



**CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT OF THE 43<sup>RD</sup> ASEAN SUMMIT  
JAKARTA, INDONESIA, 5 SEPTEMBER 2023**

1. We, the Heads of State/Government of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), gathered in Jakarta, Indonesia, on 5 September 2023 for the 43<sup>rd</sup> ASEAN Summit under the Chairmanship of the Republic of Indonesia, with the theme "ASEAN Matters: Epicentrum of Growth." The Summit was chaired by H.E. Joko Widodo, President of the Republic of Indonesia, and convened in accordance with the ASEAN Charter.
2. We reviewed ASEAN's progress and reaffirmed our commitment to further strengthen ASEAN as an organisation that is robust and agile, equipped with strengthened capacity and institutional effectiveness to address today's challenges and to remain relevant for its people, the region, and the world while continuing to serve as an epicentre of growth and prosperity for the region and beyond.
3. We reaffirmed our commitment to strengthening the ASEAN Community, its unity and Centrality. We also reaffirmed our shared commitment to maintaining and promoting peace, security and stability in the region, as well as to the peaceful resolution of disputes, including full respect for legal and diplomatic processes, without resorting to the threat or use of force, in accordance with the universally recognised principles of international law, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).
4. We reiterated the importance of maintaining an ASEAN-centred, open, inclusive, transparent, resilient regional architecture that upholds international law and rules that strengthen our engagement and cooperation with Dialogue Partners and external partners, including through existing ASEAN-led mechanisms, to promote peace, stability, security, and development.
5. We reaffirmed our strong commitment to upholding regionalism and multilateralism and emphasised the importance of adhering to key principles, shared values, and norms enshrined in the United Nations (UN) Charter, the ASEAN Charter, the Declaration on Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality (ZOPFAN), the 1976 Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC), the 1982 UNCLOS, the Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ), the 2011 Declaration on the East Asia Summit on the Principles for Mutually Beneficial Relations and the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP).
6. We are committed to intensifying our work towards a people-oriented, people-centred, and ASEAN-rules-based Community, and continued to encourage

the meaningful participation of the people, societies and other stakeholders in the ASEAN Community-building process.

## **ASEAN COMMUNITY BUILDING**

7. We emphasised our dedicated efforts to sustain the momentum of ASEAN Community-building, ensuring the full and effective implementation of the ASEAN Community Vision 2025, and reiterated the importance of cross-pillar, cross-sectoral coordination and the significance of a holistic, coordinated response and coherent approach to addressing the increasingly multi-dimensional character and complexities of issues facing ASEAN.
8. We noted with satisfaction the progress in implementing the recommendations of Mid-Term Reviews (MTRs) of the ASEAN Community Blueprints 2025 and the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity (MPAC) 2025. We commended the active efforts by ASEAN Member States and Sectoral Bodies across the three ASEAN Community pillars in ensuring the effective realisation of the ASEAN Community Blueprints 2025 in the face of global and regional challenges.
9. We reiterated the necessity for ASEAN to be adaptive, responsive and forward-looking, and able to anticipate opportunities and address emerging challenges and future shocks.
10. We agreed that the Philippines shall assume the ASEAN Chairmanship in 2026 and, subsequently, the Chairmanship rotation will continue based on alphabetical order until a different decision is made.
11. We agreed to change the name of ASEAN's premises in Jakarta to ASEAN Headquarters. This reflects ASEAN's determination to strengthen its diplomatic processes for ASEAN's community building and role as a locomotive for the region's peace, stability, and prosperity.

## **KEY DELIVERABLES**

### **ASEAN Matters: Epicentrum of Growth**

12. We adopted the ***ASEAN Concord IV***, which consolidated our continued efforts to ensure that ASEAN matters to our people and for the region, and remains an epicentre of growth in the Indo-Pacific and beyond. The ASEAN Concord IV also serves as a solid foundation and reflects the commitment to work towards the ASEAN Community Vision 2045 and its attendant documents in order to build a resilient, innovative, dynamic, and people-centred ASEAN that is able to anticipate opportunities and address emerging and future challenges.
13. We adopted the ***ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on ASEAN Human Rights Dialogue*** that underscored the importance of fostering a culture of dialogue in advancing the promotion and protection of human rights in the region. We also underscored the importance of the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) role as the overarching human rights

institution in ASEAN to engage in dialogue and consultation in advancing the promotion and protection of human rights in the region through its meetings and activities, including the convening of the ASEAN Human Rights Dialogue.

14. We adopted the ***ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on ASEAN as an Epicentrum of Growth*** that affirmed our commitment to strengthen the region's capacity as the epicentre of growth by navigating and responding to global challenges and unleashing the region's full growth potential amidst the megatrends, reaffirmed our efforts to strengthen resilience against future shocks, leverage new growth drivers, and embrace a forward-looking and future-proofed ASEAN agenda.
15. We adopted the ***ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on Strengthening Food Security and Nutrition in Response to Crises*** that highlighted our commitment to ensure rapid action on food security and nutrition in response to crises as well as strengthen preparedness for long-term resilience and sustainability of agri-food systems. We looked forward to the adoption of Joint Statements between ASEAN and Australia, Canada, and India respectively on strengthening food security and nutrition in response to crises.
16. We adopted the ***ASEAN Declaration on Disability Inclusive Development and Partnership for a Resilient ASEAN Community***, acknowledging the strategic position of regional cooperation to mainstream the rights of persons with disabilities and ensure their full participation in society to enable them to better contribute to the region's inclusive development and growth.
17. We adopted the ***ASEAN Leaders' Statement on the Development of the Digital Economy Framework Agreement***, which underscored our commitment to develop an enabling environment for a robust ASEAN digital economy and strengthen regional digital integration and transformation toward an ASEAN Digital Economic Community 2045.
18. We adopted the ***ASEAN Declaration on Early Childhood Care and Education in Southeast Asia***, reaffirming the importance of providing every young child in ASEAN with access to quality Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE), as it lays the foundation for their full developmental potential as adults to participate successfully in economic, social, and civic life.
19. We reaffirmed ASEAN's commitment in strengthening family resilience based on gender equality and women empowerment approach that highlights the equal partnership between women and men, and girls and boys in achieving inclusive and sustainable regional development. We adopted ***the ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on Gender Equality and Family Development***, which aimed to among others, develop family-centred policies and strategies to strengthen family's resilience, in building universal and gender-responsive care systems and infrastructure, recognise and reduce the burden of women's unpaid carework in family; as well as strengthen coordination across sectors and pillars to promote women empowerment, gender equality, family

development, and inclusive sustainable growth, and looked forward to its implementation.

20. We adopted the **ASEAN Joint Statement on Climate Change to the 28<sup>th</sup> Session of Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC COP-28)**, reiterating our commitment to global climate action at regional, national, and sub-national levels.
21. We adopted the **ASEAN Blue Economy Framework** to elevate ASEAN's collaborative efforts on blue economy in an integrated, cross-sectoral and cross-stakeholder approach that creates value-added and value-chain of resources from oceans, seas and fresh water in an inclusive and sustainable way, making blue economy a new engine for ASEAN's future economic growth.
22. We adopted **the ASEAN Declaration on Sustainable Resilience** to enhance collaboration in strengthening climate and disaster resilience for sustainable development by closer alignment of national and regional institutional framework, intensifying utilisation of the full potential of science, technology, and innovation as well as enhancing national and local capacity, particularly local communities as the first line of defence against emerging risks.
23. We noted the draft ASEAN Community Vision 2045: Resilient, Innovative, Dynamic, and People-Centred ASEAN which was prepared and deliberated by the High-Level Task Force on ASEAN Community's Post-2025 Vision (HLTF-ACV) and has been endorsed in-principle by the ASEAN Coordinating Council (ACC). In accordance with the Roadmap for an ASEAN Community's Post-2025 Vision, the HLTF-ACV will continue its work to develop the attendant documents/strategic plans which will be annexed to the ASEAN Community Vision 2045. The Vision and its Annexes will further be adopted in 2025.
24. We remained committed to strengthening ASEAN's capacity and institutional effectiveness, including through the implementation of the ASEAN Leaders' Statement on Strengthening ASEAN's Capacity and Institutional Effectiveness and the ASEAN Leaders' Statement on the Development of the ASEAN Community's Post-2025 Vision.
25. We welcomed the adoption of the Rules of Procedure to Support Decision-Making Process at the ASEAN Summit by the ACC. These Rules of Procedure operationalise relevant Articles of the ASEAN Charter and will serve as a guide and facilitate the process to refer matters to the ASEAN Summit in urgent and specific situations where consensus cannot be achieved, and allow them to arrive at a decision and effectively respond to urgent situations in a timely manner.

## **ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific**

26. We expressed concern over the intensifying geopolitical tensions in the region, and further underlined the value and relevance of the AOIP to ASEAN's peace, security, stability and prosperity. We were determined to further promote the AOIP in our interactions with partners and to mainstream and promote the implementation of the AOIP through concrete projects and activities in order to promote mutual trust, respect and benefit through ASEAN-led mechanisms. We welcomed the support of all our partners to the AOIP, among others, through the issuance of joint statements and other forms of collaboration and support. We continued to encourage our partners to support and undertake substantive, practical and tangible cooperation with ASEAN, in accordance with the objectives and principles contained in the AOIP, on the four (4) identified key areas, namely maritime cooperation, connectivity, UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030, economic and other possible areas of cooperation.
27. We are committed to mainstreaming and promoting the implementation of the AOIP through concrete and practical projects and activities based on its objectives and principles and welcomed the convening of the ASEAN-Indo-Pacific Forum: Implementation of AOIP on 5-6 September 2023 in Jakarta, Indonesia, with particular focus on infrastructure forum, creative economy forum, youth on digital development for SDGs, and ASEAN Business and Investment Summit. We encouraged the continuation of such platforms for dialogue and consultation on the four (4) areas of cooperation under the AOIP.
28. We welcomed the advancement of cooperation between the AOIP and the respective initiatives of Dialogue Partners on the Indo-Pacific through ASEAN-led mechanisms such as ASEAN Plus One, ASEAN Plus Three (APT), the East Asia Summit (EAS), ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), and ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM-Plus). In this regard, we welcomed the adoption of the ASEAN-New Zealand Joint Statement on Cooperation on the AOIP and looked forward to the adoption of similar Joint Statements with the United States, the Republic of Korea, and China, respectively on the AOIP.
29. We welcomed the convening of the ASEAN-Indo-Pacific Workshop on Marine Plastic Debris co-hosted by Indonesia and New Zealand on 15-16 June 2023 in Bali, Indonesia, and the EAS Workshop on Developing Coastal Economy on 4-5 August 2023 in Bali, Indonesia, as the concrete implementations of the AOIP. We looked forward to the convening of the ASEAN-Australia Indo-Pacific Workshop on the Use of Technology for Sustainable Aquaculture, co-hosted by Indonesia and Australia on 30-31 October 2023 in Bali, Indonesia.
30. We are committed to enhancing our engagement in the wider Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean regions. We welcomed the signing of the Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) between ASEAN and the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), and between ASEAN and the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF). We also welcomed the participation of the Chairs of PIF and IORA as Guests of the Chair at the 18<sup>th</sup> EAS. We also welcomed the potential to engage further with IORA and PIF in areas of common interest.

