



**CHAIR'S STATEMENT OF THE 48TH ASEAN SUMMIT
8 MAY 2026, CEBU, PHILIPPINES**

1. We, the Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), gathered in Cebu, Philippines, on 8 May 2026, for the 48th ASEAN Summit under the Chairship of the Republic of the Philippines. The Summit was chaired by H.E. Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr., President of the Republic of the Philippines, and convened in accordance with the ASEAN Charter.
2. We reaffirmed our support for the Philippines' ASEAN Chairship in 2026 under the theme "Navigating Our Future, Together," which reflects our collective resolve to steer ASEAN proactively and cohesively through an evolving regional and global landscape.
3. We underscored the importance of upholding ASEAN unity, Centrality and solidarity, while strengthening adherence to a rules-based regional architecture. We further reaffirmed our commitment to advancing the Chair's priorities of reinforcing peace and security through dialogue and cooperation, promoting maritime cooperation as an important avenue for enhancing regional connectivity, mutual trust and dialogue, deepening economic integration and digital transformation, and promoting inclusive, people-centred and sustainable development, including efforts to enhance resilience against emerging threats, climate change, and other cross-cutting challenges.
4. We reiterated our shared commitment to maintaining and promoting peace, security, and stability in the region, and to the peaceful settlement of disputes, including full respect for legal and diplomatic processes, without resorting to the threat or use of force in accordance with international law, including the UN Charter, the ASEAN Charter, the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC), and the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). We reiterated the importance of respecting sovereignty and territorial integrity, while continuing to promote dialogue and consultation as the primary means of addressing differences and preserving regional stability, including through strengthened preventive diplomacy, dialogue platforms, and confidence-building measures aimed at fostering trust and addressing emerging sources of tension in the region.
5. We reaffirmed our commitment to advancing ASEAN's external engagement in a manner that strengthens ASEAN unity and Centrality, and fosters constructive, forward-looking partnerships within and beyond the region. We underscored the

importance of ensuring that such engagement is anchored in mutual benefit, shared interests, and constructive engagement, and contributes to peace, stability, and sustainable development.

ASEAN COMMUNITY-BUILDING

6. We noted that this year marks the first year of the implementation of the *ASEAN 2045: Our Shared Future*. We reaffirmed our commitment to its full and effective implementation through the timely and coordinated implementation of the Strategic Plans of the three Community Pillars and ASEAN Connectivity towards a resilient, innovative, dynamic, and people-centred ASEAN by 2045.
7. We reaffirmed the importance of the ASEAN Political-Security Strategic Plan, which envisions a peaceful, stable and secure region based on the fundamental principles enshrined in the ASEAN Charter, the UN Charter and international law, including international humanitarian law, as well as international and regional human rights instruments, as subscribed to by ASEAN Member States. The Strategic Plan underscores ASEAN's determination to sustain and reinforce its Centrality through ASEAN-led mechanisms and other relevant platforms, leveraging its strengths in the peaceful conduct of relations among states, as well as in forging new and potential partnerships while ensuring substantive and mutually beneficial relations. It also seeks to enable ASEAN to project common positions on regional and global issues to remain a primary driving force in shaping the regional architecture while contributing towards a rules-based order anchored in international law amidst geopolitical tensions and rivalries, and to be a contributor to the maintenance of international peace and security through upholding the rules-based multilateral system and international law.
8. We underscored that 2026 marks the first year of implementation of the AEC Strategic Plan 2026–2030, a critical phase in translating our collective vision into concrete action. We emphasised the importance of ensuring effective, coordinated, and results-oriented implementation to deepen regional economic integration, strengthen resilience, and sustain high-quality growth, in line with ASEAN's aspiration to become the world's fourth-largest economy by 2030. In this regard, we welcomed the AEC Sectoral Plans that will be critical for the effective execution of the AEC Strategic Plan 2026–2030. Furthermore, to strengthen our results-based approach, enhance the tracking of progress, and support evidence-based policy adjustments throughout the implementation period, we welcomed the Enhanced AEC Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning (MEAL) Framework 2045.
9. Building on the strong foundation of the ASCC Blueprint 2025, we welcomed the implementation of the ASCC Strategic Plan, supported by strengthened monitoring and evaluation mechanisms and the development of the ASCC

Results Framework to ensure measurable, accountable, and evidence-based progress, as well as continued advances in communication and stakeholder engagement.

10. We underscored the need to enhance regional connectivity through the implementation of the ASEAN Connectivity Strategic Plan (ACSP) and its Work Plan in support of the *ASEAN 2045: Our Shared Future*. We called on the relevant ASEAN Sectoral Bodies and Implementing Bodies as well as ASEAN Mechanisms to undertake concrete activities under the ACSP to advance the ASEAN Connectivity agenda towards enhancing ASEAN's resilience and competitiveness, promoting sustainable development, and strengthening regional integration. We further highlighted the complementary and mutually reinforcing role of the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) Work Plan V (2026–2030) in supporting the effective implementation of the ACSP and its Work Plan, particularly through targeted capacity building in CLMV countries and Timor-Leste. In this regard, we emphasised that narrowing development gaps is essential to ensuring that enhanced connectivity translates into more inclusive, balanced, and sustainable regional integration across ASEAN.
11. We underscored the importance of turning long-term aspirations into clear, time-bound, and measurable actions, supported by mid-term review and transparent progress reporting so that the ASEAN Community Vision (ACV) 2045 delivers tangible improvements in the lives of our 700 million strong population.

KEY DELIVERABLES

Theme: "Navigating Our Future, Together"

12. We reaffirmed our commitment to strengthening ASEAN Community-building, upholding ASEAN unity and Centrality, and reinforcing ASEAN's role as the primary driving force in shaping an open, transparent, resilient, inclusive, and rules-based regional architecture that upholds international law. We emphasised the importance of sustained dialogue and cooperation, and reaffirmed ASEAN-led mechanisms as platforms for inclusive and constructive regional cooperation, in line with the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific.
13. We welcomed the 19 Priority Economic Deliverables (PEDs) under the ASEAN Chairship of the Philippines, which are designed to strengthen trade and investment linkages, accelerate digital transformation, integrate ASEAN's Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) agenda, leverage the creative economy and innovation, and advance sustainable and inclusive economies, including through the responsible and strategic use of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI) as a transformative tool for MSMEs and health services. In this regard, we looked forward to the adoption of the ASEAN Leaders'

Declaration on AI-Powered MSME Growth to institutionalize these initiatives and translate them into concrete, region-wide actions that will uplift our MSMEs. We noted that these PEDs will steer the region towards a more resilient, innovative, sustainable, and inclusive economic future. We underscored the importance of sustaining the momentum and ensuring timely and effective delivery of the PEDs, as they contribute meaningfully to advancing the objectives of the AEC Strategic Plan 2026–2030 and reinforcing ASEAN’s collective efforts towards deeper integration and sustainable growth that is felt by all ASEAN peoples.

14. We reaffirmed our commitment to building a people-oriented, people-centred ASEAN that is sustainable and resilient. We expressed our full support for the four ASCC priorities under the Philippines ASCC Chairship, namely (i) resilient and empowered families; (ii) inclusive development; (iii) smart youth and innovation; and (iv) environmentally sustainable and food-secure future. Amid an increasingly dynamic regional and global environment, we underscored the importance of empowering the people of ASEAN by fostering social inclusion, protecting people in vulnerable situations, and promoting a sense of shared identity and community, thereby advancing a people-oriented, people-centred, sustainable and resilient ASEAN.
15. Recognising that families are the foundation of societies, we welcomed the establishment of an ASEAN Network for Family Development to advance coherent and impactful family-centred policies. These initiatives build upon ongoing work to support parenting, promote child well-being and strengthen alternative family-based care systems to ensure that children grow up in safe, nurturing and supportive environments. We underscored the value of community-based approaches and regional cooperation in advancing the protection, well-being and resilience of families, particularly those in vulnerable situations, which require coordinated, holistic-and rights-based responses at all levels.
16. We further emphasised the importance of advancing regional health cooperation and strengthening resilient public health systems, including through ensuring universal access of families to essential health services and promoting the adoption of digital health systems to enhance the efficiency, accessibility, and quality of healthcare delivery. We also highlighted the importance of addressing child malnutrition and immunisation to support healthy growth and development, as well as enhancing regional prevention, preparedness and response to outbreaks, pandemics and emerging health challenges. Through these efforts, we reaffirmed our commitment to building a healthier, more resilient, inclusive, and sustainable ASEAN Community.
17. We further reaffirmed our commitment to strengthening social protection by ensuring accessibility and coverage particularly for vulnerable groups and those living in poor, at-risk and marginalised communities. We look forward to the

development of the Post-2025 ASEAN Declaration on Advancing Social Protection Towards a People-Centred Community and the convening of a High-Level Social Protection Conference, led by the Senior Officials Meeting on Social Welfare and Development, to promote more inclusive, adaptive and responsive social protection systems for all.

18. We recognised the importance of advancing the silver economy in fostering age-friendly and inclusive societies through strengthened cross-sectoral collaboration. We looked forward to the ASEAN High-Level Meeting on Unlocking the Silver Economy to help shape the ASEAN Regional Framework aimed at harnessing opportunities and sustaining economic growth amid the region's rapidly ageing population, underscoring the importance of responsive approaches in active ageing policies.
19. We reaffirmed that addressing the root causes of systemic gender inequalities remains central to inclusive and sustainable development and are committed to the gender-transformative implementation of the ASEAN Community Vision 2045. We valued the significant role of women as leaders and agents of change in peacebuilding and conflict prevention efforts. We welcomed continued progress across the region, including the increased participation of women in leadership and decision-making roles, and underscored the importance of promoting shared responsibility for care to address the disproportionate burden of unpaid care and domestic work borne by women. We further reaffirmed our steadfast commitment to ending violence against women and girls and look forward to the Post-2025 ASEAN Regional Plans of Action on the Elimination of Violence Against Women and Violence Against Children, which will address both existing and emerging forms of violence, including in the digital domain. We further underscore the importance of eliminating all forms of violence against vulnerable groups, including in crisis and armed conflict where there are heightened risks of violence, displacement and disruption to essential services.
20. We reaffirmed their shared commitment to a resilient, self-reliant, and people-centred ASEAN Community capable of responding swiftly and collectively to increasingly frequent, intense, and complex disasters affecting the region. Recalling the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) and the ASEAN Declaration on the "One ASEAN, One Response": ASEAN Responding to Disasters as One in the Region and Outside the Region, we emphasized that ASEAN Centrality and solidarity remain the foundation of regional disaster governance. We further acknowledged that climate-induced disasters, biological emergencies, and cascading systemic disruptions are converging into a multi-hazard risk environment that requires faster, more coordinated, anticipatory regional action including strengthened early warning systems, risk reduction measures, and anticipatory action across the disaster management cycle.

21. In this regard, we welcomed and supported the development of the ASEAN Leaders' Statement on the ASEAN Convergence on Disaster Response: The ASEAN Strategic Protocol for Emergency and Comprehensive Transformation (ASPECT) Framework as a complementary mechanism to strengthen regional interoperability and improve the timeliness and effectiveness of ASEAN disaster response. We underscored the importance of enhancing digital coordination and information sharing, strengthening logistics cooperation including through the Disaster Emergency Logistics System for ASEAN (DELSA), streamlining cross-border processes such as customs, immigration, and quarantine procedures (CIQP) arrangements, and promoting risk-informed and anticipatory approaches through science-based triggers, pre-arranged standby mechanisms, and accessible emergency financing. We also emphasized the importance of adopting a multi-hazards approach and ensuring that disaster response efforts remain inclusive, protection-centred, and responsive to the needs of people in vulnerable situations.
22. Reaffirming the central role of the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Management (AMMDM) and the ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management (ACDM), with the support of the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on disaster management (AHA Centre) and the ASEAN Secretariat, we tasked the relevant ASEAN sectoral bodies to further develop and implement the ASPECT Framework in alignment with AADMER and the Standard Operating Procedure for Regional Standby Arrangements and Coordination of Joint Disaster Relief and Emergency Response Operations (SASOP), including through strengthened operational protocols, capacity-building initiatives, simulation exercises, and partnerships with dialogue partners and stakeholders.

ASEAN POLITICAL-SECURITY COMMUNITY

23. We reaffirmed the continued relevance of the TAC as the foundational code of conduct governing interstate relations in the region and as a key instrument for maintaining regional peace and stability. We reiterated our commitment to upholding and promoting the principles of the TAC and to further enhancing the relevance of the Treaty both in the region and beyond. We encouraged all High Contracting Parties (HCPs) to adhere to their obligations under the Treaty. We welcomed the increasing interest of non-regional countries in acceding to the TAC, based on respect for its purposes and principles.
24. As this year marks the 50th anniversary of the TAC, we reflected on its enduring contribution to peace, stability, and cooperation in Southeast Asia. We underscored the significance of commemorating this milestone through initiatives that celebrate the Treaty's legacy and reinforce its principles among both regional and non-regional HCPs. We looked forward to the successful adoption of an ASEAN-sponsored resolution to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the

TAC during the 80th Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). We looked forward to the Commemorative Activity of the 50th Anniversary of the TAC be hosted by the Philippines, as the Chair of ASEAN, on 24 July 2026 in Manila, Philippines.

