



**CHAIR'S STATEMENT
OF THE 27TH ASEAN PLUS THREE FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETING
23 JULY 2026, MANILA, PHILIPPINES**

1. The 27th ASEAN Plus Three Foreign Ministers' Meeting was chaired by H.E. Ma. Theresa P. Lazaro, Secretary of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Philippines.

Review and Future Direction of ASEAN Plus Three Cooperation

2. The Meeting noted the progress in the ASEAN Plus Three (APT) cooperation over the past year and discussed its future direction. The Meeting reaffirmed the commitment to further strengthening and deepening the APT process, which remains a main vehicle for advancing regional community-building and in promoting peace, stability, security, and prosperity in the East Asian region with ASEAN as the driving force. The Meeting also recognised the importance of APT cooperation in supporting the realisation of ASEAN 2045: Our Shared Future and its strategic plans, the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) Work Plan IV (2021–2025), including their contributions to the development and implementation of the IAI Work Plan V (2026–2030), as well as deeper regional integration in East Asia.
3. The Plus Three countries reaffirmed their commitment to supporting ASEAN Community building, including ASEAN's efforts towards a resilient, innovative, dynamic, and people-centred community. ASEAN appreciates the Plus Three countries' continued support for the other concrete activities to realise a resilient, innovative, dynamic, and people-centred approach. The Meeting agreed to further strengthen the APT partnership in accordance with the principles of the ASEAN Charter and the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC), which will be vital to sustaining peace and promoting mutual trust in the region and beyond.
4. The Meeting noted the importance of the AOIP as a guide for ASEAN's engagement in the wider Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean regions and noted the ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on the AOIP for the Future-Ready ASEAN and ASEAN-Centred Regional Architecture, including promoting inclusive, mutually beneficial, and comprehensive cooperation through concrete and practical projects and activities in the four priority areas of the AOIP.
5. The Meeting noted the progress made in the implementation of the APT Cooperation Work Plan (2023-2027) for the past one year, especially in finance,

agriculture, energy, tourism, civil service, labour, and health. The Meeting emphasised the need to accelerate efforts across all sectors and urged the APT countries to bring forward more concrete activities for implementation, particularly in the action lines that remain unaddressed.

6. The Meeting recognised ongoing efforts to further strengthen dialogue and cooperation in combatting transnational crime, addressing non-traditional security issues and strengthening border management through existing APT mechanisms, particularly the ASEAN Plus Three Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime (AMMTC+3) Consultation and its subsidiaries. In this regard, the Meeting looked forward to the convening of the 16th AMMTC+3 Consultation in Manila this year. The Meeting also noted the successful convening of the 23rd APT Senior Officials' Meeting on Transnational Crime (SOMTC+3) Consultation on 17 June 2026 via videoconference and the 5th ASEAN Directors-General of Immigration Departments and Heads of Consular Affairs Divisions of Ministries of Foreign Affairs Plus Three (DGICM+3) Consultation in Siem Reap, Cambodia on 25 June 2026. Recognising the increasing nexus between various forms of transnational crime and border management, the Meeting looked forward to the effective implementation of the SOMTC+3 Work Plan on Cooperation to Combat Transnational Crime (2024-2027) and the DGICM+3 Work Programme (2023-2027) to promote practical collaboration in the areas of transnational crime, immigration, consular affairs, and border management. The Meeting further welcomed enhanced cooperation under the Work Plan, which covers three priority areas, namely trafficking in persons, terrorism, and cybercrime.
7. The Meeting also reaffirmed its commitment to combatting illicit drugs through the APT Senior Officials Meeting on Drug Matters (ASOD+3) Consultation, which continues to serve as a key platform for exchanging views and sharing information on drug-related matters. In this regard, the Meeting took note of the 18th ASOD+3 Consultation, held on 27 August 2025 in Singapore, and encouraged continued engagement at the 19th ASOD+3 Consultation in August 2026. The Meeting also underscored the need to strengthen cooperation to effectively combat the growing threats posed by cybercrime, including online scams, and expressed concern that cybercrimes are often associated with trafficking in persons, the smuggling of goods and illicit drugs, and money laundering. The Meeting reaffirmed its intention to promote cooperation against cybercrimes within the APT framework.
8. The Meeting welcomed the progress made in the implementation of the APT Economic Cooperation Work Programme (ECWP) 2025-2026, particularly in key areas such as Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) development, private sector engagement and stakeholder dialogues, trade facilitation, digital economy, sustainable development, and green economy. The Meeting