## **PROMOTING COMPLEMENTARITIES BETWEEN ASEAN COMMUNITY VISION 2025 AND THE UNITED NATIONS 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

31. We reaffirmed our commitment to enhancing sustainable development cooperation, including with partners, by promoting the Complementarities Initiative. We reiterated our continued support for the effective implementation of the Complementarities Roadmap (2020-2025) and for the work of the ASEAN Centre for Sustainable Development Studies and Dialogue (ACSDSD). We encouraged further efforts to promote sustainable development cooperation between ASEAN and external partners to support the mainstreaming and implementation of the AOIP, and looked forward to exploring ways to ensure the continuity of Complementarities Initiative with ASEAN Community Vision 2045.

### **INITIATIVE FOR ASEAN INTEGRATION**

32. We underscored the importance of narrowing the development gap within and among ASEAN Member States to enhance ASEAN's competitiveness as a region through among others, the implementation of the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) Work Plans. We commended the work of the IAI Task Force and the concerted effort of all stakeholders and their contribution to the steady progress in the implementation of the IAI Work Plan IV (2021-2025).
33. We reaffirmed our commitment to develop the IAI Work Plan V which will guide our collective efforts to further narrow the development gap within ASEAN and realise ASEAN Community Vision 2045 of an inclusive, participatory and collaborative Community.

### **SUB-REGIONAL COOPERATION**

34. We underscored the importance of ASEAN unity and Centrality in promoting ASEAN's sub-regional development. We recognised the relevance of sub-regional development to ASEAN's regional integration and Community-building process, especially in narrowing the development gap, and encouraged closer coordination between ASEAN Sectoral Bodies and ASEAN-approved sub-regional cooperation frameworks to facilitate the realisation of this endeavour.
35. We reiterated the commitment to further promote equitable and sustainable development across the ASEAN Community by aligning sub-regional growth, including in the Mekong area such as the Ayeyawady-Chao Phraya-Mekong Economic Cooperation Strategy (ACMECS), as well as the Brunei Darussalam-Indonesia-Malaysia-Philippines East ASEAN Growth Area (BIMP-EAGA), and the Indonesia-Malaysia-Thailand Growth Triangle (IMT-GT), with the comprehensive development of ASEAN. We welcomed the continued support and assistance of external partners in the relevant processes.

## **ASEAN CONNECTIVITY**

36. We reaffirmed our commitment to developing the ASEAN Connectivity Post-2025 Agenda as part of the ASEAN Community's Post-2025 Vision. In this regard, the development of the ASEAN Connectivity Post-2025 Agenda shall be carried out with a whole-of-Community approach towards synergising and complementing connectivity efforts across sectors with the AOIP serving as a key reference.
37. We noted with appreciation the work of the ASEAN Connectivity Coordinating Committee (ACCC), Lead Implementing Bodies and relevant ASEAN Sectoral Bodies, as well as the MPAC 2025 National Coordinators, National Focal Points and relevant national agencies in advancing the implementation of MPAC 2025 and the AOIP. We also expressed our appreciation to our Dialogue Partners and other external partners for their continued support to the MPAC 2025 as well as the growing interest in developing stronger cooperation on connectivity through the Connecting the Connectivities Initiative.
38. We emphasised the need to approach ASEAN and the Indo-Pacific region, through inclusive economic cooperation with a view to supporting the implementation of the MPAC 2025 and the AOIP. We welcomed Indonesia's initiative in convening the ASEAN-Indo-Pacific Forum: Implementation of the AOIP on 5-6 September 2023 in Jakarta as a platform for dialogue and consultation between ASEAN Member States and external partners, including to explore smart infrastructure projects, to support the development of one of the most dynamic regions in the world while unlocking its potential economic growth.

## **ASEAN SMART CITIES NETWORK**

39. We commended the significant progress made by the ASEAN Smart Cities Network (ASCN) in implementing the smart city action plans and regional initiatives. We welcomed the completion of ASCN Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Report 2023 as well as the new member cities from ASCN membership expansion. We welcomed the convening of the ASCN Discussion Series this year and noted the appointment of Indonesia as the ASCN Shepherd supporting the ASCN Chair for the next two years. We expressed our appreciation to external partners for their support and collaboration in implementing ASCN Initiatives.

## **ASEAN VILLAGES NETWORK**

40. We commended the convening of the first ASEAN Villages Network (AVN) meeting which took place in Yogyakarta, on 25-26 July 2023, hosted by Indonesia. We took note that the meeting discussed the Framework of AVN as a guidance for the work of the network. We encouraged our external partners to collaborate with AVN to develop sustainable solutions in response to rural development challenges and improve the lives of all ASEAN citizens,

as well as strengthening the ASEAN identity. We reiterated support to closer cross-pillar collaboration to support AVN, including with the ASCN to explore and promote rural-urban connectivity.

## **TIMOR-LESTE'S FULL MEMBERSHIP IN ASEAN**

41. We noted the First Progress Report 2023: Implementation of the Roadmap for Timor-Leste's Full Membership in ASEAN and looked forward to the full and effective fulfilment of all the Roadmap criteria by Timor-Leste. We encouraged ASEAN Member States and external partners to fully support Timor-Leste to fulfil the criteria in the Roadmap for Timor-Leste's Full Membership in ASEAN, through the provision of capacity-building assistance and other necessary and relevant support, such as the Internship Program across Ministries/Agencies of the Republic of Indonesia for 40 Timor-Leste civil servants from June to November this year.

## **ASEAN POLITICAL-SECURITY COMMUNITY**

42. We reaffirmed the importance of the TAC as the key code of conduct in governing inter-state relations in the region and as a foundation for maintaining regional peace and stability. We remain committed to further promoting the principles embodied in the TAC and reaffirming the universality of its core principles and values. We emphasised the importance of all High Contracting Parties (HCPs) in fulfilling their obligations under the Treaty and reaffirmed the need for ASEAN and HCPs to adhere to the TAC's rules and norms and deepen cooperation with all HCPs, including intensifying possible areas of mutual interest contained in the treaty. We welcomed the growing interest of non-regional countries to accede to the TAC, on the basis of respect for and in conformity with the purposes and principles of the TAC. We welcomed the accession of the Republic of Serbia, Republic of Panama, and State of Kuwait to the TAC.
43. We expressed concern over the declining commitment and cooperation in global non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament mechanisms, and called on countries, especially Nuclear Weapon States (NWS), to maintain and fully implement their commitments under these mechanisms, including in the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). We called on NWS to fulfil their obligations in advancing nuclear disarmament in accordance with the Article VI of the NPT and to recognise the need to completely eliminate nuclear weapons, which remains the only way to guarantee that nuclear weapons are never used again under any circumstances. We reiterated our commitment to preserving the Southeast Asian region as a Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone (NWFZ) and free of all other weapons of mass destruction as enshrined in the ASEAN Charter and the SEANWFZ Treaty, and stressed the importance of the full and effective implementation of the Treaty.
44. We noted that the Executive Committee of the SEANWFZ Commission is continuing to explore the possibility of allowing individual NWS which are willing to sign and ratify the Protocol to the SEANWFZ Treaty without



reservations and provide prior formal assurance of this commitment in writing to go ahead with the signing. We welcome any NWS that are ready to do so. We reaffirmed our commitment to continuously engage all the NWS, including those with reservations, and intensify efforts of all parties to resolve all outstanding issues in accordance with the objectives and principles of the SEANWFZ Treaty. We encouraged our ASEAN experts to explore ways to bridge the differences, including the possibility of engaging with the NWS experts. We tasked the relevant officials to work towards the submission of the biennial SEANWFZ Resolution through the First Committee of the 78<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA).

45. We reiterated the importance of strengthening efforts to address common regional challenges in a strategic and holistic manner in the area of non-proliferation and disarmament. We noted the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signing of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and reaffirmed our commitment to this landmark treaty. We reaffirmed our full support to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) to carry out its mandated work as the implementing body of the CWC in a comprehensive, objective, and impartial manner, in complementarity with the work of the UN. We also reaffirmed our commitment to the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BWC) and, recognising the necessity of multilateral negotiations and noting the lack of a verification measure, the latter of which poses a challenge to the effectiveness of the BWC, welcomed the establishment of the Working Group on Strengthening the BWC. We also placed great importance on enhancing international cooperation, assistance, and exchanges in toxins, biological agents, equipment, and technology for peaceful purposes.
46. We noted ongoing multilateral discussions on emerging issues involving international peace and security, such as outer space. We reiterated that access to outer space is an inalienable right of all States and that the use of outer space should exclusively be for peaceful purposes only, and for the collective benefit of humanity.
47. We congratulated the AICHR on the progress made in the implementation of the AICHR's Five-Year Work Plan 2021-2025, and its annual Priority Programmes/Activities. We welcomed the successful convening of AICHR's activities, including the 36<sup>th</sup> and 37<sup>th</sup> Meetings in Jakarta and Bali, the Special Meeting 1/2023 in Jakarta, the AICHR's Country Learning Visit to Bogor, Indonesia to facilitate dialogues on human rights with stakeholders, and other activities concerning human rights-related issues. We commended the continuous efforts of the AICHR to work with ASEAN Organs, Sectoral Bodies, entities, and other relevant stakeholders to mainstream human rights across all pillars of the ASEAN Community, including engaging all sectors of society in the people-oriented and people-centred ASEAN Community-building process, as well as to maintain its relations with Dialogue Partners in promoting and protecting human rights in the region. We took note of the proposal to convene the 5<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Human Rights Dialogue in Indonesia. We tasked the Foreign Ministers to implement the decision made by the 52<sup>nd</sup> ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting (AMM) on the AICHR and looked forward to the establishment of the Panel of Experts.