25. We underscored the immense contribution of nuclear weapon-free zones to nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation, and enhancing international peace and security. We reaffirmed our commitment to preserve the Southeast Asian region as a nuclear weapon-free zone and free of all other weapons of mass destruction, as enshrined in the Treaty of Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ Treaty) and the ASEAN Charter. We stressed the importance of the full and effective implementation of the SEANWFZ Treaty, including through the Plan of Action to Strengthen the Implementation of the SEANWFZ Treaty (2023-2027).
26. We reaffirmed our commitment to continuously engage all the Nuclear-Weapon States (NWS), including those with reservations, and intensify efforts to resolve all outstanding issues in accordance with the objectives and principles of the SEANWFZ Treaty. We welcome any NWS that are ready and 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 encouraged our ASEAN experts to engage with the NWS experts to explore ways to bridge the differences. We welcomed NWS' readiness to work with ASEAN to resolve these issues and to support the full and effective implementation of the SEANWFZ Treaty.
27. We reaffirmed our commitment to enhancing the profile of the SEANWFZ Treaty globally, including through strengthening cooperation with other Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones (NWFZs). In this regard, we welcomed the adoption of the ASEAN-sponsored biennial resolution on the SEANWFZ Treaty by the 80th Session of the UNGA on 1 December 2025, which reiterates the importance of the Treaty in contributing to international peace and security.
28. In preparation for the 2026 Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), we welcomed the submission of the Memorandum on Activities Relating to the Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon Free Zone by ASEAN, through the Philippines as the Chair of ASEAN. ASEAN's regular submissions of the memorandum, which reaffirm the region's steadfast commitment to full and effective implementation of the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon Free Zone Treaty and to strengthening the global nuclear non-proliferation regime. We continued to call on all States Parties to the NPT to renew their commitment to its full and effective implementation, particularly Article VI, to redouble efforts to protect the credibility and integrity of the NPT and to rally towards a much-desired meaningful consensual outcome document at

the 11th NPT Review Conference in 2026. In this regard, we reaffirmed our full support for Viet Nam in assuming the role of the President-designate of the 11th NPT Review Conference.

29. We also welcomed ASEAN's contribution to the Comprehensive Study on the Question of Nuclear Weapon Free Zones in All Its Aspects, relating to the SEANWFZ, as coordinated through Thailand and Indonesia as members of the Expert Group, underscoring ASEAN's active role in supporting multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation efforts.
30. We commended the ASEAN Network of Regulatory Bodies on Atomic Energy (ASEANTOM) for their continued efforts in enhancing cooperation among the nuclear regulatory bodies in the region and in advancing high standards and strengthening the practices of nuclear safety, security, and safeguards, guided by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) standards and international best practices and its vital role in this regard. Recognising the growing regional interest in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, we emphasized the need to strengthen regulatory readiness and institutional capabilities to ensure the safe and secure use of nuclear energy. We look forward to the region forging strategic and forward-looking partnerships with the IAEA and other dialogue partners.
31. We emphasised the necessity of maintaining stability within the maritime domain of our region. Recognising the multi-dimensional nature of maritime issues and underscoring the importance of enhancing cooperation among AMS, among others, we adopted the ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on Maritime Cooperation. We reaffirmed the role of the ASEAN Maritime Forum (AMF) and the Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum (EAMF) as Track 1.5 platforms in promoting maritime cooperation through dialogue and consultations. We welcomed the preparations for the publication of the second edition of the ASEAN Maritime Outlook and the implementation of initiatives under the AMF and EAMF this year. We welcomed Cambodia's ratification of the 1982 UNCLOS on 6 February 2026. We reaffirmed the importance of protecting and preserving the integrity of UNCLOS as the legal framework within which all activities in the ocean and seas must be carried out. We also reaffirmed the importance of the navigational rights and freedoms enshrined in UNCLOS, including the right of transit passage in straits used for international navigation, the protection of the marine environment and the safety of navigation and life at sea. To further strengthen regional cooperation among ASEAN coast guards and maritime law enforcement agencies, we emphasized the continued relevance of the ASEAN Coast Guard Forum (ACF) as a platform for dialogue and practical cooperation. We noted the ongoing efforts of ACF Member Agencies to finalize the Forum's Terms of Reference (TOR) and Concept Paper (CP), with the end in view of establishing the ACF as an ASEAN Sectoral Body under Annex I of the ASEAN Charter. We noted the planned establishment of the ASEAN Maritime Centre in the Philippines, which will

support the work of ASEAN and ASEAN-led mechanisms on maritime-related issues and will promote cross-sectoral and cross-pillar collaboration among ASEAN Member States, while avoiding duplication of efforts.

32. We welcomed progress in efforts made by the ASEAN law enforcement sector to address current, emerging, and the convergence of multiple forms of transnational crime, as guided by the ASEAN Plan of Action in Combatting Transnational Crime (2026-2035). We underscored the need to further strengthen coordination, as well as institutionalized monitoring and reporting mechanisms among ASEAN Member States, to enhance data collection, reporting, and evidence-based evaluation of regional efforts under the ASEAN Convention against Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children (ACTIP), through the National ACTIP Representatives. We also emphasized the importance of strengthening the application of the non-punishment principle in trafficking in persons cases, particularly those involving forced criminality. We further welcomed the progress of cross-sectoral cooperation in support of the implementation of the Work Plan of the ASEAN Plan of Action to Prevent and Combat the Rise of Radicalisation and Violent Extremism (Bali Work Plan) 2019-2026, including through community-based approaches, peace education, and dialogue initiatives that address the root causes of conflict and violent extremism.
33. In view of the operationalisation of the ASEAN Declaration on Combatting Cybercrime and Online Scams that was adopted by the 19th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime (AMMTC), we welcomed ongoing initiatives and practical activities to strengthen cooperation and build regional capacity to effectively respond to the proliferation and growing sophistication of online scams, while strengthening protection, assistance, and access to justice for victims and survivors in the region. Recognising the importance of a comprehensive approach to address trafficking in persons (TIP), including its nexus with online scams, we looked forward to the continued contribution of ASEAN Sectoral Bodies in implementing the ASEAN Multi-Sectoral Work Plan Against TIP 2023-2028 (Bohol TIP 2.0) and its Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Learning (MERL) Framework.
34. We recognised the important role of the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Drug Matters (AMMD) and its subsidiary mechanisms in advancing regional coordination to address illicit drugs and reaffirmed our zero-tolerance towards drugs and shared commitment to achieving a Drug-Free ASEAN. We committed to continue the implementation of the ASEAN Workplan on Securing Communities Against Illicit Drugs, anchored on the ASEAN Political Security Community Strategic Plan, noting the priority deliverables that will complement our shared objectives for a safe and secure ASEAN. We expressed our appreciation for the continued convening of the AMMD on a biennial basis and looked forward to the Philippines' Chairship of the 9th AMMD this year. We

anticipated the observance of the ASEAN Drug Victims Remembrance Day on 26 June 2026 by ASEAN Member States, in conjunction with the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, underscoring ASEAN's concerted efforts to strengthen community resilience and raise public awareness about the devastating impact of illicit drugs. We also commended the continued contributions of the ASEAN Narcotics Cooperation Center (ASEAN-NARCO), particularly its publication of the annual ASEAN Drug Monitoring Report (ADM), as a key initiative supporting ASEAN's collective efforts to combat illicit drugs.

35. We noted the outcomes of the 19th ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM) and the 12th ADMM-Plus convened in 2025. We congratulated the ADMM on the 20th anniversary of its establishment this year. We acknowledged notable progress in regional defence cooperation made in the past two decades, including the founding of the ADMM-Plus in 2010, which reflects ASEAN's commitment to an open and inclusive regional security architecture. We welcomed the expansion of the practical cooperation areas under the defence sector, allowing the ADMM and ADMM-Plus to address current security challenges and prepare against future threats. We also commended the growing engagement with external partners, both under the ADMM/ADMM-Plus framework and beyond, including through the continued implementation of the AOIP. We noted initiatives under the Philippines' Chairship aimed at investing in the future, by advancing the Youth, Peace and Security Agenda. We looked forward to the flagship activities of the seven ADMM-Plus Experts' Working Groups (EWGs) in the ongoing 2024-2027 cycle.
36. We took note of the progress of the work of the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) in the promotion and protection of human rights in the region in line with the Terms of Reference of the AICHR, including by strengthening the Commission's institutional capacity, and enhancing cross-sectoral and cross-pillar collaboration. In this regard, we welcomed the commencement of the implementation of the AICHR Five-Year Work Plan 2026–2030, and encouraged its timely, effective, and results-oriented implementation, in alignment with *ASEAN 2045: Our Shared Future* and its vision of a people-centred, people-oriented, and human rights-based ASEAN Community. With this mechanism, we can enhance regional cooperation to address the lived realities and needs of the peoples of ASEAN, especially those from vulnerable and marginalised sectors. In this regard, we welcomed the continuing discussions at AICHR on the ASEAN Declaration on the Right to a Safe, Clean, Healthy and Sustainable Environment, as well as the ASEAN Declaration on Promoting the Right to Development and the Right to Peace Towards Realising Inclusive and Sustainable Development, in accordance with the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration and the Phnom Penh Statement on the Adoption of the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration. We also appreciated the deepening cooperation of the AICHR with relevant international and regional

partners in support of capacity-building, technical cooperation, and the exchange of good practices.

37. We encouraged continued efforts by the ASEAN Institute for Peace and Reconciliation (ASEAN-IPR) through research, advocacy, and engagement with relevant ASEAN bodies, entities, and academic institutions that champion peacebuilding and reconciliation, and by actively advancing peace education and the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) and Youth, Peace and Security (YPS) agendas, including strengthening the meaningful participation of women and youth in peacebuilding and conflict prevention efforts. We further encouraged stronger collaboration with national peace institutions, civil society organisations, and other relevant stakeholders in promoting dialogue, reconciliation, and inclusive peace processes.
38. We commended the ASEAN Law Ministers' Meeting (ALAWMM)'s continued efforts and work progress in strengthening ASEAN's legal cooperation in promoting the rule of law, justice, and a rules-based ASEAN. We congratulated the ALAWMM on the signing of the ASEAN Treaty on Extradition on 14 November 2025 in Manila, Philippines, and looked forward to the timely deposit of Instruments of Ratification by the ASEAN Member States necessary for the entry into force of the Treaty, which will contribute to supporting and facilitating ASEAN's efforts in strengthening its capacities, enhancing regional cooperation to combat transnational crimes, and strengthening the rule of law and justice in the region.
39. We were pleased to note the convening of the First ASEAN-Japan Law Ministers' Meeting, which was held back-to-back with the 13th ALAWMM in November 2025 in Manila, Philippines, and were encouraged by the establishment of formal mechanisms between ASEAN and Japan on the rule of law and justice, in particular the continued implementation of the ASEAN-Japan Work Plan on Law and Justice.
40. We noted with satisfaction the progress achieved under the ASEAN Ministers/Attorneys General Meeting of the Central Authorities on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters (AMAG-MLAT) and the Senior Officials' Meeting of the Central Authorities on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters (SOM-MLAT), in particular the endorsement of the Model Templates on MLA Requests to be used under the ASEAN MLAT by ASEAN Member States. We looked forward to the progress update on the accession to the ASEAN MLAT by non-ASEAN Member States.
41. 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 in raising awareness of the dangers 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 both the regional and global level, including at the UN. We expressed appreciation to ASEAN Member States, Dialogue Partners, external partners, and international organisations, who have contributed to the undertaking of projects and operations of ARMAC.

ASEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY

42. We emphasised the importance of advancing an innovative, dynamic, inclusive, and sustainable AEC that benefits all our peoples. In this regard, we emphasised the importance of enhancing energy and food security, strengthening trade and investment linkages, accelerating digital transformation and the responsible use of emerging technologies, integrating ASEAN's MSMEs agenda, leveraging on the creative economy and innovation, and promoting sustainable economic practices to support long-term growth and economic resilience in the face of evolving geopolitical and geoeconomic developments. Recognising that Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) account for approximately 95% of enterprises in ASEAN, we further underscored the importance of empowering MSMEs and deepening regional economic integration. In this context, we welcomed initiatives such as the Priority Economic Deliverable on AI-Powered MSME Growth. We further underscored the need to empower MSMEs and deepen regional economic integration to ensure ASEAN remains resilient, competitive, and responsive amid evolving global challenges.
43. We noted with satisfaction that ASEAN recorded a robust growth rate of 4.9% in 2025,¹ reaffirming the region's resilience amid persistent external headwinds, including retaliatory tariff measures and ongoing geoeconomic fragmentation. We further noted that ASEAN's growth momentum is projected to remain steady at 4.6% in 2026, supported by strong domestic demand and sustained structurally supportive investments across the region.² We expressed confidence that this growth trajectory, underpinned by strengthened regional economic resilience, will support ASEAN's ambition to advance from the world's fifth-largest economy to the fourth-largest by 2030 despite continued global uncertainty and geopolitical tensions.
44. We welcomed that intra-ASEAN merchandise trade remained steady in 2025, accounting for 20.5%³ of total trade and represents the second largest share among ASEAN's trading partners. We noted that inward FDI flows to ASEAN

¹ ASEAN Stats (as of 28 April 2026)

² ADB (2026, April), 'Asian Development Outlook, April 2026', retrieved from: <<https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/1135881/ado-april-2026.pdf>>

³ ASEAN Secretariat (2026), Trade in goods (IMTS), retrieved from IMTS data as of 13 March 2026.

increased by 7.9% in 2025,⁴ and notwithstanding periodic fluctuations in line with global trends, ASEAN continues to rank among the world's leading destinations for foreign direct investment.⁵ We noted with satisfaction that intra-ASEAN FDI in 2025 accounted for 15.9 per cent of total inflows, marking its re-emergence as the largest source of investment for the first time since 2020 and highlighting the strength of regional investment integration.

45. We note the recommendations of the ASEAN Geoeconomics Task Force, which reinforce the urgency of strengthening implementation and follow-through of ongoing strategies and initiatives. We also underscored the importance of closer coordination between ASEAN Foreign and Economic Ministers to develop timely, coherent, and synergised responses to evolving geopolitical and geoeconomic challenges.
46. We reaffirmed our strong support for a rules-based, non-discriminatory, open, and predictable multilateral trading system, with the World Trade Organization (WTO) at its core. We underscored the need to strengthen and reform the WTO to ensure its continued relevance and effectiveness, preserve a predictable trading environment, and support open and inclusive pathways for progress within the multilateral system. We reiterated ASEAN's commitment to work constructively with all partners to safeguard a predictable and stable, resilient and rules-based global trading environment.
47. We recognised the increasing convergence of economic policy and security considerations in an increasingly complex and uncertain global environment. In this regard, we agreed to develop an ASEAN Leaders' Statement on Strategic Trade Management to promote trade and enhance the resilience of regional supply chains. We reaffirmed our commitment to strengthening ASEAN's role as a credible and reliable partner in the global economy.
48. We welcomed the 87.4 per cent completion rate of the AEC Blueprint 2025 as of end-2025, reflecting the strong commitment of Member States and Sectoral Bodies in advancing the economic integration agenda. We noted the continuing relevance of the ongoing activities and encouraged the AEC Sectoral Bodies to expeditiously complete these activities within 2026 or, where appropriate, align them with their respective Sectoral Plans for 2026–2030 to ensure continuity and sustained progress in the next phase of ASEAN economic integration. We looked forward to the report of the AEC Blueprint 2025 Full Implementation status, including the 2026 spill-over in November 2026.

⁴ ASEAN Secretariat (2026), Flows of inward foreign direct investment (FDI), retrieved from <<https://data.aseanstats.org/fdi-by-hosts-and-sources>>

⁵ ASEAN Secretariat (2025), *ASEAN Investment Report 2025*, Jakarta: ASEAN Secretariat, retrieved from <https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/AIR2025_rev17-Okt.pdf>

49. We commended the full signing of the Second Protocol to Amend the ASEAN Trade in Goods Agreement (ATIGA), which marks a strategic milestone in advancing ASEAN's economic integration, and called for its swift ratification and possible early entry into force to facilitate seamless movement of goods in the region. We looked forward to the expansion of the ASEAN Authorised Economic Operator (AEO) Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA) with Dialogue Partners to enhance the utilisation of ASEAN Plus-One Free Trade Agreements and promote supply chain resilience. We further welcomed Myanmar's participation as the seventh member of the ASEAN Customs Transit System (ACTS) and looked forward to the successful implementation of the pilot project to test the railway mode in ACTS by the end of 2026, which will mark an important step toward seamless multimodal connectivity. We also tasked relevant sectoral bodies to support Brunei Darussalam and Indonesia to participate in the ACTS to reinforce ASEAN's vision of a fully integrated, efficient, and future-ready regional transit system.
50. We welcomed the progress in upgrading the ASEAN Single Window (ASW), particularly the finalization of the Roadmap for ASEAN Single Window 2.0, which will enhance the versatility of the ASW to be interoperable with external partners' platforms through more widely adopted protocols and define technical specifications and legal requirements to improve the electronic exchange of trade administration documents among ASEAN and with External Partners. We urged officials to expedite the implementation of the ASEAN Single Window 2.0 to further facilitate trade, reduce compliance costs, and advance digital interoperability among relevant agencies and stakeholders within ASEAN and between ASEAN and its external partners.
51. We welcomed the completion of the signing of the Fifth Protocol to Amend the ASEAN Comprehensive Investment Agreement (ACIA). We looked forward to the entry into force of the Protocol to operationalise the transition to a two-annex negative list and implement the obligations on the Prohibition of Performance Requirements mandated under the Fourth Protocol to Amend the ACIA. We underscored that this development would enhance certainty, transparency, and predictability for investors while ensuring that ASEAN's investment regime remains modern, relevant, and responsive to evolving business needs.
52. We welcomed the progress in the implementation of the ASEAN Regional Investment Action Plan 2025-2030. We acknowledge that this will aim to attract foreign investment in green transition and post-pandemic priority recovery sectors, namely carbon capture and storage, biofuels, medical devices, solar photovoltaic equipment, veterinary healthcare, and green/sustainable building materials. We noted that this will help position ASEAN as a single investment destination for sustainable investment, while accelerating the region's green transition and inclusive economic growth.

53. We recognize the efforts of the ASEAN Member States to expedite the finalisation of Schedules of Non-Conforming Measures for the ASEAN-6 under the ASEAN Trade in Services Agreement (ATISA) in 2026. We look forward to their continued coordination and rigorous work in discussing the equivalence requirement under the agreement.
54. We recognised the vital role of accurate and reliable measurement in helping industries to reduce the cost of doing business and safeguarding consumer protection. In this regard, we looked forward to the implementation of the Guidance Document for the Implementation of the MRA on Type Approval for Automotive Products (APMRA), the Guideline on the Verification of Automatic Catchweighing Instruments, and the ASEAN Guideline on Establishing ASEAN Pharmaceutical Testing Methods (APM).
55. We welcomed and looked forward to the implementation of the ASEAN Capacity Building Roadmaps on Competition and Consumer Protection 2026 – 2030. We noted that this would establish a structured and forward-looking framework that will strengthen institutional capacity, professional competence, cross-border cooperation, and regulatory coherence across ASEAN. We acknowledged that these will also contribute and enhance the regional readiness to address the complex and digitalised market dynamics while safeguarding fair competition and consumer welfare.
56. We reaffirmed ASEAN's commitment to deepening its economic engagement with the world, strengthening cooperation with existing Dialogue Partners, and diversifying by exploring new partnerships. This is central to ensuring ASEAN's continued relevance in the evolving global landscape. We welcomed the signing of the ASEAN-China Free Trade Area (ACFTA) 3.0 Upgrade Protocol on 28 October 2025 and looked forward to its entry into force this year. We are encouraged by the positive momentum of the ASEAN-Canada Free Trade Agreement (ACAFTA) negotiations and are committed to its substantial conclusion this year. We recognised that the ongoing ASEAN-India Trade in Goods Agreement (AITIGA) Review remains a crucial initiative to further deepen our economic relation and make the AITIGA more effective, user-friendly, simple, and trade facilitative and therefore, we remain committed to reaching mutually beneficial outcomes that will also address emerging issues to support the evolving needs of our economies. Additionally, we commenced the ASEAN-Korea Free Trade Area (AKFTA) Upgrade negotiations this year, which will improve the transparency, predictability and efficiency of existing trade, while enhancing ASEAN's economic linkages with the Republic of Korea in emerging areas such as digital trade, supply chain connectivity, and sustainability.

57. In line with ASEAN's diversification efforts, we looked forward to the commencement of the Joint Feasibility Study on a potential ASEAN-Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Free Trade Agreement, following the adoption of the Joint Declaration on Economic Cooperation between ASEAN and the GCC last year. This marks an important step toward deepening economic ties and exploring new opportunities for collaboration with the GCC.
58. We remained fully committed to the effective implementation of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Agreement and advancing the accession process of applicants into the RCEP Agreement as a priority this year. We welcomed the positive steps towards broadening RCEP's membership and commencing preparation for the General Review of the RCEP Agreement, scheduled for 2027, which will further strengthen the RCEP as a cornerstone of regional trade and economic integration, fostering a more open, inclusive, and rules-based economic order across the region.
59. We reaffirmed our commitment to strengthening ASEAN cooperation in food systems, agriculture, and forestry to enhance resilience, sustainability, and food security across the region. We support the advancement of sustainable and regenerative agricultural practices, as appropriate to national and local agro-ecological conditions, to improve soil health, productivity, climate resilience, and livelihoods, while reducing environmental impacts. We recognised the potential of an ASEAN billion tree-growing initiative as a nature-based solution for climate action, biodiversity conservation, and sustainable ecosystem management, as well as a means to invigorate regional carbon market and trading. We welcomed further discussion on promoting ready-to-eat meals during natural calamities as part of disaster preparedness and emergency response. We encouraged stronger private sector engagement, including through public-private partnerships, to enhance investment, innovation, and sustainable growth across the sectors.
60. We welcomed the continued recovery and steady expansion of the ASEAN tourism sector, with international visitor arrivals reaching approximately 147 million in 2025, underscoring tourism's contribution to economic growth, employment, foreign exchange earnings, and MSME growth. We commended the adoption of the ASEAN Tourism Sectoral Plan 2026–2030 as a shared five-year framework to enhance competitiveness, productivity, investment facilitation, and the resilience of the regional tourism value chain. We recognised intra-ASEAN tourism, accounting for around 42 per cent of total arrivals in 2025, as a stable demand base that helps cushion external shocks and promote more balanced growth among Member States. We reaffirmed our commitment to mobilising financing partnerships to support investment in secondary cities as well as emerging destinations and expand alternative and sustainable tourism

destinations, advancing more inclusive and geographically balanced tourism-led growth across ASEAN.

61. We underscored that a coordinated regional framework on critical minerals should remain open, market-oriented, transparent and rules-based while enhancing policy coherence, attracting responsible investment, strengthen regional processing and metallurgical capacity, supporting comprehensive downstream value addition, and positioning ASEAN as a high-tech reliable and competitive hub in global manufacturing and strategic supply chains.
62. We reaffirmed that the ASEAN Power Grid (APG) is a strategic pillar of ASEAN's energy integration. We noted that the APG is essential to strengthening regional resilience through cross-border electricity trade, renewable energy integration, and enhanced grid stability amidst rising demand and climate-related risks. We underscored that operationalising the Enhanced Memorandum of Understanding on the APG, together with comprehensive operational guidelines for the Submarine Power Cable Development Framework, is critical to establishing clear governance and regulatory foundations, while respecting national laws, regulations and energy sovereignty and ensuring technical reliability. In this regard, we welcomed continued efforts to strengthen coordination across key implementation areas through the Senior Officials Meeting on Energy (SOME) in supporting the development of operational guidelines covering legal/regulatory, technical, financial and commercial, and governance components, including for subsea interconnections. We also welcomed continued progress under the APG Financing Initiative (APGF) to mobilise blended finance and crowd in private investment, as well as to provide technical assistance for project preparation and capacity building accelerating the development of a secure and interconnected ASEAN power system.
63. We underscored our strong collective support for ASEAN's vision of a more integrated, secure, and sustainable energy future, and affirmed our readiness to contribute as committed partners in advancing a resilient and greener energy landscape. We emphasised the need to facilitate and support the development of bankable regional projects, strengthen institutional readiness, and enhance coordinated financing approaches in accordance with national priorities and circumstances, and strengthen institutional readiness to meet the region's estimated infrastructure and connectivity needs of around USD 210 billion annually, including through enhanced project preparation facilities and coordinated regional financing mechanisms aligned with ASEAN's energy transition objectives.
64. We reaffirmed our strong commitment to accelerating the implementation of APAEC 2026–2030 to strengthen ASEAN's energy security and resilience. We emphasised diversifying energy sources, scaling up renewable and emerging technologies, improving energy efficiency, and advancing cooperation on

petroleum security, Carbon Capture, Utilisation, and Storage (CCUS), where appropriate, civilian nuclear energy subject to national policies and readiness, and smart grid digitalisation. We welcomed the new aspirational 2030 targets of a 40 per cent reduction in energy intensity (from 2005 levels), a 30 per cent renewable energy share in Total Primary Energy Supply, and a 45 per cent renewable share in installed power capacity, underscoring ASEAN's collective resolve to build a more sustainable, competitive regional energy system.

