

**ASEAN FOREIGN MINISTERS' STATEMENT
ON THE IMPORTANCE OF MAINTAINING PEACE AND STABILITY
IN SOUTHEAST ASIA
(8 August 2020)**

We, the ASEAN Foreign Ministers, on the 53rd anniversary of the establishment of ASEAN, recall the aspirations of the 1967 ASEAN Declaration to promote regional cooperation in the spirit of equality and partnership, and contribute towards peace, progress and prosperity in the region.

We note with satisfaction the achievements made by ASEAN in the past 53 years, in particular the progress in the realisation of a rules-based, people-oriented, and people-centred ASEAN Community.

We reaffirm our strong commitment to ensuring the effective implementation of the ASEAN Community Vision 2025, and sustaining the momentum of ASEAN Community building beyond 2025.

Having closely followed the growing uncertainties resulting from the changing geo-political dynamics in the regional and global landscape, noting with concern that these may have detrimental ramifications for the region, and acknowledging that without peace and stability, sustainable progress and prosperity would be unattainable, we, the ASEAN Foreign Ministers:

1. Reiterate our commitment to maintaining Southeast Asia as a region of peace, security, neutrality and stability, and strengthening peace-oriented values in the region in line with international law.
2. Reaffirm the need for ASEAN to remain united, cohesive, and resilient in promoting its purposes, principles, and common interest as enshrined in the ASEAN Charter.
3. Further reaffirm the importance of upholding the purposes and principles of the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC) as well as in the Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality Declaration, and the Declaration of the East Asia Summit on the Principles for Mutually Beneficial Relations.
4. Call on all countries to exercise self-restraint in the conduct of activities that would complicate or escalate disputes and affect peace and stability, to refrain from the threat or use of force, and to resolve differences and disputes by peaceful means in accordance with international law.
5. Call for the continued building of strategic trust and mutual confidence among countries through continued dialogue, win-win

cooperation and practical confidence building measures to create a peaceful environment conducive for sustainable growth.

6. Commit ourselves to strengthening ASEAN Centrality and encourage the constructive engagement of ASEAN's external partners, through ASEAN-led mechanisms such as the East Asia Summit (EAS), ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM-Plus), in building mutual trust and confidence as well as an open, transparent, inclusive and rules-based regional architecture.
7. Reaffirm the objectives and principles of the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP) and encourage external partners to work with ASEAN in promoting the AOIP and undertaking cooperation on the key areas of cooperation identified in the Outlook to enhance mutual trust, mutual respect and mutual benefit through ASEAN-led mechanisms.
8. Reiterate our commitment to supporting multilateralism founded on the principles of the UN Charter and anchored in international law, while emphasising a multilateral approach in addressing emerging challenges and actively shaping a more effective rules-based multilateral architecture that is capable of tackling pressing common regional and global issues.