

CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT ON ASEAN COLLECTIVE RESPONSE TO THE OUTBREAK OF CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019

1. The Heads of State/Government of ASEAN Member States express serious concerns over the outbreak of the respiratory illness caused by the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) which poses severe challenges to the well-being of the peoples and the development of our respective countries and the region and the world;
2. We recognise the declaration by the World Health Organisation (WHO) on 30 January 2020 that the situation is a “public health emergency of international concern” (PHEIC);
3. We reaffirm our firm commitment and resolve to ensure a peaceful and safe living environment for the people, and the sustainable growth of ASEAN Member States and the region;
4. We emphasize the importance of ASEAN solidarity and the spirit of a Cohesive and Responsive ASEAN Community in facing the outbreak of the COVID-19 and similar challenges;
5. We express our solidarity and heartfelt support for the Government and people of the People’s Republic of China, and for all countries around the world, in their tremendous endeavours to address the outbreak of the COVID-19.
6. We note with satisfaction on-going efforts by individual ASEAN Member State and commend the pro-active role and timely actions taken by the ASEAN Health sector, in collaboration with partners from the People’s Republic of China, Japan and the Republic of Korea (the Plus Three countries) in the prevention and control of the spread of the COVID-19; and welcome the encouraging outcome of the Special Video Conference of the ASEAN Plus Three Senior Officials Meeting on Health Development (SOMHD) on COVID-19, held on 3 February 2020.
7. We stress the important role of the WHO in the global campaign to control and contain the spread of the COVID-19 and commend their efforts in addressing the outbreak;
8. We recognize the critical importance of an orchestrated response and collective actions of ASEAN in curbing the spread of the disease;
9. Building upon existing measures undertaken by individual ASEAN Member State and ASEAN’s regional health mechanisms, we resolve to:

- Reaffirm ASEAN's commitment to collectively respond to the outbreak of the COVID-19;
 - Further strengthen the coordination of national and regional efforts in ensuring ASEAN's readiness and responsive measures to mitigate and subsequently eliminate the threats of the COVID-19;
 - Intensify timely sharing of information, experiences and best practices among ASEAN Member States, between ASEAN and China, other partners, the WHO and international organisations, on the prevention, detection, and treatment of the COVID-19 infections;
 - Encourage the continued utilization and strengthening of regional mechanisms for coordination and cooperation in response to this threat;
 - Task the ASEAN Health sector to establish close networking with relevant sectoral bodies of ASEAN in the areas of consular, immigration and transportation, among others, to ensure a coherent and holistic approach of the ASEAN Community in response to the disease;
 - Task the ASEAN Coordinating Council (ACC) to monitor and make proper reports and recommendations to the 36th ASEAN Summit;
 - While affirming our consistent policies of maintaining our economies and our borders open, emphasize the need to coordinate and standardize measures to ensure proper health inspection at borders and entry points of ASEAN Member States;
 - Instruct diplomatic missions of ASEAN Member States in third countries to provide appropriate consular assistance to nationals of ASEAN Member States in needy situations;
 - Strengthen cooperation to ensure that the people in our community are rightly and thoroughly informed on the COVID-19 situation and are not being misled by disinformation pertaining to the COVID-19;
10. We are determined to work closely and actively with ASEAN's partners and the international community to mitigate the adverse impacts of the COVID-19;
 11. We pledge ASEAN's high priority in dealing with this dangerous disease and urge the international community to support ASEAN in this effort./.