65. We looked forward to the ASEAN Strategy for Carbon Neutrality Work Plan that will operationalise the ASEAN Strategy for Carbon Neutrality through clear priorities, shared objectives and coordinated action to decarbonise regional value chains. We noted the transformative potential of the Strategy in advancing sustainable and resilient economic growth, while strengthening ASEAN's position as an attractive and competitive destination for green investments to support an inclusive climate transition.
66. We acknowledged the regional commitment to harness the potential of our marine, ocean, seas, and freshwater resources through ongoing efforts to finalise the Roadmap of the ASEAN Blue Economy Implementation Plan 2026–2030. We looked forward to the finalisation of the Roadmap as critical pathways to practical and context-specific initiatives to advance the physical, financial, human, social, and natural capital of ASEAN's blue economy. We looked forward to the outcomes of the ASEAN Blue Carbon and Finance Profiling project, which will support the mapping of blue capital assets and facilitate the identification of sustainable investment opportunities to advance the region's blue economy agenda.
67. We welcomed the efforts to advance relevant and fit-for-purpose circular economy initiatives. We looked forward to the conduct of the mid-term review of the Framework on Circular Economy, including the stocktaking exercise and assessment of impact on the region's circular economy transition, as well as foresight priorities that can be incorporated within the framework. We also welcomed strengthened public-private engagement through the Independent Advisory Panel (IAP), enabling coordinated resource mobilisation and technical expertise to accelerate the implementation of circular economy initiatives under the AEC Framework.
68. We welcomed the adoption of the ASEAN Transport Sectoral Plan 2026–2030, which sets out ASEAN's strategic directions to meet the evolving demands of seamless transport connectivity, ensuring that the region's transport systems remain competitive, resilient, and future-ready in support of the ASEAN Community Vision 2045. In addition, we noted the steady progress in developing key transport initiatives for adoption in November 2026, covering air navigation services, sustainable aviation, heavy-duty vehicle electrification, rail

interoperability and high-speed rail, and carbon-neutral ports, underscoring ASEAN's commitment to enhancing safety, efficiency, capacity, resilience, sustainability, connectivity, and deeper regional integration across all modes of transport.

69. We welcomed ASEAN's commitment towards greater financial inclusion for the vulnerable population and MSMEs through substantial policy dialogues and knowledge exchanges to promote digital financial literacy, robust digital consumer protection, leverage digitalisation for financial access, and incorporate financial health and well-being as a desired outcome for financial inclusion. With the ever-evolving financial risks associated with rising household debt, fraud, and scams, we looked forward to ASEAN's continued efforts to advance financial health as a regional priority, including the development of a financial health measurement framework, to support monitoring, policy cooperation, and evidence-based policymaking and to the strengthen financial resilience across ASEAN.
70. We commended ASEAN's substantial progress in deepening financial integration not only to facilitate greater trade and investment but also to promote inclusivity. In this regard, we welcomed the continued expansion of cross-border payment linkages in the region, with 29 QR payments and P2P funds transfer linkages launched, as of December 2025, not only within ASEAN but also with external partners, as well as the substantial growth in the volume and value of transactions. We noted ongoing regional efforts to strengthen interoperability, transparency, and regulatory coordination to further advance ASEAN regional payments connectivity, guided by the Roadmap for Instant Payment Connectivity (RIPC). We looked forward to the continued collective action towards the development and expansion of safe, efficient, and inclusive payment systems in ASEAN, supporting greater access for households, businesses, and migrant workers.
71. We underscored the necessity of scaled up access to climate finance to address the unique vulnerabilities of the region, including support for loss and damage to support recovery and long-term resiliency. We welcomed ASEAN's priority on creating a conducive ecosystem for climate mitigation and adaptation, including the acceleration of capital market financing for ASEAN's transition through the adoption of frameworks on a code of conduct for External Review Providers in Sustainable Financing Instruments, and the promotion of climate adaptation through the Mitigation co-benefit, Adaptation, Resilience and Sustainable Finance (MARs) Guide, while underscoring the importance of scaling up accessible and affordable financing for sustainable development and climate action. We emphasised the need for enhanced access to existing international funds, capacity building, and promoting an enabling environment for private sector investment. Finally, we recognized that through cross-collaboration

among ASEAN sectoral bodies, we can become a stronger, more united region where fiscal strategies serve as concrete investments towards a more sustainable and resilient ASEAN.

72. We looked forward to the conclusion of the ASEAN Digital Economy Framework Agreement (DEFA) negotiation and its signing at the 49th ASEAN Summit. We noted that this collective milestone will accelerate ASEAN's digital transformation through enhanced coordination in the areas of digital trade, cross-border e-commerce, electronic payments and e-invoicing, digital identity and authentication, online safety and cybersecurity, cross-border data flows and data protection, competition policy, cooperation on emerging technologies such as AI, and digital talent development.
73. We welcomed the endorsement of the ASEAN Cybersecurity Cooperation Strategy 2026-2030, underscoring ASEAN's commitment to strengthening cybersecurity cooperation, protecting critical information infrastructure, and promoting a safer and more trusted online environment in an increasingly interconnected digital landscape. We commended the ongoing regional capacity-building work undertaken by the ASEAN-Japan Cybersecurity Capacity Building Centre (AJCCBC) and the ASEAN-Singapore Cybersecurity Centre of Excellence (ASCCE) in strengthening regional cybersecurity resilience against complex and evolving threats. We welcomed the progress in operationalising the ASEAN Regional Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT), launched in October 2024 in Singapore, and its information sharing mechanism. This initiative is a significant step towards raising the regional cybersecurity posture through timely information sharing and the exchange of best practices among AMS. Furthermore, we acknowledged the value of ASEAN Norms Implementation Checklist in supporting the implementation of voluntary, non-binding norms of responsible State behaviour in cyberspace, in alignment with national priorities, and needs. We acknowledged the continued efforts in combating online scams, including through the development of the ASEAN Guide on Anti-Scam Policies and Best Practices, which provides practical guidance for governments, telecommunications regulators, and industry stakeholders in ASEAN to adopt recommended anti-scam measures, share scam-related information, and strengthen protection for public and industry resilience against scams conducted over telecommunication channels. We further welcomed the Enhanced ASEAN Guidelines for Strengthening Resilience and Repair of Submarine Cables which strengthens regional cooperation and harmonization among the ASEAN Member States, consistent with international law, particularly the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.
74. We commend the adoption of the ASEAN Digital Masterplan 2026 – 2030 which provides strategic direction to ASEAN as an integrated, secure, trusted, innovative, and inclusive digital economy that empower every citizen and

business to access opportunities, build innovation capabilities, and thrive in the global digital economy.

75. We reaffirmed ASEAN's commitment to strengthening MSME competitiveness, inclusiveness, and resilience through the Strategic Action Plan for MSME Development 2026-2030 (SAP MSMED 2030), including measures to accelerate digital and technology transformation, deepen integration of MSMEs into regional and global value chains, and support a greener transition. We welcomed concrete steps to safeguard the continuity and impact of ASEAN's regional MSME platforms, including the ASEAN SME Academy, ASEAN Access, and emerging regional initiatives, which serve as vital instruments for capacity building, market access, and cross-border collaboration. We looked forward to the finalisation of the ASEAN MSME Digital Trade Outreach Toolkit, which will provide practical guidance and resources to help MSMEs navigate digital trade opportunities, enhance their digital capabilities, and access international markets more effectively.
76. We further welcomed the Philippines' proposal to establish an AI MSME Hub to further support MSMEs in harnessing the transformative potential of AI. We noted its objective to provide MSMEs with accessible tools, capacity building programs and advisory services to strengthen productivity and competitiveness, while supporting ASEAN to address sovereign compute gap through shared, and industrial scale computing resources. We look forward to the fulfillment of the AI MSME Hub to further promote an inclusive, interoperable and corresponds with regional priorities on digital transformation, innovation, and sustainable development. We also look forward to the ASEAN AI Summit to be hosted by the Philippines in September 2026, which will serve as a high-level platform to gather private sector inputs and catalyze the strategic partnership ecosystem for AI adoption.
77. We welcomed the adoption of the Terms of Reference for establishing the ASEAN Unique Business Identification Numbers (UBIN) Implementing Committee and emphasised the importance of the implementation of the ASEAN UBIN Implementation Roadmap as a key enabler of trusted cross-border digital verification and a more interoperable regional digital trading environment, with benefits for MSMEs. We encouraged the advancement of implementation of the initial enable first use cases, including Company Search and Data-as-a-Service, while remaining open to future use cases to ensure the initiative remains interoperable, scalable, and sustainable.
78. We reaffirmed our steadfast commitment to the ongoing efforts to establish the ASEAN Centre of Excellence for Creative Industries (ACE-CI) as one of this year's PEDs. We envisioned the ACE-CI as a shared regional platform that enables ASEAN Member States to collaborate, amplify their collective strengths,

and shape a globally competitive creative future together. We looked forward to a strengthened cross-sectoral and cross-pillar collaboration to advance the ACE-CI as a regional coordination and convergence hub for cultural and creative industries development initiatives. We emphasized the Centre's objective to assist AMS in coordinating strategies, strengthening creative ecosystems, and unlocking new economic and cultural value. (DTI) We further underscored the pivotal role of the ACE-CI in enhancing and expanding Intellectual Property (IP) education, balanced protection, and commercialisation for the creative industry, ensuring that our creative industries remain competitive and sustainable while fostering inclusive, people-centred and innovation-driven growth across the region.

79. We commended the Member States for finalising the textual negotiation of the upgraded ASEAN Framework Agreement on Intellectual Property Cooperation (AFAIPC 2.0) to strengthen regional cooperation in IP protection, enforcement, and commercialisation, streamline cross-border IP processes, and develop a high-skilled IP workforce. We looked forward to the conclusion of legal review processes and signing at the earliest opportunity.
80. We welcomed the commencement of the implementation of the ASEAN Plan of Action on Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) 2026–2035, guided by the vision of a more integrated and resilient ASEAN powered by science, technology, and innovation. We further noted ASEAN's continued improvement in the Global Innovation Index, reflecting the region's strengthening competitiveness and commitment to STI-driven growth.
81. We underscored the strategic importance of the responsible and inclusive application of artificial intelligence (AI) application and welcomed the establishment of ASEAN's first shared high-performance computing (HPC) facility, accessible to all ASEAN Member States (AMS). This facility, delivering 4.2 petaflops of GPU-based computing power, is expected to enhance regional research capabilities and support advances in AI, big data analytics, and advanced scientific simulations. We also recognised progress in developing the Regional STI Programme on the AI Plan of Action, particularly in advancing AI-driven health research and development, as well as ongoing efforts in the engineering biology landscape study.
82. We acknowledged the valuable support of ASEAN's External Partners, including Dialogue Partners in advancing regional economic integration. We underscored the importance of sustaining strong and mutually beneficial partnerships and expressed appreciation to their continued commitment to contribute to promoting inclusive and sustainable growth, and enhancing the region's collective competitiveness and resilience, in line with the aspirations of the *ASEAN 2045: Our Shared Future* and the AEC Strategic Plan 2026–2030.

83. We acknowledged the continued contribution of the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA) to ASEAN's Community-building efforts, through its high-quality research, capacity-building activities, and evidence-based policy recommendations. We recognised ERIA's valuable support to successive ASEAN Chairmanships, including the Philippine Chairship 2026, where it has committed to support several PEDs. We encouraged ERIA to further enhance its partnership with ASEAN to ensure that its work, particularly in the priority areas of supply chain resilience, digital transformation, transition to a green ASEAN, and inclusive growth remains forward-looking, practical, and closely aligned with the ASEAN Community Vision 2045 and its strategic plans.
84. We recognized the increasing importance of outer space activities and space-based technologies in supporting sustainable development, disaster risk reduction, environmental monitoring, connectivity, and scientific advancement across the region. We underscored the value of strengthening cooperation among ASEAN Member States in the peaceful and responsible use of outer space, including through enhanced capacity-building, information-sharing, and collaborative research and development initiatives.
85. We welcomed initiatives aimed at promoting dialogue and cooperation on the safety and sustainability of space activities. In this regard, we noted the convening of the ASEAN Space Situational Awareness and Space Traffic Management Seminar-Workshop in March 2026 in Manila, Philippines, which provided a platform for technical exchanges and the sharing of experiences among ASEAN Member States and partners, focusing on approaches to managing increasing space activities and safeguarding space assets.
86. We looked forward to continued progress in advancing regional cooperation in space science, technology and innovation, including ongoing efforts toward the adoption of an ASEAN Declaration on Space Cooperation. We noted that this initiative will strengthen regional coordination, encourage the responsible and sustainable use of outer space, and expand opportunities for ASEAN Member States to harness space-enabled applications in support of inclusive and sustainable development.