48. We noted the UNGA Resolution A/RES/77/248 emphasising in the Preamble, the universal and unified character of the 1982 UNCLOS, and reaffirming that the 1982 UNCLOS sets out the legal framework within which all activities in the oceans and seas must be carried out and is of strategic importance as the basis for national, regional and global action and cooperation in the marine sector, and that its integrity needs to be maintained.
49. We welcomed the issuance of the First Edition of the ASEAN Maritime Outlook (AMO), which serves as a practical tool to understand regional maritime trends and strengthen synergies of work among maritime-relevant bodies, mechanisms, and processes in ASEAN.
50. We welcomed the regularisation of the ASEAN Maritime Forum (AMF) and the Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum (EAMF) to intensify dialogue and cooperation on maritime issues pertinent to the three Community pillars. We applauded the successful convening of the 13<sup>th</sup> AMF and 11<sup>th</sup> EAMF on 1-2 August 2023, in Bali, Indonesia, which discussed, among others, initiatives towards strengthening maritime cooperation and stability, as well as blue economy.
51. We noted the convening of the Heads of ASEAN Coast Guard Meeting on 22-23 November 2022 in Bali, Indonesia and on 7-8 June 2023 in Jakarta, respectively. We encouraged further discussions to establish the ASEAN Coast Guard Forum (ACF).
52. We expressed concern over the increasing number of transnational crime cases in our region and emphasised the need to expedite the process of addressing them among ASEAN law enforcement, as time stands as the most crucial aspect in preventing and tackling such criminal activities. We welcomed the successful conduct of the 17<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime (AMMTC) on 20-23 August 2023 in Labuan Bajo, Indonesia, and commended the adoption of the Labuan Bajo Declaration on Advancing Law Enforcement Cooperation in Combating Transnational Crime as a commitment to accelerating and enhancing the effectiveness of law enforcement in managing transnational crime cases within the ASEAN region. We further welcomed the adoption of the ASEAN Declaration on Strengthening Cooperation in Protecting and Assisting Witnesses and Victims of Transnational Crime, as means for the effective protection of witness and victims from threat of retaliation and intimidation.
53. We recalled the ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on Combating Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Caused by the Abuse of Technology adopted by the 42<sup>nd</sup> ASEAN Summit and committed to promoting a more robust and more effective regional and international cooperation against TIP. We reiterated the need to mobilise resources and develop strategies and modalities against criminal use of technology in TIP. We welcomed the adoption of the ASEAN Multi-Sectoral Work Plan Against Trafficking in Persons (2023-2028) and looked forward to its effective implementation.

54. We stressed the importance of the full and effective implementation of the Work Plan of the ASEAN Plan of Action to Prevent and Counter the Rise of Radicalisation and Violent Extremism (Bali Work Plan) 2019-2025 to address radicalisation and violent extremism in the region in a holistic manner. We reaffirmed the importance of addressing the root causes of armed conflict and violent extremism as foundations for regional peace, security and development. We further welcomed the adoption of the ASEAN Declaration on Developing Regional Early Warning and Early Response (EWER) Capability to Prevent and Counter the Rise of Radicalisation and Violent Extremism (PCRVE) during the 17<sup>th</sup> AMMTC and looked forward to its development.
55. We recognised the significant role of the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Drug Matters (AMMD) in coordinating a coherent, comprehensive, and effective ASEAN strategy in realisation of a Drug-Free ASEAN and welcomed the convening of the 8<sup>th</sup> AMMD in Vientiane, Lao PDR. We underscored our continued serious concerns over global moves to reclassify certain types of illicit drugs to less restrictive schedules under the international drug conventions, and reaffirmed our commitment towards a drug-free region and a zero-tolerance approach towards illicit drugs.
56. We acknowledged the importance of ADMM and ADMM-Plus as primary platforms for ASEAN defence establishments and their Plus Countries counterparts in promoting security and stability in the region. We commended the progress and continuation of the defence cooperation among ASEAN Member States (AMS) under the ADMM framework. We welcomed the defence sector's commitment to advancing the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) agenda into practical cooperation. We commended the progress made in practical defence cooperation under the ADMM-Plus Experts' Working Groups (EWGs) for 2021-2024 on humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, peacekeeping operations, maritime security, counter-terrorism, military medicine, humanitarian mine action and cybersecurity. We noted the ongoing Observership Programme in the ADMM-Plus EWG activities this year and looked forward to enhancing engagement with external partners in the defence area.
57. We welcomed the development of the Concept Paper on the Implementation of the AOIP from a Defence Perspective, in line with the ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on Mainstreaming Four Priority Areas of ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific within ASEAN-led Mechanisms and the Concept Note on the ASEAN Roadmap for Promoting ASEAN Outlook on Indo-Pacific adopted and noted respectively by the 40<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit. We looked forward to the adoption of the Concept Paper at the ADMM in November 2023.
58. We commended the work of the ASEAN Law Ministers' Meeting (ALAWMM) and the ASEAN Senior Law Officials' Meeting (ASLOM) on law and legal matters to support the ASEAN Community-building processes and enhance ASEAN as a rules-based organisation. We welcomed the progress in the negotiation of the ASEAN Extradition Treaty (AET) and looked forward to its

conclusion, which will complement the Treaty on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters (MLAT).

59. We also commended the work of ALAWMM on strengthening cooperation between ASEAN and Dialogue Partners and External Partners in promoting the rule of law and enhancing the justice system. To this end, we noted with satisfaction the achievement of the collaborative work between ASEAN and Japan in the area of law and justice and commended the successful outcome of the ASEAN-Japan Special Meeting of Justice Ministers as well as the ASEAN-G7 Justice Ministers' Interface on 6-7 July 2023 in Tokyo.
60. We welcomed the progress of the work of the Senior Officials' Meeting of the Central Authorities on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters (SOM-MLAT) in formulating templates for Mutual Legal Assistance (MLA) requests and also looked forward to the inaugural Meeting of the ASEAN Ministers/Attorneys General Meeting of the Central Authorities on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters (AMAG-MLAT) which will be held in Brunei Darussalam in the last quarter of this year in furthering the effective implementation of the ASEAN MLAT to strengthen ASEAN's capacity and resilience to combat transnational crime.
61. We noted the ASEAN Institute for Peace and Reconciliation's (ASEAN-IPR) activities with relevant ASEAN bodies and external partners to promote the culture of peace and moderation in ASEAN. We encouraged the ASEAN-IPR to find innovative solutions to ensure its sustainability. We encouraged all ASEAN Member States to continue supporting the operations of the Institute, as reflected in the Terms of Reference (TOR) of the ASEAN-IPR. We also noted ASEAN-IPR's continued support for the ASEAN Women for Peace Registry (AWPR) to implement the ASEAN Leaders' Joint Statement on Promoting Women, Peace and Security (WPS) in ASEAN. We encouraged the ASEAN-IPR to engage with other relevant stakeholders, including the AWPR and the Southeast Asian Network of Women Peace Negotiators and Mediators (SEANWPNM), to further implement the Joint Statement. We further encouraged the implementation of the WPS and Youth, Peace, and Security (YPS) agendas in ASEAN and ASEAN-led mechanisms.
62. We commended the role of the ASEAN Regional Mine Action Centre (ARMAC) as a centre of excellence in promoting ASEAN's efforts to address the issue of explosive remnants of war (ERW) for interested ASEAN Member States and raise awareness of the danger of ERW among affected communities. We reiterated the importance of mine action in national rehabilitation and sustainable development and welcomed efforts to promote mine action at the regional and global level, including at the UN. We expressed appreciation to ASEAN Member States, Dialogue Partners, external partners and international organisations that have contributed to the undertaking of projects and operations of the ARMAC.

## ASEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY

63. We were encouraged by the region's continued growth momentum despite being confronted with widespread financial tightening and elevated inflation on a global scale. We recognised that ASEAN remains a bright spot and a point of resilience in 2023, having a better prospect vis-à-vis the global outlook. We noted that the ASEAN economy is projected to maintain positive momentum, with growth rates of 4.6% in 2023 and 4.9% in 2024, total merchandise on trade and investments rose to record levels of USD 3.8 trillion and USD 224.4 billion, respectively, total trade volume grew by 14.9% and direct investment inflows growing by 5.5%. We also noted that the ASEAN region's share in trade and FDI saw an increase, reaching 22.3% and 12.3%, respectively. We are committed to continue to enhance collaboration among ASEAN Member States as well as external partners to maintain and strengthen regional economic resilience through promoting transformative sectors such as digital and green economy to strengthen ASEAN's position as the epicentre of growth.
64. We welcomed the successful delivery of the 11 Priority Economic Deliverables (PEDs) under Indonesia 2023 Chairmanship pursued to rebuild regional growth through connected markets and new competitiveness, accelerating inclusive digital economy transformation and participation and promoting sustainable economic growth for a resilient future. We also noted the progress made on the remaining deliverables and we looked forward to their timely completion before the end of the year.
65. We noted the progress of the ASEAN Trade in Goods Agreement (ATIGA) upgrade negotiations which has held five rounds of negotiations since its launch in March 2022 and has entered into the text-based negotiations since the third round of negotiations. We welcomed the recent conclusion of two chapters namely the Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) and the Economic and Technical Cooperation (ECOTECH), and looked forward to the conclusion of the negotiations on most of the chapters in 2024. We reiterated commitment to upgrade the ATIGA to be comprehensive in scope and cover not only traditional trade-in-goods elements but also emerging and future issues to ensure that the upgraded ATIGA will be a modern, comprehensive, forward-looking agreement and relevant to business communities and more responsive to regional and global developments. We supported the on-going efforts to align the upgrading of ATIGA with the ASEAN digital transformation and sustainability agenda, as well as emerging priorities such as paperless trade, circular economy, sustainability, food security, and trade and environment.
66. We welcomed the signing of the Second Protocol to Amend the Agreement Establishing the ASEAN-Australia-New Zealand Free Trade Area during the 28<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Economic Ministers-Closer Economic Relations (AEM-CER) Consultation on 22 August 2023 by Brunei Darussalam as ASEAN country coordinator for ASEAN-Closer Economic Relations, Indonesia as AEM Chair, Malaysia, Singapore, Australia, and New Zealand with the rest of ASEAN Member States that will sign on an ad referendum basis by 2023. We also

welcomed the finalisation of the First Protocol to Amend the ASEAN Hong Kong, China Free Trade Agreement FTA (AHKFTA) and noted the progress made in ASEAN's Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) with other external partners, in particular the ASEAN-China Free Trade Area (ACFTA) 3.0 Upgrade Negotiations, the Review of the ASEAN-India Trade in Goods Agreement (AITIGA), the Work Programme of ASEAN-Hong Kong Investment Agreement, and the ASEAN-Canada Free Trade Agreement as well as the implementation of ASEAN's various FTAs with its major trading partners as part of the effort to ensure that ASEAN's FTAs remain relevant and fully beneficial to businesses in the region.

