI**

THE ASEAN DAY FOR DISASTER MANAGEMENT (ADDM)

“Bridging Disaster Recovery to Resilience”

4 October 2019, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar

- *His Excellency, **Henry Van Thio**, Vice President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar,*
- *His Excellency, **Professor Win Myat Aye**, Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar;*
- *Excellencies – ASEAN Ministers responsible for disaster management,*
- *Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,*

A very good morning. *Min-ga-lar-bar.*

1. It is with great honour to speak here at the Opening Ceremony of the 7th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Management and 8th Conference of the Parties of the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.

2. We are very grateful for the presence of the Vice President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, His Excellency Henry Van Thio, and the important message he conveyed in his opening remarks. I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, particularly the Ministry of Social

Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, for the excellent hosting arrangements and the warm hospitality extended to all of us.

3. Today also marks the 'ASEAN Day for Disaster Management'. ASEAN has observed this day in every October since 2006, in conjunction with the United Nations' International Day for Disaster Reduction. On this day, we raise regional awareness on the importance of building a more resilient ASEAN Community. I believe that ASEAN can achieve our collective goal in the region to enhance disaster resilience by 'Bridging Disaster Recovery to Resilience'.

Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

4. Being the most disaster-prone region in the world, ASEAN countries are constantly threatened by different types of disasters including floods, tropical storms, tsunamis, earthquakes, and landslides. The recent experiences show that storms and flooding are the most common and repetitive in many countries over time, constituting over 80 percent of all the natural disasters in the region. In August and September 2019, we experienced devastating flood situations in Lao PDR, Thailand, Vietnam and the Philippines, caused by Tropical Storm Podul and Tropical Depression Kajiki, affecting around 2 million people.

5. In response, particularly to the flood in Lao PDR, ASEAN exerted solidarity through our ASEAN regional mechanisms, such as the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER), the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA Centre), and the ASEAN Emergency Response and Assessment Teams (ASEAN-ERAT). Our

Disaster Emergency Logistics System for ASEAN (DELSA), through our regional stockpile in Subang, Malaysia, have proven extremely useful in times of disaster. I would also like to share that some ASEAN members through the AHA Centre have contributed to the recovery efforts in Palu in Indonesia by constructing an 'ASEAN Village' there.

6. Let me bring to your attention the evolving climate change trajectories that will continue to increase the frequency and intensity of the earlier-mentioned disasters as well as the vulnerability of the disaster-affected people. To this end, we are working closely with regional and international organisations to prevent and mitigate serious adverse effects that climate change may bring to our region. We conducted a study early this year, jointly with the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), which concludes that drought in many parts of South-East Asia may become even more frequent and intense if actions are not taken now to build resilience. In September this year, at the United Nations, ASEAN has pledged its support and cooperation in tackling the climate change issues at the UN Climate Action Summit in New York.

Excellencies,

Ladies and gentlemen,

7. ASEAN has collectively achieved many milestones, yet much remains to be done to strengthen our resilience. Through the ASEAN Declaration on Culture of Prevention (COP), ASEAN strives to foster a culture of resilience and care for the environment to prevent disaster risks. We will take into consideration the issues that I have mentioned in developing the 2021-2025 cycle of the Work Programme for the AADMER. I would also like to take this opportunity to reiterate the need

for enhanced cross sectoral coordination and the adoption of a whole-of-society approach in our regional efforts in disaster management and humanitarian assistance.

8. We are witnessing a steady increase in the number, magnitude, and new patterns of disasters globally. The damages caused by natural disasters in our region alone is estimated to reach approximately USD 4.4 billion each year on average. With this in mind, ASEAN is developing the ASEAN Disaster Risk Financing and Insurance (ADRFI) Roadmap, involving our Finance and Central Bank Deputies and Insurance Regulators colleagues.

Excellencies,

Ladies and gentlemen,

9. Before I conclude, I would like express my appreciation to the Dialogue and International Partners for their contribution of to the disaster management sector in the region. In this regard, allow me to highlight the importance to continue working together with our dialogue partners and international organisations engaged in disaster management. This will become even more crucial as we move towards enhancing our capacity in disaster management and strengthening the role of the AHA Centre in the spirits of the ASEAN Vision 2025 on Disaster Management and One ASEAN One Response Declaration.

10. Last but not least, I wish to reiterate my appreciation for the ASEAN Ministers who have come together here today for the 7th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Management and 8th Meeting of the

Conference of the Parties to ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response.

Thank you.