underscored the importance of further strengthening economic cooperation among APT countries, with ASEAN playing a central role through enhanced trade and investment, deeper business engagement, and collaboration in areas of mutual interest to support sustainable and inclusive growth, in contributing to supply chain resilience, and addressing challenges arising from regional and global developments.

9. The Meeting reaffirmed its support for an equitable, transparent, inclusive, free, fair, sustainable, and rules-based multilateral trading system, with the World Trade Organization (WTO) at its core, and emphasised the importance of deepening regional economic integration through the effective implementation and upgrading of free trade agreements, including the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Agreement, ASEAN-China Free Trade Area (ACFTA) 3.0, ASEAN-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership (AJCEP), and ASEAN-Korea Free Trade Area (AKFTA) Upgrade, to strengthen regional supply chain resilience and support predictable and rules-based trade amid increasing global and regional uncertainties.
10. The Meeting welcomed the progress in the implementation of RCEP and looked forward to its effective implementation in a transparent manner and its contribution to stronger and more resilient supply chains in the region. The Meeting encouraged businesses, particularly MSMEs, to make greater use of the opportunities provided under the Agreement. The Meeting also looked forward to the preparations for the General Review to upgrade the RCEP Agreement, and the advancement of accession process for appropriate applicants, while maintaining rules and standards of the Agreement, which will further strengthen the RCEP's role in addressing emerging challenges, ensuring a level playing field as well as promoting open, transparent, fair, and inclusive trading system and economic cooperation across the region.
11. The Meeting reaffirmed the importance of strengthening regional economic and financial cooperation under the ASEAN+3 Finance Process to support stability and resilience, especially during periods of heightened uncertainty. The Meeting welcomed ongoing efforts to strengthen the Chiang Mai Initiative Multilateralisation (CMIM), as an essential component of the broader Global Financial Safety Net, including towards the swift completion of domestic procedures for signing the amended CMIM Agreement to support the immediate entry into force of the Rapid Financing Facility, enabling ASEAN+3 members to access timely emergency financing to address urgent balance of payments needs arising from sudden exogenous shocks. The Meeting commended efforts to further strengthen the role of the ASEAN+3 Macroeconomic Research Office (AMRO) in macroeconomic surveillance, technical assistance, and in support for CMIM operation. The Meeting agreed to evolve from the Asian Bond Markets Initiative (ABMI) into the Asian Bond Financial Markets Initiative (ABFMI). The

Meeting welcomed the new ASEAN+3 Disaster Risk Financing (DRF) Initiative 2026–2028 Roadmap and the transfer of its Secretariat to the Asian Development Bank (ADB). The Meeting also welcomed progress in ASEAN+3 Future Initiatives, including cross-border digital payments as one of the new and important areas of cooperation under the “Updated Strategic Direction of ASEAN+3 Finance Process”, aimed at promoting regional connectivity and payment integration.