67. We were pleased with the significant progress in the implementation of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Agreement, including the adoption of the TOR of the RCEP Support Unit (RSU) and the Funding Arrangement for the RSU by the RCEP Ministers' Meeting on 21 August 2022 and looked forward to the operationalisation of the RSU in 2024. We noted the urgent need of ensuring effective implementation of the RCEP Agreement to support the regional post-pandemic economic recovery and to achieve inclusive, and rules-based trade and promote investment, as well as to strengthen the regional supply chain and support the ASEAN economic integration agenda.
68. We welcomed the signing of the Protocol to Amend the ASEAN Agreement on Movement of Natural Persons (MNP) by nine ASEAN Member States and looked forward to the signing by remaining ASEAN Member State this year, which will further facilitate mobility of people among ASEAN Member States and in the cross-border provision of goods, services and investment. We also welcomed the conclusion of the ASEAN Services Facilitation Framework (ASFF) to help improve policy and regulatory environment by establishing a favourable and predictable business environment for trade and investment in the services sectors in ASEAN, and we looked forward to its adoption by next year.
69. We welcomed the substantial conclusion of the Fifth Protocol to Amend the ASEAN Comprehensive Investment Agreement (ACIA) to provide greater certainty and transparency to investors on the investment regime in ASEAN, as well as to ensure ASEAN's own internal agreement for investment has continued relevance vis-à-vis its external Agreements. We looked forward to the signing of the Protocol in 2024.
70. We noted the highlights of the latest Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) trends and emerging developments such as international supply chain restructuring, international minimum tax, and energy transition investment, including investment in the Electric Vehicle industry in the region. We looked forward to a thorough study on the impact of international minimum tax towards the FDI flows to the region and strategy to bolster ASEAN's investment competitiveness. We also looked forward to the publication of the Special ASEAN Investment Report 2023, prepared by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and with the support from the Government of Indonesia, at the earliest opportunity.

71. We stressed the importance of promoting investment that contributes to sustainable development goals as mandated by the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework (ACRF) and the importance of enhancing ASEAN's attractiveness as a sustainable investment destination. Therefore, we looked forward to the development of the ASEAN Sustainable Investment Guidelines for a conclusion in 2024 and noted the convening of the ASEAN Investment Forum with the theme of "Investments for Sustainable Development" held in Jakarta on 2 September 2023. We were also of the view that investment in higher added-value industries is central to achieve ASEAN as a seamlessly integrated single market, and production base.
72. We recalled the ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on Advancing Regional Payment Connectivity and Promoting Local Currency Transactions (LCT), adopted at the 42nd ASEAN Summit. In this regard, we welcomed the establishment of the ASEAN Local Currency Transaction Task Force (LCT-TF) and the endorsement of high-level principles on the ASEAN LCT Framework by the ASEAN Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors Meeting (AFMGM) which will provide the key principles for developing and implementing the ASEAN LCT Framework. We also welcomed the completion of the Roadmap on Regional Payment Connectivity for ASEAN and looked forward to the accession of the remaining ASEAN Member States, as well as the expansion to other neighbouring countries beyond ASEAN for the RPC.
73. We commended the efforts to further enhance digital financial inclusion and digital financial literacy with the completion of the Implementation Guidelines to Strengthen Digital Financial Literacy in ASEAN, the development of the ASEAN Policy Toolkit on Enhancing MSME Digital Payment Use and Digital Financial Inclusion, and the successful conduct of the Digital Financial Inclusion Festival at the sidelines of the 10<sup>th</sup> AFMGM. We welcomed the continued efforts in promoting sustainable finance with the development of Transition Finance Guidelines for ASEAN which will serve as a common set of guidance for what constitutes a just, affordable, credible, transparent, and inclusive transition, as well as the adoption of the ASEAN Sustainable and Responsible Fund Standards by Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand.
74. We recalled the ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on Developing a Regional Electric Vehicle Ecosystem, adopted at the 42<sup>nd</sup> ASEAN Summit. In this regard, we welcomed the convening of the ASEAN-US Electric Vehicle Workshop Series and looked forward to the completion and adoption of Policy Recommendations to Improve Electric Vehicle Infrastructure and Charging Stations in ASEAN by the ASEAN Transport Ministers (ATM). We also acknowledged the importance of Dialogue Partners in advancing the regional electric vehicle ecosystem and looked forward to the implementation of the ASEAN Plus Three Leaders' Statement on the Development of the Electric Vehicle Ecosystem.
75. We highlighted the importance of promoting sustainable infrastructure development and welcomed the endorsement of repositioning the ASEAN

Infrastructure Fund as an ASEAN Green Fund through the mainstreaming of the ASEAN Catalytic Green Finance Facility. We also emphasised that the ASEAN Taxonomy should continue to ensure its interoperability with other international taxonomies in order to foster sustainable finance in the region.

76. We acknowledged that sustainable food production and resilient agricultural practices, including sustainable production of vegetable oils, are essential to the attainment of the SDGs by 2030 and will contribute to the regional and global efforts towards economic recovery, green growth, and food security. We noted the development of the action plan for the implementation of the ASEAN Regional Guidelines on Sustainable Agriculture adopted in 2022 that will identify programmes that will support and provide farmers with access to financing options for transitioning to sustainable agriculture, and encourage them to adopt technology such as precision farming and smart irrigation system, that will enhance productivity, protect biodiversity, and mitigate climate change.
77. We welcomed the adoption of the Joint Declaration of the 41st ASEAN Ministers on Energy Meeting (AMEM) on Sustainable Energy Security through Interconnectivity, reaffirming the shared commitment and collective responsibility of ASEAN to enhance the role of regional interconnectivity and integration in ensuring sustainable energy security in the region. We also welcomed the adoption of the Joint Statement of the Brunei Darussalam–Indonesia–Malaysia–Philippines Power Integration Project (BIMP-PIP), as the initial step to establish interconnection within the BIMP region. We were encouraged with the extension of the MoU of ASEAN Power Grid as well as the plan to extend and amend the MoU of Trans-ASEAN Gas Pipeline (TAGP) to also include the role of LNG and the expanded development of Regasification Terminals.
78. We commended the effort to reduce emissions and accelerate energy transitions among others through the deployment of Clean Coal Technology (CCT) and Carbon Capture, Utilisation, and Storage (CCUS); accelerating Energy Efficiency measures, not only for the power sector but also to expand focus on the largest energy-consuming sectors such as transport, industry, and buildings; as well as ongoing preparation of the ASEAN Long-Term Renewable Energy (RE) Roadmap.
79. We noted the progress of the implementation of the ASEAN Minerals Cooperation Action Plan III (Phase 2) and looked forward to addressing the remaining action lines of Phase 2. We looked forward to the 9<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Minerals (AMMin) scheduled for November 2023 and its outcome documents, including the launch of the ASEAN Minerals Exploration Strategy Version 1: 2023 and the adoption of the ASEAN Principles of Sustainable Mining Development, with a view to reframing minerals development in ASEAN and promoting the region as a sustainable minerals investment destination.
80. We highlighted the ever increasingly pivotal role of digital technology in achieving an innovative, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable economic growth



in the region. We noted the endorsement of the Framework for Negotiating the ASEAN Digital Economy Framework Agreement (DEFA) and the Final Report: Study on the ASEAN DEFA by the 55<sup>th</sup> AEM Meeting in August 2023 and welcomed the Launch of the DEFA negotiations at the 23<sup>rd</sup> AEC Council on 3 September 2023 toward a leading digitally connected community.

81. We commended the positive progress in the implementation of the Bandar Seri Begawan Roadmap: an ASEAN Digital Transformation Agenda to Accelerate ASEAN's Economic Recovery and Digital Economy Integration (BSBR), reaching 46% completion of its action items and looking forward to the full completion in 2025. We noted the progress in the implementation of the Consolidated Strategy on the Fourth Industrial Revolution for ASEAN and welcomed the convening of the Inaugural ASEAN 4IR Task Force Group (A4IR-TFG) Meeting, which will advance the 4IR priorities and agenda in the region.
82. We noted the progress in the implementation of the ASEAN Agreement on E-Commerce and encouraged the enhanced coordination between the ASEAN Coordinating Committee on Electronic Commerce and Digital Economy (ACCED) with other Sectoral Bodies to ensure timely implementation of the initiatives. We welcomed the 2023 ASEAN Online Sale Day (AOSD), which was officially launched on 19 August 2023 at the sidelines of the 55th AEM Meeting, which will increase the experience time for consumers with quality products and brands, creating safety and trust in e-commerce.
83. We noted the progress on the implementation of the ASEAN Digital Masterplan 2025 (ADM 2025), which aims to transform ASEAN into a leading digitally connected community and economic bloc powered by secure, transformative digital services, technologies, and ecosystems. In this connection, we looked forward to the completion of two PEDs under the ASEAN Digital Senior Officials' Meeting (ADGSOM) this year, namely ASEAN Framework on Logistics for the Digital Economy Supply Chain for Rural Areas and the Regulatory Pilot Space to Facilitate Digital Cross-Border Data Flows to Enable Self-driving Cars in ASEAN. We also welcomed the ADM 2025 Mid-Term Review, which assessed and offered insights recommendations for the subsequent stages of the Masterplan's execution.
84. We noted that in view of accelerating the implementation of the ASEAN Cybersecurity Cooperation Strategy (2021-2025), the 3<sup>rd</sup> ASEAN Digital Ministers Meeting (ADGMIN) endorsed the ASEAN Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT) Operational Framework in February 2023, marking a significant milestone in the establishment of the ASEAN CERT as a means of raising regional cybersecurity capabilities, including through information exchanges and the sharing of best practices. ASEAN initiated the implementation of the ASEAN Cyber Shield Project from 2023 to 2026 to complement the existing ASEAN capacity-building efforts, including the ASEAN-Singapore Cybersecurity Centre of Excellence (ASCCE) and the ASEAN-Japan Cybersecurity Capacity Building Centre (AJCCBC) in recognition of the importance of cybersecurity awareness activities and capacity-building programmes in building regional cybersecurity resilience.