ASEAN SOCIO-CULTURAL COMMUNITY

87. Recognising that nearly half of ASEAN's population is under 30, even as the share of older persons continues to rise, we underscored the need for life-course approaches to development that uphold human dignity and the rights and well-being of all individuals regardless of age. We highlighted the importance of recognising unpaid care work and strengthening the care economy, strengthening social protection, enabling women's economic participation, and supporting resilient families and communities, and reaffirmed our commitment to

advancing regional cooperation on social protection, ageing, disability inclusion, and the silver economy to promote active and healthy ageing.

88. We reaffirmed our commitment to advancing ASEAN's health priorities to empower families and strengthen regional resilience, including through the development and implementation of the ASEAN Health Development Agenda Work Programmes for 2026–2030 and the operationalisation of the ASEAN Leaders' Declarations and Statements, notably on ending all forms of malnutrition and combating antimicrobial resistance through a One Health approach. We further supported the Health Sector's focus on promoting healthy lifestyles, strengthening disaster preparedness and public health emergency management capacities, strengthening health systems and access to care, and ensuring food safety, in close cooperation with other ASEAN sectors and partners.
89. We underscored the heightened vulnerability of ASEAN to public health threats, including natural disasters, disease outbreaks, and pandemics, and reaffirmed our resolve to strengthen regional health security through a coordinated, whole-of-ASEAN approach. We emphasised the need to maximise existing and future regional frameworks and mechanisms across sectors to enhance prevention, preparedness, detection, and response to public health emergencies and emerging diseases. In this regard, we looked forward to the establishment and operationalisation of the ASEAN Centre for Public Health Emergencies and Emerging Diseases (ACPHEED) to provide the necessary structure, systems, and support to safeguard the health and well-being of our peoples as the regional hub for collaboration in surveillance, research, training and information exchange, enhancing preparedness and response to public health emergencies. We also recognised the importance of strengthening coordination mechanisms, including Emergency Operations Centres (EOC) and the ASEAN EOC Network, to support timely information sharing and effective regional response.
90. We acknowledged the transformative influence of Artificial Intelligence (AI), in enhancing healthcare delivery and patient care, including in diagnostics and imaging, surgical and procedural care, patient monitoring, therapeutics, rehabilitation, healthcare operations, and public health. We looked forward to the progress of the ASEAN Health Sector's priority on digital health and health information systems as an essential part of the building blocks of effective health systems.
91. We adopted the ASEAN Declaration on the Empowerment of Youth in Climate Action and Disaster Resilience, reaffirming our strong commitment to empowering youth to contribute meaningfully to climate action and disaster resilience, including through participation in disaster risk reduction, preparedness, and humanitarian response efforts. We looked forward to deeper

regional cooperation to strengthen youth participation by ensuring young people are empowered, equipped, and included in decision-making at all levels, as well as strengthening youth leadership in policy development, capacity-building, and community-based resilience initiatives, supported by inclusive platforms, education, and innovation.

92. We reaffirmed our commitment to empowering ASEAN youth through innovation and digital literacy, particularly in harnessing AI for education. We acknowledged recent progress under the AI Ready ASEAN initiative, including regional policy dialogue and research on AI readiness in educational contexts. We emphasised the need to equip learners and educators with the skills and ethical foundations to thrive in an AI-driven future, while ensuring that digital transformation remains inclusive, responsible, and aligned with ASEAN's shared values.
93. We recognised the growing influence of digital platforms and the transformative potential of artificial intelligence which underscore the need to strengthen safe, inclusive, and accessible online spaces for youth. In this regard, we welcomed the development of the ASEAN Declaration on Youth Digital Resilience, which affirms ASEAN's commitment to empowering young people in the digital age, including enhancing digital literacy, safeguarding online well-being, promoting youth participation in digital governance, and supporting technology-driven advocacy and innovation, with the aim of nurturing a generation of digitally resilient youth capable of navigating risks, harnessing opportunities, and contributing positively to the region's development.
94. We underscored the importance of harnessing innovation and digital transformation to strengthen the information sector and empower our peoples, including youth, to become digitally savvy and well-informed citizens. We reaffirmed our commitment to building a resilient and responsive ASEAN amid the rapidly evolving media landscape. Moving forward, we welcomed the Philippines' leadership in convening high-level policy dialogues on the impact of artificial intelligence on information and media cooperation, emerging trends in digital broadcasting, and efforts to enhance equitable access to information across the region.
95. We recognised the importance of protecting our region's platform workers while harnessing innovation and supporting the robust growth of the platform economy in the region. In this regard, we welcomed the conduct of the ASEAN High-Level Forum on Decent Work in the Platform Economy held on 3–5 February 2026, in Cebu, Philippines, as a platform of regional dialogue to advance decent work amidst digitalisation of the economy.
96. We underscored the critical role of digital transformation in building an agile, innovative, and future-ready civil service across ASEAN and reaffirmed our

commitment to advancing cooperation in digital government and public sector innovation. In this regard, we looked forward to the adoption of the ASEAN Statement on Promoting Innovation for Better Public Service Delivery by the Heads of Civil Service at their 23rd Meeting this year.

97. We noted the progress on the development of the Post-2025 ASEAN Strategic Plan on Environment, which will guide the region's long-term environmental agenda to address the triple planetary crisis of climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution, as well as emerging challenges to build an inclusive and sustainable resilient ASEAN.
98. We resolved to advance collective action and strengthen regional cooperation in addressing the global challenge of climate change and welcomed the progress in the development of the ASEAN Joint Statement on Climate Change for the 31st session of the Conference of Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC COP31) and the ASEAN Climate Change Strategic Action Plan (ACCSAP), as well as looked forward to the operationalisation of the ASEAN Centre for Climate Change (ACCC) in Brunei Darussalam. We encouraged climate-resilient urban planning, development of flood mitigation infrastructure, and nature-based solutions to strengthen the resilience of cities.
99. We underscored the urgent need to halt and reverse biodiversity loss by conserving and sustainably using biodiversity through the implementation of the ASEAN Biodiversity Plan and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. We welcomed the development of the ASEAN Joint Statement on Biodiversity for the Seventeenth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP17). Driving these initiatives is the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity, hosted by the Philippines.
100. We acknowledged that haze from land and forest fires continues to pose major environmental, economic, and health impacts to the region. We reaffirmed our commitment to fully and effectively implement the ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution (AATHP) and looked forward to the entry into force of the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Transboundary Haze Pollution Control (ACC THPC) to ensure its full operationalisation in Indonesia. We noted the finalisation of the Implementation Plan of the ASEAN Investment Framework for Haze-Free Sustainable Land Management that would enhance the support in the implementation of the Second Roadmap for 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, bringing strengthened partnerships and collaboration among ASEAN stakeholders and partners to achieve a haze-free ASEAN by 2030. We also looked forward to the 21st Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution (COP-

21), the 21st Meeting of the Committee under the Conference of the Parties (COM-21), and the 11th Meeting of the ASEAN Task Force on Peatlands (ATFP), to be held October in Viet Nam later this year.

101. We recognised the growing threats posed by climate change to food security, food safety, and the overall health of our peoples, driven by rising temperatures and increasingly erratic weather patterns. We reaffirmed our support for the ASEAN One Health Initiative, which promotes strengthened cross-sectoral collaboration across human, animal, and environmental health, as well as food safety. We looked forward to the continued operationalisation of the ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on the One Health Initiative through the ASEAN One Health Network (AOHN) and to the finalisation and adoption of the ASEAN One Health Joint Plan of Action, Medium-Term Plan 2025–2030 to advance a coordinated and resilient regional response.
102. We reaffirmed our steadfast commitment to advancing a climate-friendly future through gender-responsive, socially inclusive, and people-centred approaches. Recognising the interlinkages among climate resilience, food security, and sustainable rural development, we emphasised the need to strengthen adaptive social protection, promote sustainable and resilient livelihoods through just transition, and enhance women's leadership in community resilience. We underscored the importance of integrated, cross-sectoral and cross-pillar action to ensure a fair, just and equitable transition towards a resilient, sustainable, and inclusive ASEAN Community in line with the ASEAN Community Vision 2045.
103. We reaffirmed inclusive development as a cornerstone of a people-centred and resilient ASEAN Community, underscoring the need to advance gender equality and women's empowerment, strengthen social welfare systems, accelerate rural development and poverty eradication, and expand equitable access to opportunities and services. We reiterated our commitment to upholding ASEAN's shared values of inclusion in realising the ASEAN Community Vision 2045, ensuring that no one is left behind.
104. We noted the progress of the work of the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC) in leveraging regional cooperation to realise the women's rights and children's rights in the region, including its cross-sectoral cooperation on addressing trafficking -in-persons especially women and children, the social impacts of climate change, and child online protection. We further noted the ASEAN Guidance Note on Disability Inclusion Against Women and Girls Policies and Programmes developed by ACWC and encouraged policy makers and frontline service providers to utilise the guidelines. We looked forward to the finalisation of the successor frameworks of the ASEAN Regional Plans of Action on the Elimination of Violence Against Women and Violence Against Children, particularly the

common chapter, which aims to break silos and establish intrinsic policy and programme linkages.

105. We recognised the achievements made through the implementation of the ASEAN Enabling Masterplan 2025: Mainstreaming the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in advancing disability-inclusive development and empowerment of persons with disabilities across the region. We commended the Senior Officials Meeting on Social Welfare and Development (SOMSWD) in spearheading and coordinating the development of the post-2025 successor framework of the ASEAN Enabling Masterplan through the cross-sectoral Technical Working Group. The new framework will further strengthen accessibility, promote inclusive policies and expand lifelong support systems to ensure the substantive and meaningful participation of persons with disabilities and their organisations across all aspects of society.
106. We stressed that inclusive development must be supported by equitable access to quality education at all levels, as education is a key driver of social mobility and economic resilience. We reaffirmed our commitment to addressing learning gaps, strengthening foundational literacy and numeracy, expanding lifelong learning opportunities through skills development and digital transformation — ensuring that no learner is left behind. We recognised that inclusive and future-ready education systems are essential to narrowing development gaps and advancing a people-centred ASEAN Community.
107. We noted the adoption of the ASEAN Framework and Action Plan (FAP) for a Just and Inclusive Transition to Green Jobs (2025–2030), which will guide regional efforts to advance employment in green jobs, green skills development, reskilling, and social dialogue in support of a just transition. We welcomed the ongoing development of the ASEAN Declaration on Strengthening Labour Market and Social Resilience, which is planned for adoption by the ASEAN Labour Ministers Meeting later this year as a strategic framework to support just transition towards a resilient, adaptable and inclusive labour market.
108. We welcomed the completion of the Regional Study on Implications of the Inclusion of Labour Provisions in Free Trade Agreements, which provides useful analysis and recommendations on possible strategies to build coherence between trade and labour provisions. We also welcomed the completion of the ASEAN Employment Outlook (Second Edition), which provides insights and recommendations to advance long-term care work for ageing societies through better labour protection and labour mobility governance of ASEAN care workers.
109. We further welcomed the ongoing development of the ASEAN Guidelines on Occupational Safety and Health in the Informal Sector and the ASEAN Guidelines on Strengthening Labour Inspection in the Fishing Sector planned for

adoption by the ASEAN Labour Ministers Meeting later this year. These Guidelines aim to enhance the protection of workers, including migrant workers and workers in vulnerable situations, improve compliance, and promote decent work in high-risk and hard-to-reach sectors.