12. The Meeting welcomed the adoption of the ASEAN Plus Three Cooperation Strategy on Food, Agriculture, and Forestry (APTCS-FAF) 2026–2035 and looked forward to its effective implementation in support of the ASEAN Leaders’ Declaration on the Vision for Food, Agriculture, and Forestry Towards 2045. The Meeting reaffirmed the importance of strengthening regional food security and resilience through key mechanisms such as the ASEAN Plus Three Emergency Rice Reserve (APTERR) and the ASEAN Food Security Information System (AFSIS) to enhance regional food reserves and strengthen supply chain connectivity in anticipation of and response to future disruptions. The Meeting also underscored the need to promote resilient and sustainable agrifood systems through innovation, digital transformation, sustainable resource management, adoption of nature-based solutions, and enhanced regional cooperation to ensure sufficient, safe, nutritious, and accessible food for all.
13. The Meeting welcomed the outcomes of the 22nd ASEAN+3 Ministers on Energy Meeting (AMEM+3), held in October 2025, noting the endorsement of the ASEAN Plan of Action for Energy Cooperation (APAEC) 2026–2030 and the signing of the Enhanced MoU of the ASEAN Power Grid. The Meeting looked forward to the endorsement of the ASEAN Submarine Power Cable Development Framework to further advance regional interconnectivity through the ASEAN Power Grid. The Meeting also reaffirmed the importance of strengthening energy security and accelerating a just and inclusive energy transition through enhanced regional cooperation, investment in energy infrastructure, and the development of low-carbon and emerging energy technologies, considering national circumstances and priorities to achieve energy security and economic competitiveness simultaneously. We also noted other relevant initiatives such as the Asia Zero Emission Community (AZEC).
14. The Meeting welcomed the progress in ASEAN Plus Three minerals cooperation and reaffirmed the strategic importance of promoting sustainable and responsible minerals development, including in critical minerals, to support regional industrial development, the energy transition, and economic resilience. Noting the ongoing cooperation in geological information sharing, capacity building, and mining technologies, the Meeting looked forward to the implementation of a new ASEAN Plus Three Minerals Cooperation Work Plan aligned with the ASEAN Minerals Cooperation Action Plan (AMCAP-IV)

2026–2030 and the ASEAN Minerals Development Vision (AMDV) 2045 which sets out practical pathways to expand cooperation in upstream-to-downstream minerals development, promote sustainable practices and technology adoption, and build human capacity and foster responsible investment, production, and trade across the value chain. To support ASEAN’s efforts in promoting the region as a premier investment destination for sustainable minerals development, the Meeting noted that the ASEAN Minerals Investment Forum (AMVest), which was initiated in 2024, will be held annually in conjunction with the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Minerals (AMMin), and encouraged the active participation of the Plus Three Countries in future editions of the Forum.

15. The Meeting appreciated the support of the Plus Three countries for ASEAN connectivity initiatives and encouraged continued collaboration in implementing the ASEAN Connectivity Strategic Plan (ACSP) 2026–2030. The Meeting looked forward to developing practical cooperation projects under the ACSP, building on previous successes to strengthen regional connectivity under the MPAC 2025 and strengthening synergies between the ACSP and the connectivity initiatives of the Plus Three countries through the “connecting the connectivities” approach.
16. The Meeting welcomed the continued support of the Plus Three countries for ASEAN’s digital transformation agenda, including through the signing of the ASEAN Digital Economy Framework Agreement (DEFA) at the 49th ASEAN Summit. The Meeting noted that this collective milestone will accelerate ASEAN’s digital transformation. The Meeting also underscored the importance of focusing on enhancing APT’s capacity to facilitate free flows of data across borders, strengthening digital connectivity, trusted cross-border data flows, digital innovation, cybersecurity, and digital inclusion, particularly for MSMEs, and looked forward to enhanced ASEAN Plus Three cooperation in building a resilient, secure, and people-centred digital economy. We encouraged further APT support for the ASEAN Digital Master Plan 2030.
17. The Meeting commended the continued commitment of the Plus Three countries to strengthening cooperation in science, technology, and innovation (STI). The Meeting underscored the importance of promoting research collaboration, innovation, and talent development, including through initiatives such as the ASEAN+3 Centre for the Gifted in Science Board of Directors (BOD) Meeting, ASEAN+3 Junior Science Odyssey, ASEAN+3 Student Camp, and ASEAN+3 Young Scientist Forum, and looked forward to enhanced cooperation in harnessing STI to support sustainable development, digital transformation, and regional competitiveness.
18. The Meeting emphasised the importance of cultural, sports, and tourism exchanges in promoting people-to-people connectivity, awareness, mutual understanding, and ASEAN identity in the region. To this end, the Meeting

encouraged greater cooperation through the development and implementation of substantive initiatives, especially in consideration of the potential development of a new ASEAN Plus Three Work Plan on Cooperation in Culture and the Arts (2026-2030). Also, the Meeting welcomed the outcomes of the 25th Meeting of ASEAN, China, Japan and the Republic of Korea Tourism Ministers (25th M-ATM Plus Three), and looked forward to enhanced tourism cooperation in support of the ASEAN Tourism Sectoral Plan (ATSP) 2026–2030, particularly in promoting sustainable, resilient, and innovative tourism.