Furthermore, acknowledging the rapid and widespread issue of online scams in the ASEAN Region, which poses growing risks to privacy and personal data security leading to the economic slowdown, the 3rd ASEAN Digital Senior Officials Meeting (ADGSOM) in February 2023 agreed with the establishment of the Working Group on Anti-Online Scams (WG-AS) as well as encouraging its immediate implementation in response to these challenges.

85. We recognised the importance of sustainable tourism as a catalyst for environmental conservation, economic growth, and the preservation of cultural heritage, and with a commitment to creating a harmonious balance between tourism development and protection of natural and cultural assets. We noted the development of an Action Plan to support the implementation of the ASEAN Framework on Sustainable Tourism Development in the Post COVID-19 Era to support economic renewal to boost industry performance. We noted the effort to update ASEAN Tourism Standards and encouraged the effort in re-skilling and up-skilling the tourism professionals to ensure that the ASEAN tourism workforce remains competitive.
86. We stressed the important role of MSMEs and encouraged their greater participation in our economies. We underscored the importance of inclusive growth in ensuring balanced socio-economic development through facilitating partnership between MSMEs and large enterprises. We emphasised the importance of providing support to MSMEs through access to financing, business coaching and mentoring and capacity-building programs, and the significance of digital transformation for MSMEs to expand their business internationally. In this regard, we welcomed the endorsement of the Plan of Action for the Promotion of Inclusive Business in ASEAN (2023-2027) by the ASEAN Economic Ministers as well as the adoption of the Declaration on Promoting Inclusive Business Models: Empowering Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises for Equitable Growth during the Sixth ASEAN Inclusive Business Summit in Bali on 23-25 August 2023 to pursue concrete regional activities in high-impact cooperation areas.
87. We noted the completion of the revised ASEAN Guidelines for Harmonisation of Standards and the 27 new standards harmonised in ASEAN, which provides further guidance to ASEAN Member States in harmonising their national standards compatible with international standards. We also noted the progress on the development of the ASEAN Pharmaceutical Regulatory Framework Agreement (APRFA), which is a follow-on initiative of the ASEAN Pharmaceutical Regulatory Framework (APRF), and a cross-cutting initiative between the economic and health pillars. We further noted the progress of the development of the Roadmap of ASEAN Harmonised Standards to Support Sustainable Development Goals Implementation, which will serve as a reference document for ASEAN in harmonising standards across the region that is consistent with international standards and support sustainable development goals.
88. We looked forward to the completion of the signing this year of the following ASEAN economic agreements to further reduce technical barriers to trade, namely: ASEAN Framework Agreement on Mutual Recognition

Arrangements, ASEAN Sectoral Mutual Recognition Arrangement for Building and Construction Materials, ASEAN Food Safety Regulatory Framework Agreement, and Protocol to Amend the ASEAN Sectoral Mutual Recognition Arrangement for Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) Inspection of Manufacturers of Medicinal Products.

89. We recognised the importance of maintaining competition policy and law and welcomed the progress of the negotiations for the ASEAN Framework Agreement on Competition (AFAC) by the ASEAN Experts Group on Competition (AEGC). We looked forward to the conclusion of the negotiations by mid-2024. We noted the completion of the review of the Guidance Document for the ASEAN Competition Business Perception Index (ACBPI) to include indicators that will assess the impact of e-Commerce on market competition, which will be used for the ACBPI survey to measure the awareness, understanding and perceptions of businesses on ASEAN's competition regimes in 2024.
90. We recognised the importance of ensuring enhanced awareness of emerging consumer protection issues and consumer empowerment. We noted the development of ASEAN Guidelines on Consumer Impact Assessment (CIA Guidelines) to support national authorities in the development of policies, laws, and/or regulations that would protect the rights and legitimate interests of consumers. We also noted the updating of the ASEAN Peer Review Guidance Document as well as ASEAN Consumer Empowerment Index (ACEI) to include indicators to assess ASEAN Member States policies on consumer protection in e-Commerce and to assess consumer skills and awareness in e-Commerce and the digital economy, towards the ensuring of the rights and interests of consumers are considered in the formulation or review of national policies.
91. We welcomed the positive progress in the ASEAN Intellectual Property cooperation towards the visionary directions set forth in the AEC Blueprint 2025 for an Innovative ASEAN, through among others, the completion of the Study to Harmonise Requirements for Industrial Designs (ID) and the Study on the Gap Analysis on ASEAN IP E-Commerce Regulatory Landscape by the ASEAN Working Group on IP Cooperation (AWGIPC). We welcomed the enhancing of cooperation between ASEAN and the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), a long-standing partner of ASEAN, to a new level and new era of cooperation with the signing of the MOU between ASEAN and WIPO for Expansion of the Cooperation in Specific Areas and the official launching of ASEAN IP Register at the 55<sup>th</sup> AEM in August 2023, towards the reinforcement of ASEAN as a regional hub of innovation by creating an enabling environment for IP protection, commercialisation that is conducive for all businesses, investors, start-ups and inventors for their growth.
92. We welcomed the progress on the implementation of the ASEAN Plan of Action on Science, Technology, and Innovation (APASTI) 2016-2025 and noted the ongoing development of its successor document. We also underscored the importance of applied research in translating scientific knowledge into practical solutions that cater to the needs of ASEAN and

encouraged the strengthening of the role of the Board of Advisers to COSTI (BAC), as well as the effective utilisation of the ASEAN Science, Technology, and Innovation Fund.

93. We underscored the importance of the industrial sector as one of the main pillars of ASEAN's economy and the need to bring back and mainstream industrial cooperation as a fulcrum of the region's economic integration. In this regard, we welcomed the adoption of the Ministerial Declaration on the Framework of ASEAN Industrial Project-Based Initiative (AIPBI) by the 23<sup>rd</sup> AEC Council Meeting that focuses on forward-looking sectors and specific areas, considering green technological advancements, private sector participation, intra-ASEAN complementarity, and collaboration with the relevant Dialogue Partners and external partners. We looked forward to the implementation of the Declaration by the Senior Economic Officials Meeting (SEOM) in coordination with relevant Sectoral Bodies.
94. We noted the importance of the Creative Economy as one of the streams for competitiveness in ASEAN and noted the proposal on the creation of an ASEAN Working Group on Creative Economy under the AEC. We noted the convening of the Creative Economy Forum as part of the ASEAN-Indo-Pacific Forum in Jakarta on 5-6 September 2023 and welcomed the ASEAN Member States and Dialogue Partners' participation in the Forum, which served as an inclusive platform to discuss the mainstreaming of creative economy by addressing common challenges and building the creative economy ecosystem in the region.
95. We recognised the urgent need to strike a balance between economic growth and sustainable use of natural resources and protection of the environment. We reaffirmed the importance for ASEAN to continue its sustainable development agenda in the region, as well as in achieving ASEAN Member States' commitments under the Paris Agreement. We noted the developments following the adoption of the Implementation Plan of the Framework on Circular Economy for AEC in February this year. The 67 initiatives identified in the implementation plan covering standards harmonisation, trade facilitation, access to financing and capacity building will undoubtedly contribute to accelerate efforts to realise ASEAN's goal towards a low carbon economy. We were particularly pleased with the decision to establish the ASEAN Centre of Excellence for Green Transition, which will support businesses in the region, especially MSMEs, to transition to a circular economy and contribute to accelerated efforts to realise ASEAN's goal towards a low carbon economy.
96. We welcomed the adoption of the ASEAN Strategy for Carbon Neutrality, which has been designed to provide a credible, structured and strategic pathway for ASEAN to accelerate the region's transition towards a low-carbon future and to leverage on the region's strengths and complementarities among the ASEAN Member States to develop regional approaches that will complement their Nationally Determined Contribution (NDCs) goal to ensure that ASEAN remains competitive and progressive, amidst the increasing global climate action. We underscored the critical need for an effective

governance structure to oversee the implementation of this Strategy given its cross-sectoral nature.

97. We welcomed the significant contribution of the private sector in economic development and integration and stressed the importance of public-private sector collaboration. We reiterated the key role of the ASEAN Business Advisory Council (ASEAN-BAC) in coordinating views and inputs of the ASEAN business community to contribute to the development of the AEC. We welcomed the convening of the ASEAN Business and Investment Summit 2023, as a venue for business and governments to synergise their priorities. We encouraged ASEAN-BAC, ASEAN Plus One Business Councils and Joint Business Councils (JBC) to deepen their active contribution to regional efforts to enhance digital transformation and foster a greener and sustainable economic community.
98. We noted the support from the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA) in the development of several ASEAN priorities, including the ASEAN-Indo-Pacific Forum, ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on Strengthening Food Security and Nutrition in Response to Crises, and the ASEAN Blue Economy Framework. We commended ERIA's research activities and Capacity Building Programme, which contribute to ASEAN's economic integration and Community-building efforts, particularly those related to ASEAN's emerging priorities. We also welcomed the launch of the ERIA Digital Innovation and Sustainable Economy Centre (E-DISC) on 24 August 2023, and looked forward to further collaborating with ERIA, particularly in advancing ASEAN's priorities post-2025.

## **ASEAN SOCIO-CULTURAL COMMUNITY**

99. We reiterated our commitment to realising our region as an epicentrum of growth, to be relevant and beneficial to its people, to ensure an ASEAN Community that promotes a high quality of life and is adaptive and responsive to current and future challenges.
100. We recognised the need to increase investment in human resources development and strengthen regional health architecture, scale-up cooperation and partnership in addressing climate change and other environmental issues, to develop a competitive, resilient and sustainable region.
101. We welcomed the implementation of the ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on One Health Initiative, adopted at the 42<sup>nd</sup> ASEAN Summit, to strengthen ASEAN's prevention, preparedness, detection and response mechanisms to deal effectively with potential public health threats in the future through the development of the TOR of the One Health Network as well as the development of the Joint Action Plan on One Health that emphasised the need to enhance multisectoral and multilateral collaborations under the framework of One Health, which brings together health, animal, plant and environmental sectors into a holistic and sustainable solution.