110. We welcomed the ongoing third completion of the checklist of the ASEAN Guidelines on Gender Mainstreaming into Labour and Employment Policies by ASEAN Member States this year. This biennial implementation since 2022 assists ASEAN Member States in their continuous efforts towards promoting gender equality in the labour sector.
111. We further welcomed the ongoing third self-assessment of the ASEAN Consensus on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers by ASEAN Member States. The self-assessment results will further strengthen regional monitoring of the implementation of the ASEAN Consensus since its adoption in 2017. We also welcomed the ongoing completion of the Checklist for ASEAN Member State governments, labour recruiters, and employers on fair recruitment and decent employment practices this year, which will contribute to strengthened implementation, monitoring, and accountability across the region.
112. We underscored the importance of promoting social justice, protecting workers' rights, and empowering vulnerable groups. In this regard, we looked forward to the finalisation of the ASEAN Declaration on Fair, Ethical, and Sustainable Recruitment for Empowered Migrant Workers planned for adoption by the ASEAN Labour Ministers Meeting later this year.
113. We noted the adoption of the ASEAN Labour Ministers' Work Programme 2026–2030, together with the Work Plans of ASEAN Plus Three Senior Labour Officials Meeting (SLOM+3) and SLOM's subsidiary bodies, namely Senior Labour Officials Meeting Working Group on Progressive Labour Practices to Enhance the Competitiveness of ASEAN (SLOM-WG), ASEAN Occupational Safety and Health Network (ASEAN-OSHNET) and the ASEAN Committee on the Implementation of the ASEAN Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers (ACMW), by the ASEAN Labour Ministers Meeting, to guide regional labour cooperation in the next five years.
114. We noted the adoption of the Checklist of the ASEAN Guidelines on the Effective Return and Reintegration of Migrant Workers by the ASEAN Labour Ministers Meeting, which is an important step toward strengthening reintegration systems and promoting sustainable livelihoods for returning migrant workers. The Checklist is a practical self-assessment tool for ASEAN Member States to track the progress of voluntary implementation of the ASEAN Guidelines on Effective Return and Reintegration of Migrant Workers at the national level. It enables governments to take stock of existing laws, mechanisms, and services across

the entire return and reintegration cycle, identify implementation gaps and good practices.

115. We noted the adoption of the ASEAN Guidelines on Cross-Country Exchange of Expertise by the ACCSM Heads of Civil Service. The Guidelines facilitate temporary cross-country assignments of civil servants to strengthen their technical skills and mutual learning. It guides the planning, implementation, and evaluation of exchange programmes among AMS, which will be implemented to forge deeper understanding and appreciation of diversity in ASEAN and to support regional capacity building and cooperation among civil service agencies in areas of common interest, as well as in other emerging areas such as digital transformation and green economy.
116. We emphasised the ongoing regional and national initiatives that advance inclusive sports by empowering more women in sport and by providing and expanding access to sports and physical activities for people with disabilities. We also highlighted the meaningful youth participation through platforms that support young people in vulnerable situations with opportunities such as scholarships, exchanges, volunteer programmes, internships, and fellowships.
117. We noted the adoption of the ASEAN Statement on Collaboration and Network of Local Governments in ASEAN by the ASEAN Heads of Civil Service. The Statement reaffirms ASEAN's commitment to strengthening the role of local administrations in driving community development and supporting their capacities and responsiveness to public needs and development challenges. The Statement supports regional collaboration and networking among local governments, exchange of best practices, policy dialogue, research, and training among ASEAN Member States.
118. We welcomed the 2026–2030 health agenda and priorities of the ASEAN Health Sector, which advance inclusive development through strengthened and equitable access to quality and affordable healthcare under Universal Health Coverage (UHC). We underscored the importance of accounting for the needs of people in vulnerable situations; promoting inclusive health infrastructure and services; enhancing consultative and participatory health policymaking; and ensuring resilient and effective health systems encompassing the health workforce, information systems, medical products and technologies, sustainable financing, and strong leadership and governance. In this regard, we welcomed the operationalisation of the ASEAN Framework on Health Coverage for Documented Migrants, including Migrant Workers and other Special Populations, which aims to strengthen regional cooperation in promoting equitable access to essential health services and advancing Universal Health Coverage across ASEAN.

119. We welcomed the region's significant reduction in extreme poverty and reaffirmed our resolve to sustain and build on these gains. We underscored that transformative rural transformation remains central to this agenda, noting the encouraging advances in rural development, including the implementation of key regional frameworks and initiatives such as the ASEAN Master Plan on Rural Development and ASEAN Villages Network. We committed to strengthening cooperation to enhance rural livelihoods, improve food systems, and build resilience to climate and economic shocks, advancing sustainable development and shared prosperity in line with *ASEAN 2045: Our Shared Future*.
120. We reaffirmed our collective commitment to advancing gender equality and mainstreaming gender as a cross-sectoral priority across the ASEAN Community, in pursuit of sustainable, inclusive, and resilient development. We looked forward to the development of the ASEAN Declaration on the Gender-Transformative Implementation of the ASEAN Community Vision 2045 and its Strategic Plans as an important step towards embedding a more transformative and inclusive approach to gender equality across our institutions and policies, and strengthening the empowerment and participation of women and girls as a cornerstone of ASEAN's future development. We looked forward to enhanced cross-sectoral and inter-pillar cooperation through the work of the ASEAN Gender Mainstreaming Steering Committee (AGMSC), which is co-chaired by the ASEAN Committee on Women (ACW) and the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC).
121. We underscored the importance of strengthened coordination and cross-sectoral collaboration to advance women's political participation and leadership and women economic empowerment to promote women's full, equal and meaningful participation and leadership across all sectors of the ASEAN Community. We looked forward to the convening of the ASEAN Women Leaders' Summit under the theme "2026: The Year of Women's Leadership for Inclusive Prosperity in the ASEAN Region," which will serve as a strategic platform to elevate women's leadership, strengthen regional partnerships, and advance inclusive prosperity across ASEAN. We are encouraged by the significant progress in implementing the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on Women, Peace and Security in advancing women's leadership and participation in peace and security processes, and commended the cross-sectoral work of the Advisory Group on Women, Peace and Security.
122. We welcomed the progress toward the establishment of the ASEAN Centre of Excellence on Gender Equality and Women Empowerment (ACE-GEWE) as the primary regional mechanism to institutionalise gender-transformative approaches across the ASEAN Community, and called for the timely operationalization of the Centre as a knowledge, capacity-building, and coordination hub in support of the ASEAN Declaration on the Gender-

Transformative Implementation of the ASEAN Community Vision 2045 and its Strategic Plans.

123. We emphasised the vital role of culture and the arts in enabling the region to respond to emerging challenges, including climate change, the rapid advancement of artificial intelligence, and issues of peace, security, and inclusive economic growth. In this regard, we underscored that cultural cooperation can help advance its R.I.S.E. priorities --- *Resilient and Empowered Families, Inclusive Development, Smart Youth and Innovations, and an Environmentally Sustainable and Food Secure Future* --- while also fostering shared values and practices that strengthen community resilience in ASEAN. In this spirit, we affirmed that ASEAN must continue to harness culture as a driver of cooperation and sustainable development.
124. We welcomed the establishment of the ASEAN Cultural Center in the Philippines and looked forward to its cooperation with the existing ASEAN Cultural Centre in Bangkok and other regional cultural platforms. These platforms shall serve as hubs for cultural exchange and collaboration among the ASEAN Member States and Dialogue Partners, and promote synergy with other specialised centres, including the proposed ASEAN Centre of Excellence for Creative Industries (ACE-CI), to support the region's transformation and shared future.
125. Recognising the value of care work, both paid and unpaid, and the transformative potential of the care economy as a driver of inclusive growth, social resilience and sustainable development, we looked forward to the convening of the ASEAN High-Level Conference on Care Economy on Investing in Care, Advancing ASEAN: Driving Economic and Social Transformation Through Care Investment. We also welcomed the finalisation of the Guidance Note to implement the ASEAN Declaration on Strengthening the Care Economy and Fostering Resilience Towards the Post-2025 ASEAN Community by the ASEAN Committee on Women (ACW) and expressed support for its effective operationalisation across relevant ASEAN Sectoral Bodies.
126. We welcomed the development of the ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Social Welfare and Development (SOMSWD) Work Plan 2026-2030, the ASEAN Committee on Women (ACW) Work Plan 2026-2030, the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC) Work Plan 2026-2030 and the ASEAN Framework Action Plan on Rural Development and Poverty Eradication 2026-2030. We underscored the importance of these work plans in providing strategic directions and coherence to ASEAN's agenda in support of the ASEAN Community Vision 2045. We looked forward to its effective implementation through strengthened cross-sectoral coordination, resource mobilisation and partnerships to ensure tangible and sustainable outcomes.

127. We welcomed the strategic priorities of the education sector aimed at building inclusive, quality, and transformative education systems across the region—from early childhood to lifelong learning. We reaffirmed our commitment to equitable access and participation; improving the quality and relevance of education to support a future-ready and green-skilled workforce, including promoting skills development through the ASEAN TVET Council; improving learning outcomes through strengthened teaching capacity and teacher professional development, innovative pedagogies, and the responsible use of digital and AI technologies; and advancing evidence-based governance, regional cooperation, and a stronger sense of ASEAN identity among learners and youth. We also looked forward to the adoption of the ASEAN Work Plan on Education 2026–2030, which will guide regional cooperation in advancing these priorities.
128. We welcomed the good progress to finalise the ASEAN Work Plan for Culture and Arts (2026-2035) and looked forward to its implementation, with priorities towards promoting cultural heritage, building a conducive creative ecosystem, fostering shared identity, leveraging digital transformation for culture and nurturing inclusive partnerships. We further welcomed the efforts to promote the development of the creative economy through the ASEAN Creative Economy Sustainability Framework, following the convening of the 2nd ASEAN-UK Creative Economy Symposium.
129. Recognising the importance of a safe and conducive online environment, we expressed our full support for ongoing efforts towards the development of the Guidelines on Safe and Responsible Use of Social Media Platforms for ASEAN. We further welcomed the finalisation of the ASEAN Work Plan for Information and Media (2026-2035), which sets out five strategic goals, facilitating access to information, safeguarding information integrity, monitoring of online platforms to mitigate the spread of disinformation that poses a risk to public safety, promoting content production and development, leveraging digital transformation for media, and nurturing inclusive partnerships. We also looked forward to the ongoing development of the ASEAN Communication Master Plan III (ACMP) 2026-2030, to amplify ASEAN awareness and foster ASEAN Identity.
130. Commemorating the 10th Anniversary of the ASEAN Declaration on ONE ASEAN, ONE RESPONSE: ASEAN Responding to Disasters as One in the Region and Outside the Region, we welcomed the development of the ASEAN Ministerial Statement on the 10th Year of One ASEAN One Response by the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Management (AMMDM), which will strengthen ASEAN’s commitment to enhancing the implementation of the ASEAN Declaration on ONE ASEAN, ONE RESPONSE. We also reaffirmed the importance of strengthening regional cooperation in disaster health management in line with the ASEAN Leaders’ Declaration on Disaster Health Management, including efforts to enhance preparedness, emergency medical response, and

the continuity of essential health services during disasters as well as strengthening coordination mechanisms, including Emergency Operations Centres (EOC) and the ASEAN EOC Network, to support timely information sharing and effective regional response. We also reaffirmed our commitment to implementing the ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on Sustainable Resilience to enhance collaboration in strengthening climate and disaster resilience for sustainable development. We commended efforts to continue strengthening disaster resilience in the region through the commencement of the implementation of the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) Work Programme 2026-2030. We look forward to the finalisation of the development of the ASEAN-China Work Plan on Disaster Management 2026-2030, the ASEAN-Japan Work Plan on Disaster Management 2026-2030, the ASEAN-Republic of Korea Work Plan on Disaster Management 2026-2030, and the ASEAN-UN Joint Strategic Plan of Action on Disaster Management V (2026-2030).

131. We commended the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on disaster management (AHA Centre)'s continuous work in strengthening its capacity to monitor and respond to disaster through the enhancement of the ASEAN Disaster Information Network (ADINet), the Disaster Monitoring and Response System (DMRS), the Disaster Emergency Logistics System for ASEAN (DELSA), and the ASEAN Emergency Response Assessment Team (ASEAN-ERAT) including the strengthening of real-time data sharing and analytics to support early warning, situational awareness, and rapid response coordination.
132. We commended the AHA Centre for the continuous implementation of ASEAN Humanitarian Assistance to Myanmar under Phase 2 (Life-Sustaining) to implement Point 4 of the ASEAN Leaders' Five-Point Consensus (5PC). We appreciated the contributions from ASEAN Member States, partners, and the private sector and encouraged all relevant parties in Myanmar to continue facilitating the safe, transparent, inclusive, and non-discriminatory delivery of humanitarian assistance, with a view to supporting the effective implementation of Point 4 of the 5PC. We further underscored the importance of sustained international financial support for humanitarian efforts in Myanmar.
133. We reaffirmed ASEAN's continued support for Myanmar's efforts to bring peace, stability, the rule of law, promote harmony and reconciliation, and sustainable and equitable development in Rakhine State. We emphasised our support for Myanmar's commitment to the safety and security of all communities in Rakhine State and the safe, dignified, voluntary return of displaced persons. We looked forward to ASEAN's continued support for Myanmar's efforts in the repatriation process through the implementation of projects following the recommendations of the Preliminary Needs Assessment (PNA). We also looked forward to the

Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA) when conditions allowed and encouraged the Secretary-General of ASEAN to continue identifying possible areas of cooperation to effectively facilitate the repatriation process.