19. The Meeting commended the efforts of the ASEAN-China Centre, ASEAN-Japan Centre, and ASEAN-Korea Centre in promoting trade, investment, tourism, cultural, and people-to-people exchanges between ASEAN and the Plus Three countries. The Meeting welcomed the continued collaboration and the regular consultation meetings among the three Centres and encouraged them to further strengthen linkages and facilitate trade, economic cooperation, and people-to-people connectivity through joint and individual initiatives.
20. The Meeting looked forward to the 11th ASEAN Plus Three Health Ministers Meeting, to be held in September 2026 in Malaysia, and reaffirmed its commitment to strengthening regional health security and cooperation in addressing public health emergencies and emerging health threats. The Meeting underscored the importance of resilient and inclusive health systems, digital health, primary health care, and the One Health approach, and looked forward to the early finalisation of the Establishment Agreement and the operationalisation of the ASEAN Centre for Public Health Emergencies and Emerging Diseases (ACPHEED) as a regional centre of excellence for public health emergency preparedness and response. The Meeting called upon the Plus Three countries to provide sustainable technical and financial support for the Centre. The Meeting also reaffirmed the importance of promoting healthy and active ageing and enhancing the well-being and empowerment of older persons through continued ASEAN Plus Three cooperation, including through the ASEAN Centre for Active Ageing and Innovation (ACAI).
21. The Meeting noted the convening of the 8th APT Ministerial Meeting on Social Welfare and Development (AMMSWD+3) in August 2025, which reaffirmed the commitment of ASEAN Plus Three countries to strengthening cooperation in social welfare and development to build inclusive, resilient, and people-centred societies. The Meeting underscored the importance of promoting healthy and active ageing, enhancing the well-being, participation, and empowerment of older persons, and addressing the opportunities and challenges arising from demographic transition through knowledge sharing, capacity building, and the exchange of good practices.
22. The Meeting reaffirmed the commitment to promoting and supporting sustainable, inclusive, and equitable development across the ASEAN

community, including the protection and mainstreaming of the rights of persons with disabilities and children through developing accessible services to health and rehabilitation, education, employment, social protection, and digital inclusion, to accelerate ASEAN disability-inclusive development and to ensure the well-being of children.

23. The Meeting reiterated its commitment to advancing sustainable, inclusive, and innovative development, and to strengthening cooperation with all stakeholders, including the private sector, in support of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Meeting encouraged enhanced ASEAN Plus Three cooperation in environmental protection, biodiversity conservation, sustainable management of natural resources, climate action, and addressing transboundary environmental challenges, including through collaboration with relevant ASEAN centres such as the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB), the ASEAN Centre for Climate Change (ACCC), the ASEAN Specialised Meteorological Centre (ASMC), and the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Transboundary Haze Pollution Control (ACCTHPC). The Meeting welcomed the continued contributions of the Plus Three countries in addressing marine debris, particularly through their support for the implementation of activities under the APT Marine Plastic Debris Cooperative Action Initiative. The Meeting also acknowledged the valuable activities of the Regional Knowledge Centre for Marine Plastic Debris, established under the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA), in addressing this issue.
24. The Meeting reaffirmed its commitment to strengthening cooperation in rural development and poverty eradication as an important pillar of inclusive and sustainable development. The Meeting underscored the importance of accelerating rural transformation through strengthened community resilience and sustainable livelihoods, digital inclusion and innovation, and human capital development, while addressing persistent development gaps and emerging socio-economic challenges. Recognising the imperative of empowering rural communities to effectively respond to and benefit from the evolving demographic, digital, environmental, and economic transitions, the Meeting underscored the importance of strengthening knowledge sharing, capacity development, and multi-stakeholder collaboration to foster resilient and inclusive rural communities, including through initiatives such as the ASEAN Public-Private-People-Partnership on Rural Development and Poverty Eradication and the ASEAN Village Network (AVN). The Meeting looked forward to the implementation of the Senior Officials Meeting on Rural Development and Poverty Eradication (SOMRDPE) Work Plan 2026-2030, which will serve as a strategic framework to deepen regional cooperation and support sustainable and inclusive growth in rural communities.