102. We committed to strengthen the resilience of the ASEAN health architecture towards emerging and non-emerging diseases, pandemics, demographic and climate changes, including through strengthening synergy and collaboration between the health and finance sectors, promoting the interoperability of regional and global health efforts, as well as promoting quality of health services for the ASEAN people across the life course with an equitable manner by, among others, addressing health risks and improving access to essential health care services for Communicable and Non-Communicable Diseases, Maternal and Child Health, accelerating Tuberculosis, malaria, and HIV/AIDS elimination in the region, as well as increasing availability and accessibility to health care professionals, especially in government health facilities/institutions.
103. We noted the discussion on the possibility of establishing an ASEAN's capacities in Vaccines Therapeutic and Diagnostic Manufacturing and Research Development hub that will among others enhance the work on the ASEAN Vaccine Security and Self-Reliance (AVSSR) and ASEAN Drug Security and Self-Reliance (ADSSR) as well as new initiative for Diagnostic Self-reliance.
104. We welcomed the possible expansion of the ASEAN Universal Verification Mechanism for other digital health certificates beyond COVID-19 to ease mobilisation of international travel and also welcomed ASEAN Knowledge Management Platform as an integrated and centralised knowledge management system for ASEAN health cooperation.
105. We reaffirmed our commitment to strengthening the regional health architecture beyond the COVID-19 pandemic towards achieving resilience in the ASEAN Community. We reiterated the importance of finalising the Establishment Agreement and the operationalisation of the ASEAN Centre for Public Health Emergencies and Emerging Diseases (ACPHEED).
106. We recognised the importance of strengthening collaboration between Health and Finance Ministers on financing for health emergencies, including through better utilisation of ASEAN health emergency resources and enhanced access to essential countermeasures. We welcomed the inaugural convening of the ASEAN Finance and Health Ministers Meeting (AFHMM) on 24 August 2023 in Jakarta, to strengthen regional health financial capacity in addressing the pandemic prevention preparedness and response (PPR). In that regard, we noted the study that identifies significant financing gaps in relation to PPR readiness in all ASEAN Member States.
107. We continued to strengthen regional preparedness for health emergencies and welcomed the convening of the High-Level Meeting on Building a Sustainable and Resilient Future in the ASEAN Region: From Emergency Response to Long Term COVID-19 Diseases Management, 25 August 2023 as the side event of Indonesia's Chairmanship to strengthen the readiness of the region for a sustainable and resilient future in managing not only COVID-19 but also other infectious diseases.

108. We took note of the Guidance Document to Implement the ASEAN Declaration on Promoting Competitiveness, Resilience, and Agility of Workers for the Future of Work, as part of our collective action to ensure human development in the region.
109. We commended the labour sector in their continued efforts to protect migrant workers throughout the entire migration cycle through the adoption of the ASEAN Declaration on the Placement and Protection of Migrant Fishers and the ASEAN Declaration on the Protection of Migrant Workers and Family Members in Crisis Situations at the 42<sup>nd</sup> ASEAN Summit earlier this year. We are pleased with the finalisation of ASEAN Guidelines on the Promotion and Protection of Migrant Workers and Family Members in Crisis Situation as one of the tools to implement the Declaration. We called on further exploration on potential strategic and innovative ASEAN cooperation in the protection of migrant workers.
110. We recognised the significance of equipping youth with necessary skills to address present and future challenges in ASEAN. We noted the recommendations of ASEAN Youth Dialogue 2023 to strengthen regional cooperation towards equitable access for digital infrastructure, education, resource mobilisation, and capacity building as conveyed at the ASEAN Leaders' Interface with the Representative of ASEAN Youth on the sidelines of the 42<sup>nd</sup> ASEAN Summit. We welcomed the initiative of Indonesia to hold the First Asian Creative and Digital Economy Youth Summit to be held in Jakarta on 28-29 October 2023. These initiatives will leverage Asia's young economy and demographic dividend, including ASEAN youth, to drive a vibrant, sustainable creative and digital economy. We also appreciate the youth-led initiative ASEAN+ Youth Summit, to further strengthen the role of youth in the region and beyond.
111. We commended the accelerated efforts to promote and protect the rights of women and children as guided by ASEAN's commitments in the Regional Plan of Action on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (RPA on EVAW) and the Regional Plan of Action on the Elimination of Violence Against Children (RPA on EVAC) through relevant impactful initiatives.
112. We expressed support to the convening of the High-Level Forum on Disability Inclusive Development and Partnership beyond 2025 to be hosted by Indonesia later this year, which aims at further mainstreaming disability-inclusive development through partnership. We expressed hope that the Forum not only will accelerate the implementation of the ASEAN Enabling Masterplan 2025: Mainstreaming the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, but also explore and provide directions for future strategies beyond 2025.
113. We acknowledged the importance of women's role in peace and security agenda that can contribute to conflict prevention and sustainable peace in the region. Therefore, we commended the successful convening of the High-Level Dialogue on Women Peace and Security (WPS) on 5-7 July 2023 in Yogyakarta, Indonesia for sharing best practices and promoting the implementation of the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on WPS (RPA on

WPS). We appreciated the support from partners in strengthening women's capacities as mediators in the region.

114. We recognised the need to promote gender mainstreaming as a cross-sectoral issue that emphasises the need to put forward a gender-responsive and gender-based approach in ASEAN. We further noted the Policy Recommendations on Integrating Gender Mainstreaming in ASEAN, with an action plan to integrate gender mainstreaming in each ASEAN Community pillar and each ASEAN Sectoral Body. We commended the successful convening of the ASEAN Gender Mainstreaming Conference on 4-5 July 2023 in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, to strengthen ASEAN's commitment to implement the ASEAN Gender Mainstreaming Strategic Framework (AGMSF) and to promote gender mainstreaming in the work of each ASEAN Sectoral Body. We welcomed the support from partners for future cooperation in strengthening capacity building on gender mainstreaming in ASEAN.
115. We reaffirmed the importance of promoting rural development and poverty eradication in the region and commended the successful 1<sup>st</sup> ASEAN Villages Network. We took note of the ASEAN Villages Network Framework and encouraged the development of concrete action plans and cross-pillar collaboration, including with the ASCN to promote rural-urban connectivity, as well as with partners to promote sustainable growth and welfare of the region.
116. We were encouraged by the implementation of the Roadmap to Implement the Ha Noi Declaration on Strengthening Social Work Towards Cohesive and Responsive ASEAN Community which recognises the critical role of social workers and the wider social service workforce in promoting and protecting the rights and welfare of vulnerable groups including older persons, persons with disabilities, women and children in the region. We took note on the finalisation of the ASEAN Regional Guidance on Empowering Women and Children: Delivering Quality Social Work Services for Those at Risk of or Affected by Violence.
117. We emphasised the importance of governments' role in dealing with and curbing the spread of fake news and disinformation in the media. We looked forward to the finalisation of the Guidelines on Management of Government Information in Combatting Fake News and Disinformation in the Media to support the work of the ASEAN Task Force on Fake News (TFFN) in tackling the proliferation and harmful effects of fake news.
118. We recognised the importance of the implementation of the ASEAN Strategic Plan for Culture and Arts 2016-2025 and the Siem Reap Declaration on Promoting a Creative and Adaptive ASEAN Community to Support the Cultural and Creative Economy in 2022, which supported the vital role of cultural and creative industries in building a progressive, inclusive, dynamic, resilient, harmonious, and inclusive ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) that is aware and proud of its identity, culture, and heritage, and with the strengthened capacity to innovate and proactively contribute to the global community.



119. We supported the ongoing efforts in realising a sustainable, inclusive, resilient, and quality education system in ASEAN, particularly in the areas of early childhood care and education, lifelong learning, and education for sustainable development. We underscored the importance and benefits of people-to-people connectivity within ASEAN, and support to widen accessible and sustainable regional student mobility scholarships for higher education students in each ASEAN Member State through, among others, the ongoing implementation of Phase 1 of the Intra-ASEAN Scholarship Programme for ASEAN Nationals. We noted with appreciation the convening of the ASEAN Higher Education Conference (AHEC) 2023 held on 24-25 August 2023 in Bandung, Indonesia, to strengthen collaboration in the higher education sector within the region.
120. We are committed to accelerating the digital transformation of education system in ASEAN as an effort to advance the process of recovery from post-pandemic learning losses and increase access to and participation in education among marginalised populations. We are pleased to note the finalisation of the Roadmap on the Declaration on Digital Transformation of Education Systems in ASEAN.
121. We recognised the importance of multi-stakeholders engagement with the ongoing work of the ASEAN Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Council (ATC) in expanding and improving the quality of TVET to increase the relevance and effective transfer of skills as well as industry cooperation.
122. We reaffirmed the importance of fostering the values of an inclusive, sustainable, resilient, dynamic, and harmonious ASEAN Community through facilitating a greater understanding of shared civilisational values derived from the ASEAN region's culture and religions, and commended the convening of the ASEAN Intercultural and Interreligious Dialogue Conference 2023 with the theme 'ASEAN Shared Civilizational Values: Building an Epicentrum of Harmony to Foster Peace, Security, and Economic Prosperity, in Jakarta on 7 August 2023, and recognised the values of its outcomes.
123. We committed to scaling up efforts to tackle environmental challenges, among others, through halting and reversing biodiversity loss, preventing loss and damage from climate change impacts, enhancing climate mitigation and adaptation efforts including for coastal and marine ecosystem, ensuring the sustainable use and management of water resources and promoting sustainable development. We welcomed the publication of the Sixth ASEAN State of Environment Report (SOER6), which provides relevant and useful information on environmental state and trends in the region and informs environmental management decisions that will contribute to ASEAN's sustainable development efforts.
124. We reaffirmed our commitment to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Paris Agreement, in particular the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, in light of different national circumstances. We recognised the importance of

enhancing cooperation in areas such as capacity-building and the provision of climate finance by developed countries, for the implementation of the commitments in the Paris Agreement and the Glasgow Climate Pact. We looked forward to the 28<sup>th</sup> Session of the Conference of the Parties (COP-28) to the UNFCCC from 30 November to 12 December 2023 in Dubai, the United Arab Emirates.