134. We commended the ASCC R&D Platforms Programme that promoted evidence-based policymaking and research uptake across the region. We noted that the published reports from the ASCC R&D Platform on Poverty Action showed new approaches to poverty alleviation. It also highlighted that poverty is a complex issue with deep ties to health, gender, and environmental factors. Moreover, the Platform on Media, Culture, and Arts highlighted emerging ASEAN priorities, including digital transformation, cultural heritage, and the impacts of environmental change and digitalisation on culture. We also looked forward to the upcoming publications under the ASCC R&D Platform on Care Economy. We further noted that, building upon lessons learned from the 1st ASCC R&D Platforms Programme, the ASEAN Secretariat will begin developing a new concept for the updated R&D Platforms Programme 2.0.
135. We looked forward to the progress and development of ASCC Development Outlook Volume 2.0 (ADO Vol. 2), which will focus on digitalisation's impact on society. We noted that the ADO Vol. 2 is expected to provide ASEAN member states and relevant stakeholders with a comprehensive assessment of the key human security risks associated with digitalisation in the region, including the digital divide, cybercrime, misinformation and disinformation, and the specific threat of online scams and scam farms, leading to actionable policy recommendations and strategies for prevention, protection, and regional collaboration.
136. We underscored our collective commitment to advancing data-driven and evidence-based policymaking, decision-making, and programme planning, recognising that rigorous and timely analysis is essential to effectively respond to the evolving needs of the ASEAN Community. In this regard, we commended the sustained utilisation of the ASCC Database for Monitoring and Evaluation (ADME) System as a vital platform for guiding ASCC initiatives through reliable and accessible data. We further looked forward to the launch of ADME System 2.0, with enhanced features and capabilities for systematic collection and use of sex-disaggregated data to strengthen the implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and communication of the ASCC Strategic Plan.
137. We welcomed the initial approval of the ASEAN Magazine Phase 4 (2026-2028). We noted that Phase 4 will feature the implementation of the new ASEAN Community Vision 2045 and progress towards achieving its four Strategic Plans.

ASEAN CONNECTIVITY

138. We acknowledged the conclusion of the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity (MPAC) 2025 as the strategic document that has guided the ASEAN Connectivity agenda. In this regard, we welcomed the finalisation of the End-Term Review (ETR) of MPAC 2025. We noted that MPAC 2025 has delivered meaningful contributions to ASEAN Connectivity, which reflects the collective commitment of ASEAN Member States and stakeholders to advancing regional connectivity and supporting ASEAN Community-building efforts amid regional evolving regional challenges. We further noted that the ETR will help inform the effective implementation of the successor document to MPAC 2025, namely the ASEAN Connectivity Strategic Plan (ACSP), which takes effect in 2026.
139. We commended the strengthened coordination among the ASEAN Connectivity Coordinating Committee (ACCC), Lead Implementing Bodies, relevant ASEAN Sectoral Bodies and Mechanisms, ASEAN Connectivity National Coordinators, and relevant national agencies in advancing the ASEAN Connectivity agenda. In this regard, we welcomed the finalisation of the ACSP Work Plan, which serves as a roadmap to guide implementation and facilitate resource mobilisation, enabling ASEAN to navigate current and emerging connectivity challenges and opportunities.
140. We expressed appreciation for the work of the ASEAN Committee on Sustainable Infrastructure (ACSI) in fostering sustainable infrastructure and regional connectivity, including through the continuous updating of the Initial Pipeline of ASEAN Infrastructure Projects. We welcomed the continued support and cooperation of external partners in the implementation of the ACSP, as well as the ASEAN Sustainable Infrastructure Action Plan (SIAP) 2026-2030, including within the framework of the AOIP, as we work together to advance a connected and future-ready ASEAN.
141. We underscored the importance of strengthened cross-pillar coordination mechanisms and platforms to foster closer collaboration among ASEAN Community Pillars and Connectivity, with a view to advance ASEAN integration and connectivity in line with the ASEAN Connectivity Strategic Plan (ACSP) 2025, and to promote disability-inclusive infrastructure as an integral component of sustainable and inclusive development. We emphasised that such cooperation should continue to be guided by the principles of equality, mutual respect, and ASEAN Centrality.

TIMOR-LESTE'S POST-ADMISSION INTEGRATION

142. We adopted the Cebu Protocol to Amend the Charter of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations to include Timor-Leste in the enumeration of Member States and to update the ASEAN Flag and Emblem to reflect its full membership. This marks the first amendment to the Charter since its signing in 2007. We

expressed our appreciation for the collective efforts of ASEAN in advancing this significant milestone. We looked forward to the unveiling of the updated ASEAN Flag and Emblem at the 49th ASEAN Summit, following the completion of the domestic procedures of all Member States.

143. We appreciated Timor-Leste's intention to chair ASEAN in 2029 and reaffirmed our commitment to support Timor-Leste in meeting its requirements for full membership of ASEAN.
144. We commended Timor-Leste for the progress made in implementing the Roadmap for Timor-Leste's Full Membership in ASEAN since its admission, and looked forward to its contributions to ASEAN, including towards fulfilment of the goals and milestones of the ASEAN Community Vision 2045.
145. We encouraged Timor-Leste's continued progress and coordination in implementing the remaining criteria under the Roadmap, including the next phase of accession to ASEAN treaties, conventions, instruments and agreements, and concurrent efforts to accede to the Priority Two and Priority Three AEAs, to support Timor-Leste's full and effective integration into the ASEAN Community.
146. We looked forward to Timor-Leste's full and effective participation in the ASEAN+1 Agreements and encouraged Timor-Leste's further collaboration with Dialogue Partners as it fully integrates into the ASEAN Community, including the goals and milestones of the ASEAN Community Vision 2045.
147. We expressed our appreciation for the continued support of ASEAN's Dialogue Partners and external partners in supporting Timor-Leste's integration, through targeted capacity-building initiatives that strengthen its capacity to fulfill post-admission commitments.

ASEAN EXTERNAL RELATIONS

148. We underscored the importance of strengthening ASEAN unity and Centrality in our engagement with external partners, while remaining actively engaged, outward-looking, inclusive and non-discriminatory in our relations with external partners. This includes utilising ASEAN-led mechanisms such as the ASEAN Plus One, ASEAN Plus Three (APT), East Asia Summit (EAS), ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and ADMM-Plus to foster mutual trust and confidence. We reaffirmed our commitment to reinforcing an open, inclusive, transparent, resilient, and rules-based regional architecture that upholds international law, with ASEAN at the centre. We emphasised the need to foster a culture of dialogue and cooperation, rather than rivalry, enhancing mutual trust and

confidence, and respect for international law, to promote peace, stability, and prosperous development.

149. We took note of the growing interest from countries, as well as regional and international organisations, in formalising relations with ASEAN, while remaining mindful of the ongoing comprehensive review of ASEAN's Dialogue Partnerships.
150. We reaffirmed the ASEAN Leaders' agreement, in principle, to confer Dialogue Partnership upon Türkiye, subject to the finalisation of the review on the issue of the moratorium. In this regard, we looked forward to the outcome and completion of this review by 2026.
151. We noted the discussion on establishing modalities for Papua New Guinea's role as a Special Observer in ASEAN, as a means to further strengthen ASEAN's engagement with Papua New Guinea.
152. We welcomed the enhanced engagement between the Committee of Permanent Representatives to ASEAN (CPR) and ASEAN's external partners, including through the participation of the 97 Non-ASEAN Ambassadors Accredited to ASEAN (NAAAs). We also acknowledged the continued efforts of the 55 ASEAN Committees in Third Countries and International Organisations (ACTCs) in promoting ASEAN's visibility and advancing its interests in their respective host countries and multilateral fora.

DIALOGUE PARTNERS

153. We welcomed the further strengthening of ASEAN's relations with Dialogue Partners, including through the implementation of new Plans of Action (POAs), which align with the *ASEAN 2045: Our Shared Future*; and Dialogue Partners' continued support for ASEAN's priorities during the Philippines' Chairship in 2026.
154. We further welcomed the commemorative anniversaries and related activities in 2026, including the 5th anniversary of the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (CSP) with Australia; the 5th anniversary of CSP with China and the 35th anniversary of ASEAN-China Dialogue Relations; the 35th anniversary of ASEAN-Russia Dialogue Relations; and the 5th anniversary of ASEAN-UK Dialogue Relations. We also welcomed the establishment of the ASEAN–New Zealand CSP at the ASEAN–New Zealand Commemorative Summit in 2025 and the announcement of the ASEAN-New Zealand Vision Fund, which serves as a flagship initiative to guide the future direction of the partnership.

155. We looked forward to the successful outcomes of the following Summits to be held in conjunction with the 49th ASEAN Summit and Related Summits in November 2026 in the Philippines: the 6th ASEAN–Australia Summit; the 29th ASEAN–China Summit; the 29th ASEAN–Japan Summit; the 27th ASEAN–Republic of Korea (ROK) Summit; the 14th ASEAN–United States Summit; and the 23rd ASEAN–India Summit. We also looked forward to the successful outcome of the ASEAN-Russia Commemorative Summit on the occasion of the 35th anniversary of relations between ASEAN and the Russian Federation in June 2026.

ASEAN SECTORAL DIALOGUE PARTNERS AND ASEAN DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

156. We welcomed the progress in ASEAN’s Sectoral Dialogue Partnerships with Brazil, Morocco, Norway, Pakistan, South Africa, Switzerland, Türkiye, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), as well as its Development Partnerships with Chile, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, and Peru. We also welcomed Denmark as a Sectoral Dialogue Partner of ASEAN and took note of the extension of the ASEAN-Chile PCA from the period of 2021-2026 to 2021-2027.

REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

157. We reaffirmed the importance of multilateralism and international cooperation and underscored the importance of ASEAN’s partnerships with regional and international organisations, including the United Nations, in addressing global challenges, advancing shared priorities, and promoting sustainable development for the benefit of our peoples. In this regard, we looked forward to the convening of the 16th ASEAN-United Nations (UN) Summit at the 49th ASEAN Summit and Related Summits to address global concerns, pursue shared goals and complementary initiatives, and promote sustainable development for the benefit of our peoples.

158. We looked forward to the implementation of the ASEAN-UN Plan of Action (2026-2030) to continue advancing our shared goals and objectives across all pillars of the ASEAN Community. We looked forward to the adoption of the Cooperation Plan between ASEAN and the Pacific Islands Forum.

ASEAN PLUS THREE

159. We reaffirmed the importance of the ASEAN Plus Three (APT) cooperation framework in advancing regional community-building efforts and in promoting peace, stability, security, prosperity, and regional cooperation in the East Asian region, with ASEAN as the driving force. We welcomed the continued progress in the implementation of the APT Cooperation Work Plan (2023-2027) and the

continued efforts to further strengthen APT mechanisms including the Chiang Mai Initiative Multilateralisation (CMIM), the Asian Bond Markets Initiative (ABMI), the Disaster Risk Financing (DRF), the ASEAN+3 Macroeconomic Research Office (AMRO), the ASEAN+3 Fiscal Exchange among Finance Ministers, and the ASEAN Plus Three Emergency Rice Reserve (APTERR). We reaffirmed our commitment to further deepen APT cooperation, including through tangible cooperation in the four priority areas of the AOIP, to contribute to greater regional sustainability and resilience, in support of the implementation of *ASEAN 2045: Our Shared Future*.

EAST ASIA SUMMIT

160. We welcomed the adoption of the Kuala Lumpur Declaration on the 20th anniversary of the EAS in 2025, which reaffirms the EAS' strategic value and relevance, as well as its responsiveness to developments in an evolving global landscape. We reaffirmed our commitment to further strengthening the EAS as a premier Leaders-led forum for dialogue and cooperation 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.
161. We noted the progress in implementing the EAS Plan of Action (2024–2028) and looked forward to deepening practical cooperation in EAS streams of work. We welcomed ongoing efforts to further enhance the EAS, including through regular engagement between the CPR and the non-ASEAN Ambassadors of EAS Participating Countries in Jakarta. We encouraged the continuation of such interactions through the Group of EAS Ambassadors to ASEAN, supported by the EAS Unit at the ASEAN Secretariat. We stressed the importance of enhancing strategic coordination between the EAS and other ASEAN-led mechanisms.
162. We reaffirmed our commitment to further deepen and broaden cooperation among EAS Participating Countries while underscoring the importance of ASEAN unity and Centrality in guiding cooperation under the EAS, including through mainstreaming and implementing substantive, practical and tangible cooperation on the EAS streams of work and the four priority areas of the AOIP through ASEAN-led mechanisms.
163. We looked forward to the adoption of thematic Leaders' Statements at the 21st EAS, reflecting ASEAN's shared priorities and collective responses to current and emerging challenges.

ASEAN REGIONAL FORUM

164. We reaffirmed the important role of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) as a central pillar in the evolving regional security architecture in the Asia-Pacific region for fostering constructive dialogue and cooperation on political and security issues of common interest and concern. We noted the progress made in advancing the development of the Manila Plan of Action (2026–2036), which will reaffirm the continued commitment of the ARF to promote confidence-building measures and consider ways to move towards the preventive diplomacy and conflict resolution stages in the region. We welcomed the adoption of the *Recommendations to Revitalise the ARF* on 23 October 2025 and looked forward to its gradual implementation starting this year, including the decision on the moratorium on participation in the ARF, to enhance its efficiency during these times of uncertainty.

ASEAN OUTLOOK ON THE INDO-PACIFIC

165. We noted the significant role of the AOIP as a key guiding framework for ASEAN's engagement in the Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean regions, particularly in reinforcing the ASEAN-centered regional architecture and providing an enabling environment for peace, stability, and prosperity. We were pleased to see that more of ASEAN's External Partners have expressed support for the AOIP, including through joint statements, as well as practical and concrete initiatives. In this regard, we encouraged all our partners to continue undertaking concrete projects and activities through workstreams under the four priority areas of the AOIP, as well as to explore further AOIP-oriented, mutually beneficial cooperation through relevant ASEAN-led mechanisms.

166. We reaffirmed our commitment to advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in support of the AOIP. We welcomed the convening of regional platforms such as the ASEAN Multi-Stakeholder Forum on Sustainability, the ASEAN-China-UNDP Symposium on SDGs, and the ASEAN-United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Forum on Population Dynamics and Development, which strengthened cross-sectoral collaboration, innovative financing mechanisms, digital transformation, and inclusive, data-driven policymaking across the region.

167. We further welcomed sustained efforts to promote maritime sustainability and resilience, including the implementation of the ASEAN Regional Action Plan for Combating Marine Debris in the ASEAN Member States (2021–2025) and other marine biodiversity initiatives. We noted the progress in strengthening disaster management cooperation and climate action. We also noted the progress in the protection of migrant fishers through the ASEAN Declaration on the Placement and Protection of Migrant Fishers and its accompanying Guidelines, contributing to a resilient, sustainable, and people-centred Indo-Pacific region in line with the AOIP.

INITIATIVE FOR ASEAN INTEGRATION

168. We reaffirmed our steadfast commitment to narrowing development gaps within and among ASEAN Member States by accelerating the implementation of the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) Work Plan V (2026–2030), with the continued support of ASEAN Member States and ASEAN’s external partners. We expressed our strong support for the IAI Task Force in finalising and operationalising the Implementation Plan of the IAI Work Plan V, ensuring its alignment with the ASEAN Community Vision 2045 and its corresponding Strategic Plans. We further encouraged the IAI Task Force to continue spearheading the effective implementation of the IAI Work Plan V and to strengthen collaboration with ASEAN Member States and ASEAN’s external partners in mobilising resources, expertise, and technical assistance to support inclusive and sustainable development across the region.

SUB-REGIONAL COOPERATION

169. We underscored the critical importance of maintaining ASEAN unity and Centrality in advancing subregional development across our diverse communities. We reaffirmed our commitment to strengthening cooperation with key subregional frameworks, including the Indonesia–Malaysia–Thailand Growth Triangle (IMT-GT), the Brunei Darussalam–Indonesia–Malaysia–Philippines East ASEAN Growth Area (BIMP-EAGA), the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS), the Ayeyawady–Chao Phraya–Mekong Economic Cooperation Strategy (ACMECS), and the Singapore–Johor–Riau (SIJORI) Growth Triangle to ensure closer alignment and greater synergy between subregional initiatives and ASEAN’s broader objectives of regional integration and Community-building. We recognised the relevance and complementarity of subregional development to ASEAN’s regional integration and Community-building process, especially in advancing economic integration and narrowing the development gap. In this regard, we encouraged the exploration, strengthening and promotion of closer coordination, collaboration, and synergy between ASEAN Sectoral Bodies and ASEAN-approved sub-regional cooperation frameworks, to facilitate the realisation of this endeavour, including in possible areas of cooperation such as climate change mitigation and adaptation, smart agriculture, energy connectivity, digital transformation, food, water and energy security.

170. We welcomed the successful convening of the 31st IMT-GT Ministerial Meeting and Related Meetings in September 2025, the 28th BIMP-EAGA Ministerial Meeting and Related Meetings and the 27th Greater Mekong Subregion Ministerial Conference (MC-27) and Related Meetings in November 2025, as well as the Joint Consultative Meeting between the ASEAN Secretariat and the Secretariats of IMT-GT, BIMP-EAGA, and GMS in February 2026, and the

Special BIMP-EAGA Summit in May 2026. These developments reaffirm our collective commitment to fostering a sustainable, equitable, inclusive, and resilient ASEAN Community. We also welcomed the continued support and assistance of external partners in the relevant processes.

ASEAN SMART CITIES NETWORK

171. We emphasized the critical importance of sub-national and local governments and stakeholders in the ASEAN Community-building process. We recognised the key role of the ASEAN Smart Cities Network (ASCN) in forging cooperation and engagement with external partners through knowledge exchange, capacity-building initiatives, and the provision of technical expertise by identifying strategic outcomes, outlining key urban systems, and complementing existing national development plans or helping to build new ones toward the common goal of achieving smart and sustainable urban development on important urbanization issues, ranging from sustainable and data-driven urban planning to enhancing urban safety and resilience.
172. We welcomed the ASEAN Smart Cities Action Plan (ASCAP) 2026–2035 as a new decade-long framework to coordinate smart city development across the region. We are anchored on a shared vision of fostering inclusive, resilient, green, innovative, and people-centred cities, and underscore digitalisation, a smart economy, environmental sustainability, and local innovation as key drivers to enhance the quality of urban life for ASEAN citizens, while addressing critical urbanisation challenges, including data-driven urban planning, urban safety, and resilience.

ASEAN PRIZE

173. We reaffirmed the significance of the ASEAN Prize as the region's premier award, fostering a shared ASEAN identity and advancing a people-oriented, people-centred agenda. We commended the continued efforts to recognise exemplary contributions demonstrated by its peoples and organisations that advance regional integration and cooperation within and beyond the region. In this regard, we encourage the National Focal Points in all ASEAN Member States to work closely with the ASEAN Secretariat in identifying and nominating qualified candidates to ensure the Prize's continued and effective implementation in support of the ASEAN Community Vision 2045.

REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ISSUES

174. We discussed the situation in the South China Sea and 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 international law, including the 1982 UNCLOS. We reaffirmed the importance of maintaining and promoting peace, security, stability, as well as the safety of seafarers and ships, and the 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, prosperity, and sustainable development.

175. We underscored the importance of the full and effective implementation of the DOC and welcomed the progress in the ongoing negotiations on the Code of Conduct in the South China Sea (COC). We encouraged efforts to make full use of the Guidelines for Accelerating the Early Conclusion of an Effective and Substantive Code of Conduct in the South China Sea endorsed by the Foreign Ministers of ASEAN and China in 2023, and 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 amongst parties, and we reaffirmed the importance of upholding international law, including the 1982 UNCLOS.
176. We expressed our deep concern over the continued escalation of conflict, humanitarian situation in Myanmar, and the minimal progress on the implementation of the ASEAN Leaders' Five-Point Consensus (5PC). We reaffirmed our united position that the 5PC remains our primary reference to address the political crisis in Myanmar and further reaffirmed the relevant Leaders' decisions. We denounced the continued acts of violence against civilians and public facilities, and urged all parties involved to take concrete action to immediately halt indiscriminate violence, exercise utmost restraint, ensure the protection and safety of all civilians and civilian infrastructure, and create a conducive environment for the delivery of humanitarian assistance and inclusive national dialogue. We welcomed the continued progress of the provision of humanitarian assistance to Myanmar by the AHA Centre to implement Point 4 of the 5PC.
177. We commended the dedicated efforts of H.E. Ma. Theresa P. Lazaro, the Special Envoy of the ASEAN Chair on Myanmar, since her appointment in January 2026. In carrying out her mandate, the Special Envoy has actively engaged a wide and diverse range of Myanmar stakeholders, reflecting ASEAN's commitment to assist Myanmar in advancing an inclusive and lasting solution to the crisis that is Myanmar-owned and -led, while reaffirming that Myanmar remains an integral part of ASEAN. The Special Envoy has also engaged ASEAN Member States, ASEAN Dialogue Partners, Myanmar's neighbouring countries, international and

regional partners, civil society organisations, and humanitarian actors, emphasizing the importance of collective efforts in addressing the political and humanitarian situation in Myanmar. We noted the conclusion of the three phases of Myanmar's general elections and the succeeding developments.

178. We took note of the deliberations of the Senior Officials on the Non-Paper on the Elements for the Terms of Reference of the Special Envoy of ASEAN on Myanmar and recognized the importance of arriving at common positions on key strategic questions, including its proposed mandate, support structure, funding, tenure and alignment with the 5PC. We also took note of Myanmar's position on this matter. We looked forward to the conclusion of the ASEAN Senior Officials' deliberations on the proposal for a long-term ASEAN Special Envoy on Myanmar to ensure continuity in the role, in line with the mandate given by the ASEAN Leaders.
179. We welcomed the release of more than 4,000 prisoners in Myanmar, including U Win Myint, the subsequent release of more than 1,500 prisoners, and the transfer of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi to a designated residence. We viewed the release of prisoners as a positive step towards inclusive national dialogue among all parties in Myanmar. We likewise reiterated our calls for the release of the remaining prisoners in Myanmar in this regard.
180. We welcomed the efforts and commitments of Cambodia and Thailand to fully and effectively implement, and build upon all existing agreements, including the ceasefire agreement on 28 July 2025, the Kuala Lumpur Joint Declaration of 26 October 2025 and the Joint Statement of the Third Special General Border Committee (GBC) between the two countries on 27 December 2025, in the interest of restoring confidence, normalcy, and durable peace along the border. We urged both sides to resolve disputes through peaceful means in accordance with international law and existing treaties and agreements. We reaffirmed our shared commitment to respect international law, the Charters of the United Nations and ASEAN, the renunciation of the threat or use of force, and respect for the international boundary, thereby contributing to peace and stability between the two countries and in the wider region.
181. We underscored the importance of the ASEAN Observer Team (AOT) in observing, verifying and reporting the effective implementation of the ceasefire agreement to ensure that the environment remains conducive for negotiations. We acknowledged the Philippines' valuable role as coordinator of the AOT. We stand ready to support ongoing efforts, including through the good offices of the ASEAN Chair, as well as efforts by other ASEAN Member States and external partners, to facilitate the effective implementation of the agreed measures and to promote an environment conducive to durable peace and stability between Cambodia and Thailand. We noted the readiness of ASEAN Member States to provide humanitarian assistance to the affected population.

182. We follow closely the situation and express serious concern over the escalation of conflict in the Middle East following the attacks initiated by Israel and the United States against the Islamic Republic of Iran on 28 February 2026 and the subsequent retaliatory attacks by the Islamic Republic of Iran against several countries in the region, including the Kingdom of Bahrain, Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, State of Kuwait, Sultanate of Oman, State of Qatar, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Syrian Arab Republic, and the United Arab Emirates, which continue to heighten tensions in the Middle East, and pose a grave threat to the lives and safety of civilians, as well as to regional and global peace and stability. We call on all countries to respect international law, including the Charter of the United Nations. We reaffirm the obligation of all States to resolve their differences through peaceful means and to respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all nations, in line with international law, including the UN Charter. We further reiterate the obligations to protect civilians and civilian infrastructures in armed conflicts consistent with international law and relevant UN Security Council resolutions.
183. Recognizing the implications of the current situation in the Middle East, as well as the rising uncertainties affecting our region's stability in energy, food, and our peoples' well-being, we adopted the ASEAN Leaders' Statement on the Response to the Middle East Crisis, which presents our unified position for a regional response.
184. We reaffirmed our longstanding support for the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including the rights to self-determination, and to their homeland. In this regard, we urged all parties concerned to work towards a peaceful resolution to the conflict with a view to realising the two-State solution in accordance with international law and the relevant UNSC and UNGA resolutions, including UNGA resolution A/RES/ES-10/23 on the Admission of New Members to the UN dated 10 May 2024, and UNGA resolution A/RES/ES-10/27 on protection of civilians and upholding legal and humanitarian obligations dated 12 June 2025.
185. 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 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.