25. The Meeting reaffirmed its commitment to promoting and protecting human rights, advancing gender equality, and empowering women and girls. The Meeting commended the continued efforts of the ASEAN Committee on Women (ACW), and the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC), and the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) in advancing the rights and wellbeing of women, children, and people in vulnerable situations. The Meeting underscored the importance of continued ASEAN Plus Three cooperation in addressing persistent and emerging inequalities, promoting rights-based, gender-responsive and inclusive policies, and supporting the implementation of the AICHR Five-Year Work Plan 2026-2030, ACW Work Plan 2026–2030, and the ACWC Work Plan 2026–2030, including through capacity building, knowledge sharing, and the exchange of good practices.
26. The Meeting reaffirmed its commitment to promoting peace and security in the region, including through the implementation of the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on Women, Peace and Security (WPS). The Meeting noted the convening of the 2025 ASEAN Women, Peace and Security Summit in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, in September 2025, which reaffirmed the commitment of ASEAN and its partners to advancing the WPS agenda and ensuring the full, equal, and meaningful participation of women in peacebuilding, peacekeeping, and conflict prevention efforts. The Meeting welcomed continued APT cooperation in promoting the WPS agenda, including through capacity building and the integration of gender perspectives in disaster risk reduction and resilience-building initiatives.
27. The Meeting looked forward to Plus Three countries' strengthened cooperation with the Senior Officials Meeting on Social Welfare and Development (SOMSWD) and Plus Three countries' active engagement with the ASEAN Centre for Active Ageing and Innovation (ACAI) and the Network of Inclusive Entrepreneurship for ASEAN (NIEA) in building resilient, inclusive and supportive ASEAN Community for all.
28. The Meeting recognised the continued commitment of ASEAN Plus Three countries to advancing education cooperation as a key driver of human resource development, lifelong learning, future-ready skills, and community building. The Meeting welcomed the ASEAN Workplan on Education 2026-2030 as an important framework to advance inclusive, equitable, and quality education and encouraged ASEAN Plus Three countries to contribute to its implementation through cooperation in digital transformation, learning assessment, skills development, and exchange of good practices and technical expertise. The Meeting commended the significant contributions of the Plus Three countries through initiatives, including the MEXT Scholarship and the Global Network Project to Promote Study in Japan and the Sakura Science Exchange Program,

in advancing student mobility, quality assurance, academic exchanges, research collaboration, and people-to-people connectivity across the region. The Meeting also welcomed the convening of the 10th Working Group on Student Mobility and Quality Assurance of Higher Education among ASEAN Plus Three Countries (APTWG) in the fourth quarter of 2026.