125. We noted that Southeast Asia is one of the regions highly vulnerable to the adverse impacts of climate change. We reiterated our call for developed countries to fulfil their commitments under the Paris Agreement and to scale-up their contributions to climate finance. We encouraged collaboration on climate change by sharing best practices, experience and knowledge, technology transfer, and capacity building on climate change adaptation and mitigation and disaster risk reduction. We welcomed the establishment of the ASEAN Centre for Climate Change (ACCC) in Brunei Darussalam and looked forward to the Centre's work towards enhancing climate change cooperation among ASEAN Member States to realise a climate-resilient and low carbon ASEAN region.
126. We reaffirmed ASEAN's commitment to promoting biodiversity conservation, sustainable use, and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilisation of genetic resources. We recognised the importance of promoting nature-based solutions and ecosystem-based approach, in order to minimise the devastating consequences of biodiversity loss and ecosystem degradation in line with post-pandemic recovery efforts. We noted the ASEAN Action Plan on Invasive Alien Species Management, which was initiated by Indonesia to address one of the major threats of nature and biodiversity loss in the region.
127. We continued to support the work of the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB) in assisting ASEAN Member States in mainstreaming biodiversity into various development sectors, promoting nature-based solutions and ecosystem-based approach to enhance the region's resilience against zoonotic diseases, addressing climate change, and facilitating ASEAN's contributions to the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF).
128. We looked forward to the conduct of the Horizontal Learning for ASEAN Sustainable Cities on Indonesia, which will provide a platform for ASEAN countries to share experiences and lessons learned in sustainable cities development, enhance knowledge and better understanding on Sustainable Development Goals especially on the waste management and urban development topics, and build networks and potential collaboration between policymakers, private sectors and civil society in initiating sustainable cities in ASEAN.
129. We reaffirmed ASEAN's commitment to implement the ASEAN Regional Action Plan on Combating Marine Plastic Debris and commended the progress of implementation of marine-debris related projects and initiatives, including the successful convening of the ASEAN-Indo Pacific Workshop on

Marine Plastic Debris and the upcoming ASEAN Conference on Combating Plastic Pollution which will be hosted by Indonesia.

130. We reaffirmed our commitment to the full and effective implementation of the ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution (AATHP), and commended the successful conclusion of the Establishment Agreement of the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Transboundary Haze Pollution Control (ACC THPC), which will be operationalised in Indonesia. We appreciated the contribution of the ASEAN Secretariat in performing the functions as Interim ACC THPC and looked forward to the full operationalisation of the Centre which will facilitate faster and effective implementation of all aspects of the AATHP to address transboundary haze pollution in the ASEAN region.
131. We noted the Second Roadmap on ASEAN Cooperation towards Transboundary Haze Pollution Control with Means of Implementation (Haze-free Roadmap) 2023-2030 and the Second ASEAN Peatland Management Strategy (APMS) 2023-2030 to further strengthening, intensifying, and comprehensively addressing the root causes of transboundary haze pollution. We also noted the ASEAN Investment Framework for Haze-Free Sustainable Land Management to enhance multi-stakeholder partnerships and securing resources at local, national and regional levels to promote sustainable land management and effectively address transboundary haze issues.
132. We reaffirmed the importance of implementing the Bandar Seri Begawan Declaration on the Strategic and Holistic Initiative to Link ASEAN Responses to Emergencies and Disaster (ASEAN SHIELD) to prepare for and manage emergencies and disasters and their impacts in the region through a holistic, cross-pillar and cross-sectoral approach. We noted the Revised Financial Rules of the ASEAN Disaster Management and Emergency Response (ADMER) and welcomed the progress of reviewing the TOR of the Secretary-General of ASEAN as the ASEAN Humanitarian Assistance Coordinator (SG-AHAC).
133. We reaffirmed the importance of promoting a whole-of-ASEAN approach in disaster management and emergency response and reaffirmed our commitment to continuously enhance ASEAN's capacity in implementing the ASEAN Declaration on One ASEAN One Response: ASEAN Responding to Disasters as One in the Region and Outside the Region including through support for the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on disaster management (AHA Centre). We commended the AHA Centre's leading role in supporting and assisting Myanmar in the aftermath of the severe impact of Tropical Cyclone MOCHA through the mobilisation of relief items from the Disaster Emergency Logistics System for ASEAN (DELSA) to the affected communities through the facilitation from the ASEAN Militaries Ready Group on Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (AMRG on HADR). We appreciated the support from the ASEAN Member States and the ASEAN Secretariat through the deployment of the ASEAN Emergency Response Assessment Team (ASEAN-ERAT), including the completion of the Needs Assessment of the affected areas in Rakhine State.

134. We reaffirmed ASEAN's continued support for Myanmar's efforts to bring peace, stability, the rule of law, promote harmony and reconciliation among the various communities, as well as ensure sustainable and equitable development in Rakhine State.
135. We emphasised the importance of and reiterated our continued support for Myanmar's commitment to ensuring safety and security for all communities in Rakhine State as effectively as possible and facilitating the voluntary return of displaced persons in a safe, secure, and dignified manner. We noted the engagement and cooperation between Myanmar and Bangladesh for the pilot repatriation project, to facilitate more than 7,000 returnees by the end of 2023 and welcomed Myanmar's efforts to work towards the implementation of this project.
136. We looked forward to ASEAN's continued facilitation of the repatriation process through the implementation of the projects as the follow-up to the recommendations of the Preliminary Needs Assessment (PNA). We also looked forward to the Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA) when conditions allow and encouraged the Secretary-General of ASEAN to continue identifying possible areas for ASEAN to effectively facilitate the repatriation process.

## **ASEAN EXTERNAL RELATIONS**

137. We underscored the importance of strengthening ASEAN unity and Centrality in our engagement with external partners, including through ASEAN-led mechanisms such as the ASEAN Plus One, APT, EAS, ARF, ADMM-Plus, and EAMF, in order to build mutual trust and confidence as well as reinforce an open, transparent, resilient, inclusive, and international law-based regional architecture. We underscored the need to promote an enabling environment for peace, stability and prosperous development for all through ensuring a culture of dialogue and cooperation, instead of rivalry, enhancing mutual trust and confidence and respect for international law. We reaffirmed that ASEAN shall act in accordance with ASEAN Centrality in external political, economic, social and cultural relations while remaining actively engaged, outward-looking, inclusive and non-discriminatory, in line with the ASEAN Charter.
138. We noted with satisfaction the encouraging progress in ASEAN's relations with our Dialogue Partners, Sectoral Dialogue Partners, and Development Partners through the existing frameworks, Plans of Action, Practical Cooperation Areas and development cooperation programmes based on mutual interest and benefit in contribution to ASEAN Community-building and development cooperation efforts. We also welcomed the support of our partners for the priorities of ASEAN in 2023 under the theme "ASEAN Matters: Epicentrum of Growth". We agreed to further strengthen partnerships and cooperation with our partners, including through sub-regional development cooperation and projects, thus contributing to the continued efforts towards the realisation of the ASEAN Community Vision 2025, as well as our proactive response to regional and global challenges and opportunities.

139. We took note of the growing interest from countries and regional organisations outside of the region in developing stronger collaboration and substantial cooperation with ASEAN, including through applications for formal partnerships with ASEAN. We affirmed the importance of pursuing an outward-looking policy and agreed on the need to reach out to new potential external parties based on shared interest, constructive engagement, and mutual benefit which could contribute to ASEAN Community-building, regional integration and development cooperation efforts.
140. We welcomed the increased engagement between the Committee of Permanent Representatives to ASEAN (CPR) and ASEAN's partners, including through the 95 Non-ASEAN Ambassadors Accredited to ASEAN (NAAAs). We also welcomed the role of the 55 ASEAN Committees in Third Countries and International Organisations (ACTCs) in promoting ASEAN's interest and forging partnerships in the respective host countries and international organisations.

### **Dialogue Partners**

141. We looked forward to the 3<sup>rd</sup> ASEAN-Australia Summit, the 26<sup>th</sup> ASEAN-China Summit, the 26<sup>th</sup> ASEAN-Japan Summit, the 24<sup>th</sup> ASEAN-Republic of Korea (ROK) Summit, the 11<sup>th</sup> ASEAN-U.S. Summit, the 20<sup>th</sup> ASEAN-India Summit to be held during the 43<sup>rd</sup> ASEAN Summits and Related Summits in September 2023. We looked forward to the ASEAN-Japan Commemorative Summit for the 50<sup>th</sup> Year of Friendship and Cooperation on 16-18 December 2023 in Tokyo, Japan, and the Special Summit to Commemorate the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of ASEAN-Australia Dialogue Relations on 4-6 March 2024 in Melbourne, Australia. We looked forward to the ASEAN-Canada Summit to launch the ASEAN-Canada Strategic Partnership on 6 September 2023.
142. We underscored that the establishment of a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (CSP) with ASEAN should be meaningful, substantive and mutually beneficial. We welcomed the establishment of the ASEAN-U.S. and ASEAN-India CSP in November 2022 and reaffirmed our commitments to working closely with the US and India, respectively, in implementing these CSPs. We looked forward to the establishment of the ASEAN-Japan CSP at the 26<sup>th</sup> ASEAN-Japan Summit on 5 September 2023. We also welcomed and looked forward to considering more details on the ROK's announcement of the request for an ASEAN-ROK CSP.
143. We looked forward to the adoption of the Joint Vision Statement on ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation and its Implementation Plan at the upcoming ASEAN-Japan Commemorative Summit for the 50<sup>th</sup> Year of Friendship and Cooperation, as well as the Joint Leaders' Statement on ASEAN-Canada Strategic Partnership at the ASEAN-Canada Summit to launch the ASEAN-Canada Strategic Partnership in September 2023 in Jakarta. We further looked forward to the establishment of the ASEAN-U.S. Centre to follow-up the implementation of the ASEAN-U.S. CSP and work on the details for its establishment.

## **ASEAN Sectoral Dialogue Partners and ASEAN Development Partners**

144. We noted the good progress made in the ASEAN's Sectoral Dialogue Partnerships with Norway, Switzerland, Türkiye, Brazil, United Arab Emirates, Pakistan, and South Africa as well as Development Partnerships with Chile, France, Germany and Italy. We welcomed the Netherlands as a Development Partner of ASEAN and Morocco as a Sectoral Dialogue Partner of ASEAN.