29. The Meeting reaffirmed its commitment to promoting meaningful engagement of the youth in addressing global challenges and contributing to ASEAN community building. The Meeting underscored the importance of collaboration with ASEAN Plus Three Countries as technical partners, co-organisers, and supporters of youth-focused initiatives, particularly in skills development, climate action, leadership exchanges, and regional collaboration, and supporting the youth development priorities under the ASCC Strategic Plan. The Meeting looked forward to the convening of the 10th ASEAN Plus Three Ministerial Meeting on Youth (AMMY+3) in August 2026 hosted by the Philippines to discuss priority areas under the ASEAN Work Plan on Youth 2026–2030. The Meeting commended the continued implementation of youth exchange and capacity-building programmes, including the China-ASEAN Youth Campus and Acceleration Week for China-ASEAN Youth Development Programs, the Ship for Southeast Asian and Japanese Youth Programme (SSEAYP), JENESYS (Japan-East Asia Network of Exchange for Students and Youths) Programme, and the Korean Youth Camp for ASEAN and Friends' Engagement (YCAFE), which contribute to strengthening mutual understanding, regional identity, and community-building among the youth of ASEAN Plus Three countries.
30. The Meeting noted the continued cooperation under the ASEAN Cooperation on Civil Service Matters Plus Three (ACCSM+3) and welcomed the finalisation of the ACCSM+3 Work Plan 2026–2030 for adoption by the 8th ACCSM+3 Heads of Civil Service Meeting on 5 August 2026 in Siem Reap, Cambodia. The Meeting encouraged closer cooperation in the areas of digital transformation and governance; citizen-centred and inclusive public service; human resource management and development; future of work and innovation; leadership and public sector values; and other areas of mutual interest. The Meeting reaffirmed the importance of strengthening civil service capabilities to support responsive, effective, and inclusive governance in the region.
31. The Meeting noted the successful convening of the 16th Annual Meeting of Deans and Directors of Diplomatic Training Institutions of ASEAN Plus Three on 1 October 2025 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The Meeting recognised its role as a valuable platform for exchanging experiences and best practices in diplomatic training, including on the integration of emerging technologies, particularly artificial intelligence (AI), to strengthen the capacity and readiness of future diplomats.

32. The Meeting welcomed the continued strengthening of APT cooperation on labour and noted the adoption ad-referendum of the new APT Senior Labour Officials' Meeting (SLOM+3) Work Plan (2026–2030) by the APT Labour Ministers in April 2026. The Meeting reaffirmed the importance of enhancing collaboration in promoting high-quality and full employment, human resource development, including green and digital skills and skills for care work, and the recognition of unpaid care work, leveraging technology for the future of work as well as sustainable social security systems, tripartism and social dialogue, and corporate social responsibility in labour. The Meeting looked forward to the convening of the 24th SLOM+3 and 14th ALMM+3 in August 2026 in Bangkok, Thailand to further strengthen cooperation among the APT countries to promote the well-being of workers and enhance labour market resilience.
33. The Meeting reaffirmed its commitment to strengthening cooperation in disaster management and emergency response to enhance regional resilience within ASEAN. It also reaffirmed the importance of advancing and continuing collaboration under the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) and the AADMER Work Programme 2026–2030. The Meeting encouraged the continued exchange of information, best practices, and experiences in disaster management, including in the areas of disaster prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery capacities, ensuring women's meaningful participation and leadership across these areas. Furthermore, it underscored the importance of enhancing cooperation in disaster risk reduction, including through strengthening the capacity of the AHA Centre.
34. The Meeting acknowledged the important contribution of the East Asia Forum (EAF) as a Track 1.5 level platform for government, business, academia, and think tanks to further deepen East Asia cooperation. In this regard, the Meeting noted with appreciation the convening of the 22nd EAF, under the theme, "Advancing Digitalisation and Innovation for a Resilient and Inclusive East Asia," hosted by Thailand on 9 December 2025 in Bangkok. The Forum's recommendations underscored the importance of advancing digitalisation through stronger public-private partnerships, bridging the digital divide, enhancing digital infrastructure, and deepening regional cooperation to address cyber threats and online scams. These efforts would support the implementation of DEFA, accelerate digital transformation, and foster a resilient, inclusive, and future-ready East Asia. The Meeting looked forward to the convening of the 23rd East Asia Forum in Japan this year.
35. The Meeting also recognised the important contributions of the Network of East Asia Think-Tanks (NEAT) towards APT cooperation and noted the outcomes of the 43rd NEAT Country Coordinators' Meetings and the two NEAT working group meetings held this year.

Regional and International Issues

Situation in the Middle East

36. We followed closely the situation and expressed 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, and the United Arab Emirates, which had heightened 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 called on all countries to respect international law, including the Charter of the United Nations. We reaffirmed 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 called on all parties concerned to exercise utmost self-restraint, avoid any acts that may aggravate the situation, and resolve differences through diplomacy and dialogue in the interest of maintaining peace and stability in the region. We reaffirmed that continued diplomatic efforts are indispensable to restoring stability at the earliest and achieving lasting peace in the region.
37. We expressed deep concern over the humanitarian situation in Lebanon. Attacks against the UN personnel are unacceptable and we strongly condemn the attacks which claimed the lives of seven peacekeepers, including four from Indonesia, and injured several other peacekeepers from other countries. We further reiterated the obligations to protect civilians and civilian infrastructures in armed conflicts consistent with international law, including international humanitarian law, Charter of the United Nations, as well as relevant UN Security Council resolutions. We stressed the imperative of advancing the Comprehensive Plan to rebuild Gaza and of living up to the commitment to ensuring a two-state solution.
38. We recognised that the implications of the situation in the Middle East along with the rising uncertainties have affected our region's stability in energy, food, and our peoples' well-being. In this regard, we underscored the importance of ensuring free and safe navigation through the Strait of Hormuz, maintaining well-functioning, stable and transparent markets and rules-based trade for energy and other essential goods. We recognized the importance of international cooperation on strengthening oil stockpiles and close coordination on energy between producing and consuming countries, as well as cooperation through regional initiatives to build more resilient energy supply chains, including the Partnership On Wide Energy and Resources Resilience Asia (POWER Asia). Recalling the ASEAN Leaders' Statement on the Response to the Middle East Crisis, we reaffirmed our commitment to strengthen coordination of ASEAN's

responses and positions to minimise and mitigate the impacts of the situation to our region, including by effectively utilising ASEAN-led mechanisms and external platforms, including the ASEAN Plus Ones, ASEAN's Plus One Free Trade Areas (FTAs), APT, the EAS, and the ARF, to promote dialogue, coordination and cooperation to build regional resilience.

39. We reaffirmed the importance of maintaining maritime safety and security, and upholding freedom of navigation in and overflight above straits used for international navigation, in accordance with international law, including the 1982 UNCLOS, and the relevant standards and recommended practices by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and the International Maritime Organization (IMO). In this regard, we called for the restoration of the safe, unimpeded, and continuous transit passage of vessels and aircraft in the Strait of Hormuz in line with the 1982 UNCLOS, as well as for all parties to ensure the safety of seafarers and ships in accordance with the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS).

Developments in the Korean Peninsula

40. Some countries took note of the recent developments regarding the Korean Peninsula and stressed the importance of resuming peaceful dialogue among all concerned parties in order to realise lasting peace and stability in a denuclearised Korean Peninsula. The Meeting expressed grave concern over the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's (DPRK) ongoing development of nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programmes in violation of relevant UNSC resolutions, which are a worrisome development that threatens peace and stability in the region. The Meeting also expressed concern over and the need to address DPRK's illicit cyber activities including cryptocurrency thefts fueling these programs. The Meeting called on the DPRK to comply fully with all relevant UNSC Resolutions and called for peaceful dialogue among the concerned parties, and continue working towards the realisation of lasting peace, and stability in a denuclearised Korean Peninsula. Some countries called for the full implementation of all relevant UNSC Resolutions and noted international efforts to bring about the complete denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula in a peaceful manner. Diplomatic efforts, including the creation of a conducive environment for peaceful dialogue among all concerned parties should remain a priority. In this vein, the Meeting expressed support for the efforts to resume dialogue through proactive de-escalation and confidence-building measures, with the aim of achieving peaceful coexistence and shared growth on the Korean Peninsula through the expansion of inter-Korean exchanges, normalisation of relations, and advancing denuclearization. Some countries reiterated its readiness to play a constructive role, including through utilising ASEAN-led platforms such as the ARF in promoting a conducive atmosphere for peaceful dialogue amongst the

concerned parties. The Meeting also called for the immediate resolution of the abductions issue.

Other Matters

41. The Meeting discussed the preparations for the 29th APT Summit to be held on 14 November 2026 in Manila, Philippines.

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