## **Regional and International Organisations**

145. We reaffirmed the importance of multilateralism and international cooperation and underscored the importance of ASEAN's partnerships with other external partners such as regional and international organisations, including the UN to address global concerns, pursue shared goals and complementary initiatives, and promote sustainable development for the benefit of our people. In this regard, we looked forward to the continued high-level interactions between ASEAN and the UN, including the convening of the 13<sup>th</sup> ASEAN-UN Summit at the 43<sup>rd</sup> ASEAN Summit and Related Summits.
146. We were pleased to note the positive progress made in the implementation of the Plan of Action to Implement the Joint Declaration on Comprehensive Partnership between ASEAN and the UN (2021-2025). We reaffirmed our commitment to intensifying cooperation in the implementation of the Complementarities Roadmap, effectively realising the goals of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and continuing our close collaboration and cooperation at regional and international fora.
147. We looked forward to the convening of ASEAN-Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Summit in October 2023 in Riyadh which will further strengthen our future relations with the GCC. We also looked forward to the adoption of ASEAN-GCC Framework of Cooperation 2024-2028.

## **ASEAN Plus Three**

148. We reaffirmed the important role of the APT cooperation framework in promoting peace, stability and prosperity in the East Asian region with ASEAN as the driving force. We noted the substantive progress of the implementation of the APT Cooperation Work Plan 2023-2027. We were committed to further strengthening APT mechanisms, including the Chiang Mai Initiative Multilateralisation (CMIM), the Asian Bond Markets Initiative (ABMI), the ASEAN+3 Macroeconomic Research Office (AMRO), and ASEAN Plus Three Emergency Rice Reserve (APTERR), and exploring potential areas of cooperation which would contribute to greater regional resilience and preparedness against emerging challenges and future shocks as well as to promote recovery toward inclusive, resilient, equitable and sustainable growth.

## **East Asia Summit**

149. We reaffirmed our commitment to the EAS as a Leaders-led forum for dialogue on broad strategic, political, and economic issues of common interest and concern with the aim of promoting peace, stability, and economic prosperity in the region with ASEAN as the driving force. We underscored the need to promote an enabling environment for peace, stability and prosperous development for all through ensuring a culture of dialogue and cooperation, instead of rivalry, enhancing mutual trust and confidence and respect for international law.
150. We reaffirmed our commitment to further strengthening the EAS and committed to ensuring the effective follow-up on the Ha Noi Declaration on the 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the EAS to further strengthen the EAS process, sustain its strategic value and relevance as well as enhance its responsiveness to fast-changing developments in the regional and global context. We welcomed the adoption of the EAS Plan of Action (2024-2028) to further enhance EAS cooperation over the next five years.
151. We welcomed the continued discussions and efforts to strengthen the EAS, including through, among others, negotiating the Terms of Reference of the Group of the East Asia Summit Ambassadors in Jakarta which regularises the engagement between the CPR and the non-ASEAN Ambassadors of EAS Participating Countries in Jakarta to discuss the implementation of the EAS Leaders' decisions, strengthen EAS cooperation, as well as exchange information on regional development which may affect regional peace and stability, cooperation initiatives and security policies and initiatives, and discuss the evolving regional architecture as well as enhancing coordination with the support of the EAS Unit at the ASEAN Secretariat.
152. We underscored the importance of refraining from provocative actions and adhering to the purposes and principles enshrined in the UN Charter, the ASEAN Charter, the TAC, and the objectives and principles of the SEANWFZ Treaty, in light of regional volatilities in order to prevent miscalculation, serious confrontation, open conflicts, and unpredictable consequences. Therefore, we looked forward to EAS Leaders Statement on Maintaining the Region as Epicentrum of Growth that emphasises the EAS Participating Countries' commitment to maintaining the region as an epicentrum of growth by building resilience against emerging challenges and future shocks through cooperation on maintaining financial stability, strengthening regional health architecture, building food security and resilience, and mitigating the impacts of geopolitical tensions on the economy.

### **ASEAN Regional Forum**

153. We reiterated the importance of the ARF's role in promoting dialogue and cooperation among its Participants for the past 30 years and as a key platform for building mutual trust and confidence, as well as consultation on regional political and security issues of common interest and concern. We reaffirmed the need to further enhance its effectiveness and maintain its relevance in the evolving regional security architecture. We noted the progress made in the implementation of the ARF Ha Noi Plan of Action II (2020-2025) and the need

for further progress, as well as looked forward to further discussion on efforts and follow-up actions to streamline and enhance the efficiency of the ARF based on the agreed 2020 Guide to ARF Processes, Procedures, Practices and Protocol. We welcomed the adoption of the ARF Statement on the Commemoration of 30 Years of the ARF at the 30<sup>th</sup> ARF on 14 July 2023.

154. We looked forward to continuing to work together towards revitalising the ARF, so that it continues to function as the leading regional security forum in the Asia-Pacific region and further promoting concrete cooperation and consultation to address political and security issues of common interest and concern, with a view to building capacity, developing expertise and enhancing coordination in areas that can contribute to the region's peace, security and stability. We noted that the ARF has focused its efforts on confidence building measures and further noted the possibility of moving to the next stage of preventive diplomacy, at a pace that is comfortable for all Participants.

## **REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ISSUES**

155. We recognised the strategic importance of our region for our peace, security, stability, and prosperity, as well as for those of our external partners. ASEAN and ASEAN-led mechanisms remain inclusive, and open avenues that facilitate constructive dialogue and concrete cooperation, thereby contributing to the development of the evolving regional architecture in line with the ASEAN Charter and the AOIP.

### **South China Sea**

156. We discussed the situation in the South China Sea, during which concerns were expressed by some ASEAN Member States on the land reclamations, activities, serious incidents in the area, including actions that put the safety of all persons at risk, damage to the marine environment, which have eroded trust and confidence, increased tensions, and may undermine peace, security, and stability in the region. We reaffirmed the need to enhance mutual trust and confidence, exercise self-restraint in the conduct of activities that would complicate or escalate disputes and affect peace and stability, and avoid actions that may further complicate the situation. We further reaffirmed the need to pursue peaceful resolution of disputes in accordance with the universally recognised principles of international law, including the 1982 UNCLOS. We emphasised the importance of non-militarisation and self-restraint in the conduct of all activities by claimants and all other states, including those mentioned in the 2002 Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) that could further complicate the situation and escalate tensions in the South China Sea.
157. We reaffirmed the importance of maintaining and promoting peace, security, stability, safety, and freedom of navigation in and overflight above the South China Sea and recognised the benefits of having the South China Sea as a sea of peace, stability, and prosperity. We underscored the importance of the full and effective implementation of the DOC in its entirety. We welcomed the progress achieved so far in the ongoing negotiations on the Code of Conduct



in the South China Sea (COC) including the completion of the second reading of the Single Draft COC Negotiating Text (SDNT), and the adoption of the Guidelines for Accelerating the Early Conclusion of an Effective and Substantive Code of Conduct in the South China Sea. We further looked forward to the early conclusion of an effective and substantive COC that is in accordance with international law, including the 1982 UNCLOS. We emphasised the need to maintain and promote an environment conducive to the COC negotiations, and thus welcomed practical measures that could reduce tensions and the risk of accidents, misunderstandings, and miscalculation. We stressed the importance of undertaking confidence-building and preventive measures to enhance, among others, trust and confidence among parties, and we reaffirmed the importance of upholding international law, including the 1982 UNCLOS.

### **Maritime Situation in the Region**

158. We recognised the need to maintain and further strengthen stability in the maritime sphere in our region and underlined the importance of strengthening maritime cooperation, and recognise the need to explore new initiatives towards these ends.

### **Development in Korean Peninsula**

159. We stressed the importance of continued peaceful dialogue among all concerned parties in order to realise lasting peace and stability in a denuclearised Korean Peninsula. The recent surge in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK)'s intercontinental ballistic missile testing and ballistic missile launches and the increased tension in the Korean Peninsula are a worrisome development that threatens peace and stability in the region. We urged all concerned parties to resume peaceful dialogue and continue working towards the realisation of lasting peace and stability in a denuclearised Korean Peninsula. We reiterated our commitment to the full implementation of all relevant UN Security Council Resolutions and noted international efforts to bring about the complete, verifiable, and irreversible denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula in a peaceful manner. Diplomatic efforts, including the creation of a conducive environment for peaceful dialogue among all concerned parties should remain a priority. We reiterated our readiness to play a constructive role, including through utilising ASEAN-led platforms such as the ARF in promoting a conducive atmosphere for peaceful dialogue amongst the concerned parties.

### **Developments in Myanmar**

160. We discussed the development in Myanmar, particularly the implementation of the Five-Point Consensus (5PC) and strongly condemned the continued escalation of violence, causing prolonged suffering for the people of Myanmar, humanitarian crisis, the destruction of houses and public facilities such as schools, hospitals, markets, churches and monasteries, and adverse impacts on regional stability, particularly along the border region.

161. We reiterated our position that the 5PC remains as ASEAN's main reference to address the political crisis in Myanmar, and in that regard, we were gravely concerned by the lack of substantial progress on its implementation by the Authority in Myanmar, despite their commitment to the 5PC in April 2021.
162. We appreciated the ASEAN Chair's efforts and the intensive and inclusive engagements by the Office of the Special Envoy in ensuring concrete progress on the implementation of the 5PC and welcomed the Chair's comprehensive report and assessment in that regard. We reviewed the progress of the 5PC and decided on the way forward. In that regard, we endorsed the ASEAN Leaders' Review and Decision on the Implementation of the Five-Point Consensus. We reaffirmed our commitment to continued and sustainable ASEAN's ongoing strategies and approach to help the people of Myanmar find peaceful, comprehensive and durable solutions.

### **Situation in Ukraine**

163. With regard to Ukraine, as for all nations, we continued to reaffirm our respect for sovereignty, political independence, and territorial integrity. We reiterated our call for compliance with the UN Charter and international law. We underlined the importance of an immediate cessation of hostilities and the serious engagement in a genuine dialogue for the peaceful resolution of the conflict. We supported the efforts of the UN Secretary-General in the search for peaceful solution. We also called for the facilitation of rapid, safe and unhindered access to humanitarian assistance for those in need in Ukraine, and for the protection of civilians, humanitarian personnel, and persons in vulnerable situations.

### **Situation in Middle East**

164. We expressed concern over the developments in the Middle East region. We reiterated the need for a comprehensive, just, and sustainable solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in order to achieve peace and stability in the Middle East region. We urged both sides to actively take positive steps to allow for negotiations to gain traction and work together towards the resumption of negotiations to achieve an enduring peace. We fully supported the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people for an independent State of Palestine with the realisation of two states, Palestine and Israel, living side by side in peace and security based on the pre-1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital.