



**JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ OF THE 59th ASEAN FOREIGN MINISTERS' MEETING
Manila, 21 July 2026**

1. The 59th ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting (AMM) was held on 21 July 2026, in Manila, Philippines. The Meeting was chaired by the Philippines under the theme "Navigating Our Future, Together."

ASEAN COMMUNITY-BUILDING

2. 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 realisation through timely and coordinated implementation of the respective Strategic Plans of the three Community Pillars and ASEAN Connectivity towards a resilient, innovative, dynamic and people-centred ASEAN by 2045.

3. 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.

4. We reaffirmed our commitment to supporting Timor-Leste's continued integration into the ASEAN Community following its admission as the 11th Member State of ASEAN. We welcomed the Leaders' agreement to the Cebu Protocol to Amend the Charter of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations at the 48th ASEAN Summit, which formally reflects the expansion of ASEAN's membership. We noted the progress made in advancing its integration and underscored the importance of its full and effective participation in ASEAN processes and structures, supported by ongoing efforts to ensure that ASEAN's institutional, legal, and operational frameworks fully reflect its membership. In this regard, we looked forward to the continued progress in the implementation of the Paper on priority considerations related to Timor-Leste's admission as a member of ASEAN, adopted ad referendum by the AMM on 28 February 2026, including on matters relating to ASEAN legal instruments and the chairmanship arrangements of ASEAN Sectoral Ministerial Bodies and their subsidiary bodies.

5. We emphasised the importance of sustained, coordinated and cross-pillar efforts alongside continued support from ASEAN Member States, external partners, and relevant stakeholders, including through capacity-building and technical assistance, to facilitate Timor-Leste's effective integration and meaningful contribution to ASEAN Community-building. 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 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 ASEAN Economic Agreements (AEAs), to support Timor-Leste's full and effective integration into the ASEAN Community. We also looked forward to Timor-Leste's active participation in advancing *ASEAN 2045: Our Shared Future* and to its constructive contributions towards strengthening ASEAN unity and collective efforts in navigating the region's future.

6. We noted the completion of the End-Term Reviews of the ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC) and ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) Blueprints 2025. We looked forward to the outcomes of the End-Term Review of the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) Blueprint 2025 and underscored the importance of building on the gains from the ASCC Blueprint 2025 to draw lessons learned and inform the effective implementation of the ASCC Strategic Plan.

7. We took note of the commencement of the implementation of the *ASEAN 2045: Our Shared Future* and the APSC Strategic Plan, including current efforts undertaken to continuously enhance the Monitoring and Evaluation System of its implementation to ensure efficient and effective tracking and substantive analysis of progress made. We encouraged APSC Sectoral Bodies to ensure that their respective work plans and activities are in line with the strategic measures contained in the APSC Strategic Plan to ensure that initiatives are guided by, and consistent with, the priorities of the APSC Pillar. We also encouraged the continued alignment of national actions with regional efforts, including strengthening cross-pillar coordination at the national and regional levels. All these would support a coherent, coordinated, and results-oriented implementation of the *ASEAN 2045: Our Shared Future* and its Strategic Plans.

8. We looked forward to the implementation of the ASCC Strategic Plan and noted the ongoing complementary efforts to establish a strong, robust and results-oriented monitoring, evaluation and learning system, which ensures a more evidence-based, transparent, accountable and people-centred realisation of the ASCC goals. We further commended the development of the ASCC Results Framework, which serves as a framework for its implementation, as well as the continued efforts to popularise and socialise the ASCC Strategic Plan to foster increased public awareness, ownership, and engagement across ASEAN stakeholders and the wider public.

9. We noted that 2026 marks the first year of implementation of the AEC Strategic Plan 2026–2030, to translate our collective vision into concrete action.

We welcomed the AEC Sectoral Plans that will guide the effective execution of the AEC Strategic Plan 2026–2030.

10. We reaffirmed our shared commitment to maintaining and promoting peace, security and stability in the region, as well as to the peaceful resolution of disputes, including full respect for legal and diplomatic processes, without resorting to the threat or use of force, in accordance with international law, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

11. We welcomed the continued efforts to strengthen complementarities between the *ASEAN 2045: Our Shared Future* and the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including through the Complementarities Initiative 2.0 (CI 2.0) endorsed at the 15th ASEAN-UN Summit in October 2025. We recognised the role of CI 2.0 in advancing ASEAN's sustainability agenda towards green finance, resilience against climate change, energy transition, effective digital transformation, as well as networking and partnerships. We further welcomed the continued efforts to promote evidence-based policymaking and regional dialogue on sustainable development, and encouraged stronger collaboration among ASEAN Sectoral Bodies, external partners, international organisations, and relevant stakeholders to accelerate the implementation of the SDGs and support inclusive, resilient, and sustainable development across the region. With less than five years remaining to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, we further welcomed the *ASEAN SDGs Indicators Progress Report 2025*, which provides key evidence-based monitoring of our shared progress in achieving the SDGs. In this regard, we noted that the ASEAN Centre for Sustainable Development Studies and Dialogue (ACSDSD) serves as a key platform for promoting regional cooperation toward achieving the SDGs.

12. We were encouraged by the progress made in advancing the women, peace and security (WPS) agenda through the implementation of the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on WPS, and commended the collaborative work being undertaken by the Advisory Group on WPS, which is being coordinated by the ASEAN Committee on Women (ACW) and participated in by the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC), ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR), ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Transnational Crime (SOMTC), ASEAN Defence Senior Officials Meeting (ADSOM), ASEAN Women Entrepreneur Network (AWEN), and the ASEAN Institute for Peace and Reconciliation (ASEAN-IPR), including efforts to strengthen the meaningful participation and leadership of women in peace processes, conflict prevention, humanitarian response, and post-conflict recovery.

13. We agreed to coordinate and provide mutual support for ASEAN Member States' candidacy in regional and international organisations, where possible. We encouraged the ASEAN SOM Leaders to work towards codifying guidelines for the designation of ASEAN candidatures to UN bodies and other international organisations, guided by existing practice, which will further manifest ASEAN Centrality, unity, and solidarity, and contribute to the enhancement of ASEAN's profile at international fora.

14. We welcomed the successful convening of the 3rd ASEAN Future Forum, held on 8-10 June 2026 in Ha Noi, Viet Nam, under the theme “Shaping Our Future Together: Peace, Prosperity, People-Centred”, which brought together ASEAN Member States, Dialogue Partners and a wide range of stakeholders from the private sectors and academia to local governments, and youth. We recognised the Forum’s meaningful contribution to the realisation of the *ASEAN Community Vision 2045* through inclusive discussions on regional resilience, sustainable development, emerging technologies and people-centred community-building, and welcomed the submission of its outcomes to ASEAN Leaders. We further welcomed Viet Nam’s commitment to continue convening the ASEAN Future Forum as a platform for strengthening collective resilience through cooperation.

ASEAN Connectivity

15. We underscored the need to strengthen regional connectivity in the face of continuing uncertainties affecting our region, and reaffirmed the importance of the six strategic areas under the ASEAN Connectivity Strategic Plan (ACSP) in addressing these challenges and navigating our shared future. In this regard, we welcomed the adoption of the ACSP Work Plan which outlines practical activities to implement the ACSP and commended the ASEAN Connectivity Coordinating Committee, relevant ASEAN Bodies and mechanisms, the ASEAN Connectivity National Coordinators, and relevant national agencies for their continued support in advancing the ASEAN Connectivity agenda towards enhancing regional resilience, competitiveness, and integration.

16. We noted the recommendations arising from the End-Term Review of the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity (MPAC) 2025 which, among others, highlighted the importance of ownership and coordination across pillars and sectors, as well as the importance of resource mobilisation to ensure the benefits of Connectivity can be realised in a timely and effective manner. On this note, we looked forward to the continued support from ASEAN’s Dialogue Partners and other external partners in implementing the ACSP through concrete projects and activities, including through leveraging synergies with *the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP)* and the Connecting the Connectivities approach, and to the convening of the 2026 High-Level Conference on ASEAN Connectivity as a flagship platform for engaging diverse stakeholders in further advancing the region’s connectivity goals.

ASEAN Smart Cities Network

17. We reiterated our appreciation for the support of ASEAN’s external partners in various areas, such as safety and security, data-driven planning, and financing mechanisms for smart and sustainable urban development. We welcomed the adoption of the ASEAN Smart Cities Action Plan (ASCAP) 2026–2035, anchoring on a shared vision of fostering inclusive, resilient, green, innovative, and people-centred cities. We looked forward to the completion of the 2nd ASEAN Sustainable Urbanisation Report and the convening of the 9th ASEAN Smart Cities Network Annual Meeting on 20-21 July 2026.

Initiative for ASEAN Integration

18. We reaffirmed our commitment to narrow the development gaps within and among ASEAN Member States through the effective implementation of the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) Work Plan V (2026–2030) and its Implementation Plan. We welcomed its strategic alignment with *ASEAN 2045: Our Shared Future* and the relevant ASEAN Community Strategic Plans, and its emphasis on promoting inclusive, sustainable, resilient, and equitable development. We further underscored the importance of strengthening cross-sectoral coordination, enhancing partnerships with external partners and relevant stakeholders, including the private sector, and ensuring effective implementation through concrete projects, technical assistance, knowledge-sharing and capacity-building initiatives. In this regard, we reaffirmed our commitment to ensuring that all ASEAN member states are able to participate meaningfully in and benefit equitably from ASEAN Community-building and regional integration efforts while harnessing opportunities arising from digital transformation, sustainable development, and regional economic growth.

Sub-Regional Cooperation

19. We underscored the critical importance of maintaining ASEAN unity and Centrality in advancing subregional development across our diverse communities. We recognised the relevance and complementarity of subregional development, in advancing economic integration, connectivity, resilience, and narrowing development gaps, and to ASEAN's regional integration and Community-building process. We encouraged strengthening and promoting closer coordination and collaboration between relevant ASEAN Sectoral Bodies and sub-regional frameworks involving ASEAN Member States, including in the Mekong area, namely the Ayeyarwady-Chao Phraya-Mekong Economic Cooperation Strategy (ACMECS), Cambodia-Lao PDR-Myanmar-Viet Nam Cooperation (CLMV), and the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS), as well as the Brunei Darussalam-Indonesia-Malaysia-Philippines East ASEAN Growth Area (BIMP-EAGA), the Indonesia-Malaysia-Thailand Growth Triangle (IMT-GT), and the Singapore-Johor-Riau (SIJORI) Growth Triangle, to facilitate the realisation of this endeavour, including in possible areas of cooperation such as sustainable development, connectivity, digital transformation, logistics, smart agriculture, food, water, and energy security, climate and disaster resilience, transboundary haze, sustainable tourism, and sustainable and equitable management of shared water resources.

20. We reiterated our commitment to further promote equitable, inclusive and sustainable development across the ASEAN Community by aligning sub-regional growth with the comprehensive development of ASEAN and strengthening engagement with these subregional frameworks.

21. We commended 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, 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 held on the sidelines of the 48th ASEAN Summit. We welcomed the continued support of ASEAN's external partners in advancing sub-regional sustainable and inclusive development and promoting innovation across the region. In this regard, we acknowledged the successful convening of the ASEAN-New Zealand Forum on Sub-regional Cooperation on 10 June 2026 in Ha Noi, focusing on Mekong Subregional Cooperation, that could serve as a testbed for innovative solutions that can be adapted and scaled across ASEAN.

ASEAN POLITICAL-SECURITY COMMUNITY

22. We reaffirmed the importance and relevance of the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC) as a foundational code of conduct for inter-state relations in the region and a cornerstone of regional peace and stability. We remained committed to promoting and upholding the principles enshrined in the TAC, and emphasised the responsibility of all High Contracting Parties (HCPs) to fulfil their Treaty obligations, and reiterated the importance of continuing to promote awareness, understanding and adherence to the underlying principles of the TAC among HCPs. We welcomed the growing interest of non-regional countries to accede to the TAC, based on respect for, and adherence to, its purposes and principles. We looked forward to the accession of the Republic of Lithuania, the Republic of Poland, Romania, and the Kingdom of Sweden on 24 July 2026.

23. As this year marks the 50th anniversary of the TAC, we emphasised its enduring contribution to peace, stability, and cooperation in Southeast Asia as reflected in the ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Statement on the Commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of the Signing of the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia issued on 24 February 2026. 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 and serve as a catalyst to enhance the Treaty's visibility, relevance, and contribution to ASEAN's external engagements, including through deeper cooperation with HCPs in areas aligned with ASEAN priorities and through mutually beneficial initiatives that promote peace, stability, mutual trust, effective cooperation, and respect for international law. 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 further looked forward to the adoption of the Joint Statement by the ASEAN Defence Ministers Commemorating the 50th Anniversary of the Signing of the TAC at the 20th ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM). We looked forward to the Commemorative Activity of the 50th Anniversary of the TAC, to be hosted by the Philippines, as Chair of ASEAN, on 24 July 2026 in Manila, Philippines.

24. We welcomed the adoption of the *Guidelines on the Modalities for Engagement of ASEAN with High Contracting Parties (HCPs) under the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC)* by the 59th AMM, which aims to establish modalities of engagement aimed at deepening cooperation with HCPs that do not yet have formal partnerships with ASEAN. We encouraged the utilisation of these Guidelines to pursue engagements that are ASEAN-driven, relevant, strategic, mutually beneficial, and responsive to current and emerging

challenges while ensuring ASEAN Centrality, and adhering to existing ASEAN processes and procedures, in line with the *ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Decision on Enhancing ASEAN Relations with External Parties*. We further welcomed the adoption of the *Revised Guidelines for Accession to 1976 Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC)*, which institutes a two-year timeline for prospective HCPs to sign and deposit the Instrument of Accession to the TAC upon being notified of ASEAN's approval of their application to accede to the TAC.

25. We expressed concern over the growing risks of nuclear danger and conflict, further expansion and modernisation of nuclear arsenals, the increasing salience of nuclear weapons in military and security doctrines, as well as the weakening of the disarmament, and non-proliferation architecture. We stressed that progress on nuclear disarmament is urgently needed and reiterated the need for strengthening the commitment to a world free of nuclear weapons amidst the heightened geopolitical tension. We reiterated that the total elimination of nuclear weapons remains the only guarantee against their use and risk of their catastrophic humanitarian consequences.

26. We reaffirmed our commitment to the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BWC), recognising the necessity of multilateral negotiations and noting the absence of a verification mechanism, which continues to challenge the Convention's effectiveness. We expressed our continued support for the BWC Working Group on Strengthening the Convention to strengthen the Convention in a comprehensive and balanced manner.

27. We reaffirmed our commitment to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), and recognised the importance of strengthening efforts to address current and future global challenges related to chemical security and chemical disarmament. We reaffirmed our full support to the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) to carry out its mandated work as the implementing body of CWC in a comprehensive, objective, and impartial manner, in complementarity with the work of the UN.

28. We noted ongoing multilateral discussions on emerging issues related to outer space, and welcomed the decision of the UNGA RES 79/512 to establish an Open-ended Working Group on the Prevention of Arms Race in Outer Space in all its Aspects, which will help ensure the meaningful participation of States in shaping the institutions and mechanisms that promote peace and stability in outer space.

29. We expressed concerns about the possible negative consequences and impact of autonomous weapon systems on global security and regional and international stability, including the risk of an emerging arms race, lowering the threshold for conflict and proliferation, including to non-State actors. We underscored the importance of continued inclusive dialogue towards the development of a robust, future-proof, and legally-binding instrument to address these challenges.

30. 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 on the 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).

31. We reaffirmed our commitment to continuously engage all the Nuclear Weapon States (NWS), including those with reservations, and intensify efforts of all parties to resolve all outstanding issues in accordance with the objectives and principles of the SEANWFZ Treaty. We noted that the Executive Committee of the SEANWFZ Commission is continuing to explore the possibility of allowing individual NWS which are willing to sign and ratify the Protocol to the SEANWFZ Treaty without reservations and provide prior formal assurance of this commitment in writing to go ahead with the signing. We welcomed any NWS that are ready to do so. We encouraged our ASEAN experts to explore ways to bridge the differences, including the possibility of engaging with the NWS experts.

32. We reaffirmed our commitment to enhancing the profile of the SEANWFZ Treaty globally, including through engaging other nuclear weapon-free zones (NWFZs). In this regard, we noted the proposal from Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL) and Central Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (CANWFZ) for cooperation with SEANWFZ through mutually agreed arrangements as appropriate. 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.

33. We expressed concern over the declining commitment and cooperation in global non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament mechanisms, and called on countries, especially NWS, to maintain and fully implement their commitments under these mechanisms, including in 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, as part of the 2026 Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT. We also commended the role of Viet Nam as the President of the 2026 Review Conference of the NPT for its leadership in promoting inclusive discussion and transparency during the Conference. In this regard, we welcomed ASEAN's contribution to the *Comprehensive Study of 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 qualified group of experts. These efforts underscore ASEAN's active role in supporting multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation frameworks.

34. 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, including the successful conduct of a 3-day ASEAN Nuclear Emergency Notification and Communications Exercise held in Manila, Philippines, on 6-8 July 2026 to test and strengthen the regional mechanisms that ASEAN Member States have established to manage such events collectively and Tabletop Exercises held in Manila and Singapore in March and

May 2026, respectively, to sharpen competencies in dispersion modelling tools to support regional response to a nuclear or radiological emergency, and in advancing high standards and strengthening the practices of nuclear safety, security, and safeguards guided by International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) standards and international best practices and its vital role in this regard. We further reaffirmed the importance of strengthening regional cooperation in regulatory capacity building, emergency preparedness and response, and the development of effective legal and regulatory frameworks to support the safe, secure and safeguarded use of nuclear energy in ASEAN. Recognising the growing regional interest in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, we emphasised the importance of supporting the need to strengthen regulatory readiness and institutional capabilities. We reiterated the Leaders' guidance for the region to forge strategic and forward-looking partnerships with the IAEA and other dialogue partners, and the convening of the 13th Annual Meeting of ASEANTOM in August 2026.

35. We are concerned about the rise in non-traditional security issues, including transboundary challenges. We are committed to enhancing cooperation to address these security challenges, including issues related to food, water and energy security, and health security, through concrete and practical activities, as well as further strengthening cooperation with Dialogue Partners, and other external parties to effectively address transboundary challenges.

36. We recognised the vital roles of the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime (AMMTC) and the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Drug Matters (AMMD), including their subsidiary mechanisms, in advancing ASEAN's collective efforts to address the evolving challenges of transnational crime and illicit drugs, including through strengthened law enforcement cooperation, information sharing and capacity building initiatives.

37. We commended the adoption of the *Melaka Declaration on Combatting Transnational Crime* and the ASEAN Plan of Action (POA) in Combatting Transnational Crime (2026-2035) by the 19th AMMTC in 2025, which had streamlined the priority areas of transnational crime under the Sectoral Body from ten to eight, and looked forward to the adoption and effective implementation of the ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Transnational Crime (SOMTC) Work Programme (2026-2028) to implement this POA.

38. We recalled the agreement of the 19th AMMTC to enhance the cybercrime priority area to include online scams and commended the adoption of the *ASEAN Declaration on Combatting Cybercrime and Online Scams* by the 19th AMMTC. We further recognised the convergence of online scams with forced criminality and trafficking in persons (TIP) and, therefore, underscored the importance of continued cross-sectoral implementation of the ASEAN Multi-Sectoral Work Plan against TIP 2023-2028 (Bohol TIP Work Plan 2.0) and its Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting, and Learning (MERL) Framework by the relevant ASEAN Sectoral Bodies, including through victim-centred, gender-responsive, and trauma-informed approaches.

39. Recognising the nexus of money laundering and illicit financial flows as an enabler of other forms of transnational crime, we recalled the adoption of the

ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on Combatting Money Laundering by the 47th ASEAN Summit in 2025 and the establishment of the SOMTC Working Group on Money Laundering (WG on ML) by the 19th AMMTC and looked forward to the effective operationalisation of the WG on ML.

40. We recalled the *ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on the Use of Sports for Preventing Violent Extremism*, adopted at the 47th ASEAN Summit and emphasised the importance of cross-sectoral coordination in addressing the multifaceted aspects of terrorism and violent extremism through the implementation of the Work Plan of the ASEAN POA to Prevent and Counter the Rise of Radicalisation and Violent Extremism (Bali Work Plan) 2019-2026, while promoting community resilience and respect for human rights. We underscored the importance of a victim-centred approach, including protection, assistance, rehabilitation and reintegration of victims.

41. We also commended the initiative of SOMTC in initiating the *ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on Enhancing Cooperation in Locating and Arresting Criminal Fugitives*, which was adopted by the 47th ASEAN Summit, as well as the adoption of the ASEAN Declaration on Countering People Smuggling and the ASEAN Border Management Cooperation Roadmap by the 19th AMMTC, which provides region-wide arrangements to enable ASEAN Member States to address cross-border challenges of these issues.

42. We recognised the important role of the ASEAN Directors-General of Immigration Departments and Heads of Consular Affairs Divisions of Ministries of Foreign Affairs Meeting (DGICM) in strengthening regional cooperation on immigration, border management and consular assistance. In this context, we welcomed the continued implementation of the DGICM Work Plan (2024-2031) to Implement the ASEAN Plan of Action on Cooperation on Immigration and Consular Assistance Matters (2022-2031). We further welcomed the plan to establish the ASEAN Heads of Consular Affairs Division Forum under the DGICM framework as a dedicated platform to enhance coordination, enable timely exchange of information, and support coordinated responses to consular issues involving ASEAN nationals overseas.

43. We commended the convening of the Table-Top Exercise on Consular Assistance for ASEAN Nationals in Third Countries on 4-5 December 2025 in Bali, Indonesia, which reaffirmed our shared commitment to providing emergency assistance, in line with the ASEAN Declaration on the Guidelines on Consular Assistance by ASEAN Member States' Missions in Third Countries to Nationals of Other ASEAN Member States.

44. We reaffirmed our resolve towards the realisation of a Drug-Free ASEAN and recognised the role of the AMMD in leading regional cooperation to combat illicit drugs. We commended the delivery of the *Joint ASEAN Statement at the 69th United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND)* on 9 March 2026 by the Philippines in its capacity as the incumbent Chair of the AMMD, which underscored ASEAN's collective commitment to responding to the challenge of illicit drugs. We welcomed the Philippines' Chairship of the AMMD and looked forward to the convening of the 9th AMMD later this year. We also commended the ASEAN

Narcotics Cooperation Centre (ASEAN-NARCO) for its continued efforts in publishing the annual ASEAN Drug Monitoring Report (ADM), which remains a key initiative in supporting ASEAN's response to the drug problem in the region.

45. We took note of the continued engagement with ASEAN Dialogue Partners and external parties in support of cooperation under the ASEAN law enforcement sector. We emphasised the importance of pursuing practical, inclusive, meaningful and mutually beneficial initiatives under SOMTC, the DGICM, and ASOD, in line with ASEAN's priorities.

46. We commended the ADMM on two decades of successful stewardship in strengthening regional defence cooperation. We welcomed the defence sector's greater engagement and practical cooperation with external partners, as well as its increased involvement in cross-sectoral issues in recent years, aimed at maintaining the responsiveness and inclusivity of the ADMM and ADMM-Plus. We noted initiatives to further advance the Youth, Peace and Security Agenda and the implementation of the AOIP within the defence sector, thereby contributing to ensuring that the APSC remains adaptive to the changing regional architecture. We further noted the importance of promoting awareness and respect for international humanitarian law and strengthening efforts to address humanitarian concerns in the situations of armed conflict including the impact of landmines, ERW, and other explosive ordnance, capacity-building, information-sharing, risk education, victim assistance, and the exchange of good practices, in support of affected communities and ASEAN's commitment to a people-centred, people-oriented, and resilient Community. We further noted efforts to enhance the defence sector's synergy with other ASEAN-led mechanisms, with a view to sustain and further reinforce ASEAN Centrality.

47. We looked forward to the various ADMM-Plus capstone activities to be conducted this year, including under the Experts' Working Group (EWGs) on Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR), Military Medicine (MM) and Cybersecurity (CS): first three EWG combined field training exercise EXERCISE TRIDENT RESOLVE, to be held from 20 to 26 September 2026 in Banten, Indonesia; under the EWG on Maritime Security (MS): (i) Table-Top Exercise (TTX) in Tokyo, Japan in March 2026, and (ii) Joint Cooperative Activity/FTX in Subic, Zambales, Philippines in September 2026; under the EWG on Peacekeeping Operations (PKO): Field Training Exercise (FTX) (codenamed Exercise Shared-Destiny 2026) in Binturan Range and Vicinity of Penanjong Garrison, Brunei Darussalam in December 2026; under the EWG on Humanitarian Mine Action (HMA): FTX in Nizhny, Novgorod, Russia in August/September 2026; and under the EWG on Counter-Terrorism (CT): (i) TTX in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in April 2026, and (ii) FTX in India in Q1-2027.

48. 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 ASEAN Member States, in accordance with international law, including the 1982 UNCLOS, among others, we welcomed the adoption of the ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on Maritime Cooperation during the 48th ASEAN Summit in Cebu and looked forward to its implementation.

49. We further emphasised the necessity of strengthening cooperation among ASEAN Member States to pursue greater understanding of maritime issues and promote compliance with international law, including the 1982 UNCLOS, including through 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, through promoting technical cooperation, information sharing, research collaboration, and capacity building activities, inter alia, while avoiding duplication of efforts. We looked forward to the timely finalisation of the ASEAN Maritime Centre's Concept Note and Terms of Reference by the 49th ASEAN Summit in November 2026.

50. We welcomed the finalisation of the Concept Paper and Terms of Reference of the ASEAN Coast Guard Forum (ACF) during the 5th ACF High-Level Meeting on 5 June 2026 in Manila, and looked forward to the inclusion of the ACF as a subsidiary body under the ASEAN SOM in Annex 1 of the ASEAN Charter. We recognised the ACF's role in advancing cooperation and dialogue among maritime law enforcement agencies, contributing to the strengthening of capacity and coordination, in addressing maritime security challenges and other maritime challenges, including through joint training programmes, exchange of best practices, humanitarian assistance, marine pollution response, and search and rescue cooperation, combatting transnational crimes, and transboundary challenges to complement without duplicating the functions of relevant existing mechanisms such as the ASEAN Maritime Forum (AMF), the Expanded AMF (EAMF), the ADMM and ADMM-Plus, the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), the East Asia Summit (EAS) and other ASEAN mechanisms on maritime cooperation within the region.

51. We reaffirmed the role of the AMF and EAMF as Track 1.5 platforms for promoting maritime cooperation through dialogue and consultations. We welcomed the convening of the 15th AMF and 13th EAMF on 11 September 2025, in Malaysia, and looked forward to the convening of the 16th AMF and 14th EAMF on 17-18 November 2026, in the Philippines. We looked forward to the finalisation of the second edition of the ASEAN Maritime Outlook and the implementation of initiatives under the EAMF this year, particularly the operationalisation of the EAMF Pool of Experts through the commissioning of policy briefs by the EAMF Chair, and the launch of the EAMF website.

52. 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 oceans 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. We likewise reaffirmed the need to protect the marine environment and ensure safety of navigation and life at sea.

53. We commended the efforts of the ASEAN Law Ministers' Meeting (ALAWMM) in strengthening cooperation with ASEAN Dialogue Partners in advancing the rule of law and justice. In this regard, we welcomed the convening of

the First ASEAN-Japan Law Ministers' Meeting, held consecutively with the 13th ALAWMM on 15 November 2025 in Manila, Philippines, which marked a significant milestone in elevating the ASEAN-Japan dialogue on the rule of law and legal matters.

54. We also welcomed the proposed establishment of the ASEAN Forum of Legal Advisers on Public International Law (AFLA), as an informal and non-binding platform for the exchange of views on public international law, with a view to strengthen ASEAN's legal awareness and capacity in public international law, thereby contributing to the realisation of the ASEAN Community Vision 2045.

55. We were encouraged with the continued efforts of the ASEAN Ministers/Attorneys-General Meeting of the Central Authorities on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters (AMAG-MLAT), supported by the Senior Officials' Meeting of the Central Authorities on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters (SOM-MLAT) in promoting the effective implementation of the ASEAN Treaty on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters (ASEAN MLAT). We further noted SOM-MLAT's ongoing consideration of non-ASEAN Member States' interest in acceding to the ASEAN MLAT to promote Mutual Legal Assistance beyond the ASEAN region.

56. We noted the inclusion of the ASEAN Prosecutors/Attorneys General Meeting (APAGM) under Annex 1 of the ASEAN Charter, and looked forward to APAGM's efforts to strengthen prosecutorial cooperation and enhance ASEAN's institutional capacity in promoting and upholding the rule of law, justice and a rules-based ASEAN. We further looked forward to the convening of the inaugural APAGM and SOM-APAGM, to be hosted by Brunei Darussalam in 2026.

57. We welcomed the progress of the work of the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) in the promotion and protection of human rights in line with its Terms of Reference. We noted AICHR's 2026 Annual Report and welcomed AICHR's efforts to enhance regional cooperation, respond to external communication, and share a common understanding on various human rights matters of interest to ASEAN, such as the issuance of AICHR's first bulletin on human rights developments and the publication of AICHR Notes to promote public awareness and knowledge-sharing on human rights, and the adoption of *AICHR's Operational Guidelines on External Communication*. We noted AICHR's ongoing efforts to develop a *Regional Plan of Action for the ASEAN Declaration on the Right to a Safe, Clean, Healthy and Sustainable Environment* and we welcomed continued discussions on efforts to follow up on the realisation of the *ASEAN Declaration on Promoting the Right to Development and the Right to Peace Towards Realising Inclusive and Sustainable Development*. We further commended the launch of the ASEAN Guideline on the Implementation of the Non-Punishment Principle for the Protection of Victims of Trafficking in Persons as a significant milestone in ASEAN's regional efforts to strengthen victim protection in addressing trafficking in persons (TIP), as well as to advance cross-sectoral cooperation in upholding human rights.

58. We approved the Priority Programmes and Activities of AICHR for 2027. In this regard, we encouraged the timely, effective, and results-oriented

implementation of the priority programmes on human rights, in alignment with *ASEAN 2045: Our Shared Future*. We further encouraged AICHR to continue its work through an inclusive and consultative approach whilst ensuring a purposeful and balanced discharge of its mandates, working together to enhance coherence and further advance the promotion and protection of human rights for the peoples of ASEAN, including those in vulnerable situations, as mentioned in the ASCC Strategic Plan. We noted AICHR's continuous efforts to improve cross-sectoral and cross-pillar collaboration, and its engagement with relevant ASEAN Sectoral Bodies, stakeholders, and external partners on the promotion and protection of human rights. We welcomed the convening of the 7th ASEAN Human Rights Dialogue in November 2025, Jakarta, and looked forward to the convening of the 8th ASEAN Human Rights Dialogue later this year.

59. We welcomed efforts by the ASEAN-IPR through research, advocacy, and engagement with relevant ASEAN bodies, entities, and academic institutions that champion peacebuilding and reconciliation in supporting initiatives for peacebuilding and conflict prevention in the region. This includes actively advancing peace education and the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) and Youth, Peace and Security (YPS) agendas, through institutionalised dialogues and capacity building programs. We further encouraged stronger collaboration between ASEAN IPR and national peace institutions, civil society organisations, and other relevant stakeholders in promoting dialogue, reconciliation, and inclusive peace processes.

60. We commended the ASEAN Regional Mine Action Center (ARMAC) as a centre of excellence and recognised its essential role in addressing the humanitarian and socio-economic challenges posed by landmines and explosive remnants of war (ERW). We also welcomed ARMAC's close collaboration with ASEAN Member States' mine action authorities, relevant sectoral bodies, and international partners, which has enhanced technical cooperation, joint training, research, and knowledge-sharing, benefiting affected States and contributing to regional stability.

61. We welcomed the adoption of the United Nations Convention against Cybercrime (Hanoi Convention) and its role in strengthening both regional and global legal cooperation frameworks. We called upon the early signing and ratification of the Convention in accordance with their respective national procedures, facilitating its early entry into force and effective implementation.

ASEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY

62. We noted that the ASEAN economy remained resilient in 2025 with a growth rate of 4.9 per cent in 2025, reaffirming the region's resilience amid persistent external headwinds, including retaliatory tariff measures and ongoing geoeconomic fragmentation. We further noted that while ASEAN's growth momentum is projected to be at 4.6 per cent in 2026, supported by strong domestic demand and sustained structurally supportive investments across the region, the geopolitical tension in the Middle East is expected to weigh the region's trade and economic activity. Nevertheless, we remain confident that the strategic initiatives undertaken

by ASEAN will enable the region to sustain its growth and realise its ambition of becoming the fourth-largest economy by 2030, despite continued global uncertainty and geopolitical tensions.

63. We expressed concern over the Middle East conflict and its cascading effects on ASEAN's economic stability, particularly through potential disruptions to critical energy chokepoints, rising energy and food prices, supply chain disruptions, and tightening financial conditions. We underscored the importance of strengthened regional coordination and timely, coherent policy responses to safeguard the welfare of ASEAN peoples and protect the region's economic fundamentals. In this regard, we noted the deliberations at the Special ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meetings; the 32nd ASEAN Economic Ministers' Retreat; the Special ASEAN Ministers on Energy Meeting; the Special ASEAN Ministers of Agriculture Meeting; the Special AEC Council Meeting; the 27th AEC Council Meeting; the ASEAN Joint Foreign and Economic Ministers' Meeting (AMM-AEM); and the 48th ASEAN Summit, which underscored the urgency of reinforcing ASEAN's collective economic resilience. We further noted the preliminary recommendations to reinforce regional energy security, safeguard food security, maintain trade, supply chain, and market stability, strengthen financial resilience, and agreed to ensure their timely implementation.

64. We noted the conclusion of the mandate of the ASEAN Geoeconomics Task Force (AGTF) and expressed appreciation for its contributions in advancing ASEAN's understanding of the evolving geoeconomic landscape. We recognised the interim arrangement for the High-Level Task Force on ASEAN Economic Integration (HLTF-EI) to continue this work through the ASEAN Geoeconomics Group (AGG) in 2026, pending the development of the revised TOR of the HLTF-EI, thereby ensuring continuity of discussion on emerging geoeconomics issues. We also encouraged continued engagements between the ASEAN Foreign and Economic Ministers, to further strengthen cross-pillar coordination in addressing geopolitical and geoeconomic challenges.

65. We welcomed the Enhanced AEC Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning (MEAL) Framework 2045 as a vital instrument to strengthen results-based implementation, enhance the tracking of progress, and support evidence-based policy adjustments throughout the implementation of the AEC Strategic Plan 2026-2030 and succeeding plans. We emphasised the importance of ensuring effective, coordinated, and results-oriented implementation to deepen regional economic integration, strengthen resilience, and sustain high-quality growth.

66. We welcomed the 87 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, in where appropriate, align them with their respective Sectoral Plans for 2026–2030.

67. We commended the full signing of the Second Protocol to Amend the ASEAN Trade in Goods Agreement (ATIGA) on 1 December 2025, which marks a

strategic milestone in advancing ASEAN's economic integration, and called for its swift ratification and timely entry into force within this year, where possible to facilitate seamless movement of goods in the region, in line with the mandate given by the ASEAN Leaders and AEC Council Ministers.

68. We recognised the efforts of ASEAN Member States to work towards completing the finalisation of the Schedules of Non-Conforming Measures (NCMs) under the ASEAN Trade in Services Agreement (ATISA) taking into account the related requirements and processes under the agreement, and looked forward to continued cooperation to work on the outstanding issues as soon as possible.

69. We welcomed the full signing of the Fifth Protocol to Amend the ASEAN Comprehensive Investment Agreement (ACIA) on 13 March 2026, which demonstrates ASEAN's commitment to enhancing the investment climate and building investors' confidence in the region. We looked forward to the finalisation of the two-annex Schedules of Reservations to ensure that ACIA remains modern, relevant, and responsive to evolving business needs.

70. We also welcomed the full adoption of the ASEAN Sustainable Investment Guidelines (ASIG), the first-ever regional policy guidelines that will foster responsible and inclusive investment practices across Member States. Through coordinated investment policies, the region aims to channel the flow of investment into economic sectors, activities, and regions that contribute to sustainable and long-term well-being of ASEAN's economy, environment, and society.

71. We noted the continued expansion of cross-border payment linkages in the region, with 29 QR payments and Person-to-Person (P2P) instant payment linkages established within ASEAN and with our external partners as of December 2025. We also commended ASEAN's commitment towards the development and expansion of safe, affordable, and efficient payments in ASEAN through substantial policy exchanges to manage risks associated with cross-border payments such as fraud. We looked forward to the sustained efforts to foster a safer and more inclusive digital finance ecosystem and the operationalisation of the multilateral payment system under Nexus Global Payment.

72. We noted ASEAN's commitment towards greater banking integration with the completion of the ASEAN Banking Integration Framework (ABIF) Review and the subsequent endorsement of the ABIF Guidelines 2.0, which aims to deliver greater clarity and coherence, whilst catering to differing levels of readiness across ASEAN Member States by encouraging progressive integration. We noted the ongoing implementation of the ASEAN Local Currency Transaction (LCT) Framework to facilitate the use of local currencies in cross-border transactions. These initiatives underpin the role of financial integration as a catalyst for deeper intraregional trade and investment in ASEAN.

73. We were pleased with the efforts of the ASEAN Infrastructure Fund (AIF) through the ASEAN Catalytic Green Finance Facility (ACGF) to further mobilise resources to address the region's infrastructure development needs with a robust lending pipeline and opportunities for 2026-2028 that include 30 regional projects amounting to USD 19.4 billion and welcomed the onboarding of the Asian

Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) in further enhancing AIF's visibility and partnership with donors and other multilateral development banks. We also welcomed the launch of the Regional Connectivity Fund (RCF) to support preparatory works for ASEAN Power Grid (APG) projects, complementing the APG Financing Initiative's efforts to mobilise blended finance and crowd in private investment.

74. We welcomed the endorsement of the Terms of Reference for establishing the ASEAN Unique Business Identification Numbers (UBIN) Implementing Committee, and looked forward to the convening of its kick-off meeting at the earliest opportunity to initiate the Committee's work. We recognised the importance of the ASEAN Strategic Action Plan for MSME Development (SAP MSMED) 2026–2030 and looked forward to its early finalisation, in order to strengthen MSMEs and foster an enabling ecosystem to enhance their productivity, competitiveness, and resilience. We looked forward to the outcomes of the feasibility study to guide the proposed establishment of the Centre of Excellence for MSMEs (ACE-MSMEs). We encouraged efforts to strengthen MSMEs' market access and participation in regional value chains, including through supporting standard and quality readiness.

75. We reaffirmed ASEAN's commitment to deepening its economic engagement with the world through the strengthening of existing partnerships and the diversification of new ones, recognising this as central to ASEAN's continued relevance in an evolving global landscape.

76. On existing partnerships, we welcomed the signing of the ASEAN-China Free Trade Area (ACFTA) 3.0 Upgrade Protocol on 28 October 2025, and noted the significant opportunity this presents to further deepen ASEAN's cooperation with China. We looked forward to its entry-into-force and the tangible benefits it will bring to businesses and peoples across ASEAN.

77. We expressed encouragement at the positive momentum of the ASEAN-Canada Free Trade Agreement (ACAFTA) negotiations and reaffirmed our collective commitment to substantially conclude negotiations this year. We noted that the ACAFTA, once implemented, will open new avenues for trade, investment, and economic partnership with Canada, contributing to ASEAN's goal of a more diversified and resilient external economic architecture.

78. We underscored the continued importance of the ongoing review of the ASEAN-India Trade in Goods Agreement (AITIGA) as a crucial initiative to further deepen ASEAN-India economic relations. We reaffirmed our commitment to achieving a mutually beneficial outcome that makes the Agreement more effective, user-friendly, simple, and trade facilitative, while also addressing emerging issues and the evolving needs of our economies. We looked forward to the conclusion of the review within this year.

79. We welcomed the commencement of negotiations to upgrade the ASEAN-Korea Free Trade Area (AKFTA) this year, reaffirming our shared commitment to ensuring that the AKFTA is commercially meaningful and relevant to businesses, trade facilitative, modern, forward-looking, and responsive to

regional and global developments. We welcomed the inclusion of new areas in the AKFTA Upgrade, including strengthening supply chain connectivity, enhancing energy cooperation, promoting sustainable development and green economy, and advancing digital economy, which reflect the common aspiration of ASEAN and the Republic of Korea to enhance resilience, strengthen competitiveness, and respond to climate and digital transformation challenges towards a more prosperous region. We noted with encouragement the positive momentum of negotiations and looked forward to the substantial conclusion of the upgrade negotiations by the end of 2027.

80. We also reaffirmed our full commitment to the effective implementation of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Agreement. We noted preparation for the general review to upgrade the RCEP Agreement and also underscored the importance of strengthening RCEP institutionalisation through the establishment of an effective RCEP Secretariat. We also welcomed positive steps toward broadening RCEP's membership. We expressed confidence that a strengthened and expanded RCEP will continue to serve as a cornerstone of regional trade and economic integration, fostering an open, inclusive, and rules-based economic order across the region.

81. On exploring new partnerships, we also recognised the importance of diversifying ASEAN's economic partnerships to broaden opportunities for sustainable economic growth and development, including through region-to-region linkages. In this regard, we commended the adoption of the Joint Declaration on Economic Cooperation between ASEAN and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) at the 2nd ASEAN-GCC Summit held last year, and looked forward to its follow-up. We further looked forward to enhancing sectoral collaboration, as well as the finalisation of the Feasibility Study (FS) on a potential ASEAN-GCC Free Trade Agreement. We recognised this as an important step toward deepening strategic economic ties and exploring new avenues of collaboration with the GCC, to create long-term value for both sides.

82. We commended the continued efforts of ASEAN Member States and the Parties of the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) in advancing dialogue, and expressed support for both sides in identifying and pursuing tangible areas of cooperation. The initial priority areas, including digital economy, supply chain resilience and trade facilitation, and capacity building for micro, small, and medium enterprises, are foundational to the rules-based multilateral trading system and remain critical enablers of inclusive and sustainable economic growth in the region. In light of evolving global trade dynamics, deepening cooperation in these areas is both timely and strategically important. We looked forward to the formal and constructive engagement of both sides at the 2nd ASEAN-CPTPP Trade and Investment Dialogue to be held later this year.

83. We reaffirmed our commitment to strengthening ASEAN cooperation in food systems, agriculture, and forestry to enhance regional resilience, sustainability, and agri-food security. We recognised evolving global challenges, including the situation in the Middle East and its impacts on food systems, supply chains, and agricultural inputs, and underscored the importance of continued regional

cooperation and coordination, including through the ASEAN Plus Three Emergency Rice Reserve (APTERR) and the ASEAN Food Security Information System (AFSIS). We supported sustainable and innovative approaches, including the ASEAN One Billion Trees initiative, nature-based solutions/ecosystem-based approaches, and stronger private sector engagement, to promote climate resilience, environmental sustainability, disaster preparedness, and sustainable growth across the sectors.

84. We noted that in 2025, ASEAN received approximately 147 million international visitors, representing a 4.6 per cent increase from the previous year, and highlighted that a significant 42.0 per cent of these arrivals originated from within the region, underscoring the critical role of intra-regional connectivity and enhanced mobility. To ensure the long-term sustainability and resilience of the sector, we encouraged ASEAN tourism stakeholders to continue strengthening intra-ASEAN travel, diversifying source markets, and elevating high-quality tourism. We further noted the development of an ASEAN Sustainable and Resilient Tourism Investment Outlook as a Priority Economic Deliverable for 2026 and looked forward to the recommendations and bankable projects that could immediately be implemented to support the development growth in the region.

85. We looked forward to the ASEAN Strategy for Carbon Neutrality Work Plan that will provide practical actions for advancing the ASEAN Strategy for Carbon Neutrality 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, emphasising the data and information exchange of the product of the greenhouse gas accounting standards and carbon market rules and standards, while promoting interoperability among carbon market and facilitating, where appropriate, the mutual recognition of high quality carbon credits across the region to facilitate the low carbon transition. We welcomed the commencement of the ASEAN Green Economy Framework Agreement (GEFA) feasibility study, which aims to chart comprehensive, forward-looking, and actionable pathways to transform the region into a sustainable and modern hub.

86. We recognised the regional commitment to harness the potential of our marine,-and freshwater resources through the development of 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.

87. We welcomed the efforts to advance contextual 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 intensified public-private engagement through the inaugural interface of the Independent Advisory Panel (IAP) in May 2026, enabling coordinated resource

mobilisation and technical expertise to accelerate the implementation of circular economy initiatives under the AEC Framework.

88. We welcomed ASEAN's continued efforts to strengthen cooperation in competition policy and consumer protection, including through the implementation of the ASEAN Capacity Building Roadmaps on Competition and Consumer Protection 2026–2030, a structured and forward-looking framework aimed at strengthening institutional capacity and professional competence across the region. We also noted ongoing initiatives to enhance cross-border cooperation, regulatory coherence, and product safety, which contribute to ASEAN's readiness to address increasingly complex and digitalised market dynamics while safeguarding fair competition and consumer welfare.

89. We welcomed the finalisation of the substantive text of the upgraded ASEAN Framework Agreement on Intellectual Property Cooperation (AFAIPC 2.0), which aims to strengthen regional cooperation in intellectual property protection, enforcement, and commercialisation, streamline cross-border IP processes, and support the development of a high-skilled IP workforce. We encouraged the timely completion of the legal review processes and looked forward to the signing of the Agreement expeditiously in 2027.

90. We welcomed the conclusion of the ASEAN Digital Economy Framework Agreement (DEFA) text negotiations and looked forward to its signing at the sidelines of the 49th ASEAN Summit in November 2026. We underscored the strategic importance of ASEAN DEFA in fostering a seamless, open, secure, interoperable, competitive and inclusive regional digital economy to position ASEAN as a globally competitive and forward-looking digital hub. We welcomed the successful convening of the 6th ASEAN Digital Ministers' Meeting (ADGMIN) in January 2026 in Ha Noi, Viet Nam, and the adoption of the Ha Noi Digital Declaration, which charted the strategic shift from connectivity to connected intelligence.

91. We reaffirmed the strategic importance of harmonised standards and technical regulations to ASEAN's cooperation in the digital ecosystem. We welcomed the progress in the implementation of ASEAN Digital Masterplan 2026-2030. We noted continued progress in standards harmonisation across key sectors and reaffirmed our commitment to strengthen regional digital transformation through enhanced coordination in the areas of cross-border ecommerce, 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. We underscored the importance of a human-centred, inclusive and responsible approach to digital transformation and the use of emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence.

92. We underscored the strategic importance of the responsible and inclusive application of artificial intelligence (AI) and welcomed the establishment of ASEAN's first shared high-performance computing (HPC) facility, delivering 4.2 petaflops of GPU-based computing power accessible to all ASEAN Member States. We reaffirmed the importance of deepening cooperation on AI by

advancing policy harmonisation and strengthening collective safety efforts under the lead of the ASEAN Working Group on AI Governance (WG-AI), and we looked forward to the establishment of the ASEAN AI Safety Network (AI SAFE), following the Leaders' Declaration in 2025, as a regional supporting mechanism to support the ASEAN Digital Senior Officials Meeting (ADGSOM) and WG-AI to further advance ASEAN's capacity to address emerging AI opportunities and risks.

93. 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. We commended the continued progress in operationalising the ASEAN Regional Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT) and its information sharing mechanism. We also 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 building regional cybersecurity resilience to address emerging threats. We also welcomed the ASEAN Guide on Anti-Scam Policies and Best Practices as the region's first comprehensive framework for combating scams over telecommunication channels, and welcomed the Enhanced ASEAN Guidelines for Strengthening Resilience and Repair of Submarine Cables, in accordance with international law, including the 1982 UNCLOS.

94. We reaffirmed that the ASEAN Power Grid (APG) is a strategic pillar of ASEAN's energy integration and underscored the importance of operationalising the Enhanced Memorandum of Understanding on the APG. We noted the progress made by ASEAN in developing the comprehensive guidelines under the Legal and Regulatory Pillar of the Submarine Power Cable Development Framework, without prejudice to national laws and regulations. We looked forward to the endorsement of these guidelines by the 44th ASEAN Ministers' on Energy Meeting (AMEM) in September 2026 as well as the full Framework thereafter. We note the continued efforts to strengthen and advance multilateral and multidirectional cross-border power trading and the APG, through initiatives under the Lao PDR-Thailand-Malaysia-Singapore Power Integration Project (LTMS-PIP) as well as the Brunei Darussalam - Indonesia – Malaysia – Philippines Power Integration Project (BIMP-PIP) and other APG initiatives. We also continued to welcome further progress under the APG Financing Initiative to mobilise blended finance and crowd in private investment. In this regard, we encouraged ASEAN Member States to expedite their respective internal procedures to facilitate the operationalisation of the enhanced MoU on the APG.

95. We underscored the importance of the ASEAN Framework Agreement on Petroleum Security (APSA) as a key regional mechanism to enhance preparedness and collective response to potential oil and gas supply disruptions. We recalled that APSA modernises ASEAN's petroleum security arrangements by providing a voluntary and coordinated framework for emergency response, information sharing, and mutual assistance during supply crises. In this regard, we urged the expeditious completion of national processes towards its ratification. We also recognised the role of the Trans-ASEAN Gas Pipeline (TAGP) in expanding

PNG and LNG supply chains to enhance preparedness against future supply disruptions.

96. We reaffirmed ASEAN's commitment to strengthening regional energy security and resilience through enhanced regional cooperation and coordination. We reaffirmed our strong commitment to accelerating the implementation of the ASEAN Plan of Action for Energy Cooperation (APAEC) 2026–2030 and welcomed its new aspirational 2030 targets, underscoring our collective efforts to build a more sustainable and resilient energy system. In this regard, we highlighted the importance of supply diversification, including clean and renewable energy transition, broadening sources of crude oil and refined products, strengthening intra-ASEAN energy trade. We further emphasised the need to accelerate biodiesel and bioethanol blending, promote the adoption of electric vehicles and electric cooking, enhance renewable energy deployment, and explore the role of emerging technologies, including civilian nuclear energy, in accordance with international safety standards.

97. We welcomed progress in advancing ASEAN's minerals sector, guided by the ASEAN Minerals Development Vision (AMDV) 2045 and operationalised through the ASEAN Minerals Cooperation Action Plan (AMCAP-IV) 2026–2030. We underscored the importance of a coordinated, open, market-oriented, and rules-based regional approach to minerals, including strengthening downstream value addition and positioning ASEAN as a reliable hub in global strategic supply chains, and looked forward to the ASEAN Minerals Investment Forum (AMVest) 2026. We looked forward to the adoption of the ASEAN Declaration on Critical Minerals at the 49th ASEAN Summit to secure regional supply chains for the energy transition.

98. We acknowledged ASEAN's efforts to advance a connected, sustainable, resilient, and forward-looking regional transport sector through initiatives across air, land, and maritime transport. In particular, we welcomed the conclusion of the Policy Recommendations for Advancing the Realisation of the ASEAN Single Shipping Market and looked forward to their adoption, which would strengthen regional maritime connectivity and support more seamless, efficient, and competitive maritime transport services across the region.

99. We welcomed the commencement of implementation of the ASEAN Plan of Action on Science, Technology and Innovation (APASTI) 2026–2035, and noted ASEAN's continued improvement in the Global Innovation Index, reflecting the region's strengthening competitiveness and commitment to innovation-driven growth. We further welcomed the launch of ASEAN's first shared high-performance computing (HPC) facility in Indonesia in 2025 as a landmark capability accelerating AI, health, climate, and innovation research across the region. We commended 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 on approaches to managing increasing space activities and safeguarding space assets. We also looked forward to the adoption of the ASEAN Declaration on Space Cooperation at the 49th ASEAN Summit, which

will strengthen regional cooperation in space science and technology innovation and encourage the responsible, peaceful and sustainable use of outer space.

ASEAN SOCIO-CULTURAL COMMUNITY

100. We commended the ASCC's ongoing efforts in further strengthening data-driven platforms and evidence-based decision-making, and policy and programme development through the ASCC Database for Monitoring and Evaluation (ADME) System as well as through strengthening institutional capacity for monitoring and evaluation across ASCC sectoral bodies and national ASCC secretariat in each ASEAN Member State. We noted with satisfaction the ADME System's vital role in the monitoring of the ASCC Blueprint 2025, and looked forward to its further enhancement to advance the use of reliable data, progress and results tracking, timely analysis, information sharing, and strengthen data governance and data security, creating a comprehensive and human-centric digital ecosystem to support the implementation of the ASCC Strategic Plan and its Results Framework.

101. We welcomed the ongoing development of the ASEAN Communication Master Plan III (ACMP III) 2026-2030, which envisions an inclusive and forward-looking framework that communicates ASEAN's collective identity, and advances ASEAN narratives towards supporting the realisation of the *ASEAN 2045: Our Shared Future*.

102. We acknowledged the contributions of the ASCC Research and Development (R&D) Platforms Programme in promoting evidence-based policy-making and strengthening cross-sectoral collaboration. We looked forward to the ASCC R&D Platform on the Care Economy's online forums, policy briefs, and flagship reports, which will evaluate the care workforce, the implications of demographic shifts, and towards the development of sustainable care policies. 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 R&D Platforms Programme 2.0.

103. We looked forward to the development of the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Development Outlook (ADO) Volume 2, which will focus on digitalisation's impact on society. We expressed our support for ADO Volume 2, which will provide valuable insights and evidence-based recommendations to advance a secure, inclusive, and people-centred digital transformation towards a digitally integrated and resilient ASEAN Community, while contributing to the achievement of relevant Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). 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. We emphasised the need for digital transformation to be inclusive, taking into account the different needs and vulnerabilities of the peoples of ASEAN, including those in vulnerable situations, as

mentioned in the ASCC Strategic Plan. We underscored the importance of close coordination between pillars and relevant sectors.

104. We noted the approval of the ASEAN Magazine Project Phase 4 (2026-2028), which will feature the implementation of the ASEAN Strategic Plans and progress towards achieving the ASEAN Community Vision 2045.

105. We supported the strategic alignment between ASCC Sectoral Work Plans, including those developed with Dialogue Partners and other external partners, and the ASCC Strategic Plan to effectively contribute to the achievement and realisation of the ASEAN Community Vision 2045. We also support the importance of the continued deliberation of sustainable and regionally-driven modalities to support the implementation of the ASCC Strategic Plan.

106. We recognised the ASCC's continued contribution to the implementation of the AOIP through the promotion of people-centred and inclusive cooperation across the four priority areas of the AOIP. We supported the importance of regularly mainstreaming and reviewing the alignment of AOIP principles within ASCC Strategic Plan to ensure cross-pillar synergy.

107. We welcomed the continued dialogue and knowledge sharing among ASEAN Member States on emerging issues in employment and labour migration as advanced by the Philippines during its ASEAN Chairship. In this regard, we noted the convening of the ASEAN High-Level Forum on Decent Work in the Platform Economy in February 2026, in Cebu City, the Philippines, to exchange views on policy and regulatory approaches to promote decent work, social protection, and inclusive growth in the digital economy. We also noted the convening of the ASEAN High-Level Roundtable on Migration in Southeast Asia: "Migration at a Crossroads: Advancing Solutions-Oriented Regional Cooperation in Southeast Asia" in April 2026, in Manila, which reinforced ASEAN's commitment to continue strengthening labour migration governance and migrant worker protection, including through the effective implementation of the *ASEAN Declaration on the Protection of Migrant Workers and Family Members in Crisis Situations* and its Guidelines.

108. We welcomed the development of the ASEAN Guidelines on Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) in the Informal Sector and the ASEAN Guidelines on Strengthening Labour Inspection in the Fishing Sector. We expressed the view that these guidelines would contribute to ongoing regional efforts to enhance safety and health of informal workers, particularly in agriculture, fisheries, and mining, and enhance the effectiveness of labour inspection systems in addressing labour exploitation, forced labour, child labour, and OSH risks especially in fishing vessels. In this regard, we also underscored the importance of advancing the implementation of the *ASEAN Declaration on the Placement and Protection of Migrant Fishers* and its Guidelines to promote decent work, labour protection, and access to effective safeguards for migrant fishers in the region, in a manner consistent with international law, and in accordance with the prevailing national law, regulations, and policies of ASEAN Member States.

109. We reaffirmed the importance of protecting the rights and welfare of migrant workers in accordance with national laws and applicable ASEAN instruments. In this regard, we welcomed the notation of the *Checklist for the ASEAN Guidelines on the Effective Return and Reintegration of Migrant Workers* during the 48th ASEAN Summit in May 2026 in Cebu City which will support ASEAN Member States in strengthening preparedness and whole-of-government responses to facilitate safe return, sustainable reintegration, and access to livelihood opportunities in home countries and looked forward to its operationalisation. We reaffirmed our commitment to strengthening regional cooperation to protect and support migrant workers across the migration cycle, including in crisis situations. We looked forward to the planned adoption of the ASEAN Declaration on Fair, Ethical, and Sustainable Recruitment for Empowered Migrant Workers during the 49th ASEAN Summit to address challenges in the labour migration and bridge the gap between policy and reality.

110. We also looked forward to the planned adoption of the *ASEAN Declaration on Strengthening Labour Market and Social Resilience* which would set out a regional commitment to enhance the ability of labour markets and social protection systems to respond to emerging challenges due to technological advancement, climate change impacts, and economic disruptions. We recognised the ASEAN TVET Council (ATC) as a regional and multi-sectoral body that is a platform for coordination, research, and policy recommendations to adapt education systems to changing labour market demands and Industry 4.0.

111. We noted the adoption of the ASEAN Framework and Action Plan for a Just and Inclusive Transition to Green Jobs (2025–2030) by the ASEAN Labour Ministers Meeting (ALMM). We commended the adoption of the ASEAN Labour Ministers' Work Programme and the Work Plans of the SLOM's Subsidiary Bodies and ASEAN Plus Three Senior Labour Officials' Meeting (SLOM+3) for 2026-2030, which will guide regional labour cooperation in alignment with the ASEAN Community Vision 2045 and ASCC Strategic Plan, and contribute to a more inclusive, adaptive, and resilient ASEAN workforce.

112. We welcomed the adoption of the ASEAN Guidelines on Cross-Country Exchange of Expertise by the ASEAN Cooperation on Civil Service Matters (ACCSM) Heads of Civil Service, recognising their role in facilitating temporary cross-country assignments of civil servants to strengthen technical capabilities and foster mutual learning. We noted that the implementation of the Guidelines will promote capacity building, mutual understanding, and closer cooperation among ASEAN Member States.

113. We reaffirmed our commitment to accelerating rural transformation and structural poverty eradication across the region by driving development from the bottom up, ensuring economic equity for all. We commended the Senior Officials Meeting on Rural Development and Poverty Eradication (SOMRDPE) for its efforts in fostering self-reliant, resilient, and prosperous rural communities in alignment with the *ASEAN 2045: Our Shared Future* and the ASCC Strategic Plan. We welcomed the conclusion of the ASEAN Framework Action Plan on Rural Development and Poverty Eradication 2021-2025 and looked forward to the development of its successor document this year. We also highlighted the critical

role of the ASEAN Villages Network as a flagship mechanism to catalyse village-led growth, enhance rural livelihoods, and promote digital and economic inclusivity at the grassroots level. We further urged strengthened cross-sectoral collaboration to secure localized food security, build rural economic autonomy, and effectively narrow the development gap within and among ASEAN Member States.

114. We further welcomed the adoption of the ASEAN Statement on Collaboration and Network of Local Governments in ASEAN by the ACCSM Heads of Civil Service. We recognised that the Statement promotes closer regional collaboration and networking among local governments to reinforce their roles in driving community development and enhancing responsiveness to the public needs and development challenges.

115. We acknowledged the finalisation of the ACCSM Work Plan 2026–2030 and the ACCSM+3 Work Plan 2026–2030 as important strategic frameworks to further strengthen regional cooperation in advancing good governance and fostering agile, innovative, and citizen-centric public service delivery across ASEAN.

116. We expressed our appreciation to the continued efforts of the ASEAN Health Ministers' Meeting (AHMM) and the Senior Officials' Meeting on Health Development (SOMHD) in advancing regional health cooperation and priorities through the development and implementation of the ASEAN Strategic Health Agenda (ASHA) 2026 – 2030 with the vision of aspiring towards a healthier ASEAN Community and 2026-2030 Work Programmes of the ASEAN Health Sector that are based on reflections of the current challenges faced by ASEAN in the health sector with the aim to realising the ASEAN Community Vision 2045. We also reaffirmed our commitment to strengthening regional health security architecture and building resilient, sustainable, equitable and people-centred health systems, ensuring no one is left behind through enhanced prevention, preparedness and response to public health emergencies and future pandemics.

117. We noted the ongoing negotiations and urged the finalisation of the Establishment Agreement of the ASEAN Centre for Public Health Emergencies and Emerging Diseases (ACPHEED) to strengthen ASEAN's regional capabilities in prevention, preparedness, detection, and response for public health emergencies and emerging diseases. We further welcomed the reaffirmation of the host countries' commitments and the updates on the progress of their preparatory work and progress towards the establishment of the ACPHEED recognising the importance of ensuring the host countries' readiness prior to its full operationalisation and looked forward to further guidance from the ASEAN Health Ministers Meeting (AHMM).

118. We underscored the importance of implementing our collective commitments and strengthening cross sectoral cooperation aimed at advancing a healthier, more resilient, and inclusive ASEAN Community, through addressing all forms of malnutrition; promoting the reformulation and production of healthier food and beverage options; regulating the sale and use of electronic nicotine delivery systems and electronic non-nicotine delivery systems (ENDS/ENNDS), including related liquids, gels and other substances intended for use with such systems, and addressing its use, especially among youths, in line with our shared regional

commitment; improving vaccines, therapeutics and diagnostics security and self-reliance; strengthening resilient health systems through enhanced biosecurity and biosafety and the One Health approach; accelerating digital health transformation and the responsible use of artificial intelligence in healthcare; enhancing regional capacity on disaster health management and foodborne disease outbreak response; strengthening regional cooperation on disease surveillance; addressing communicable and non-communicable diseases; and promoting mental health and well-being across the region strengthening the health workforce and responding to demographic transition, population ageing and long-term care needs. We further recognised the importance of integrated health and social care systems in promoting healthy and productive ageing, disability inclusion, and the well-being of vulnerable populations across ASEAN.

119. We supported the need to continue enhancing regional resilience against future health emergencies by strengthening diagnostics security and self-reliance. In this regard, we looked forward to the adoption of the ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on ASEAN Diagnostics Security and Self-Reliance (ADxSSR) which will facilitate closer cooperation, the development of strategic action plans, and the operationalisation of appropriate mechanisms to ensure timely and equitable access to safe, affordable, and quality diagnostics across the region, complementing and interconnecting with the existing VTD initiatives, such as ASEAN Vaccine-Security and Self-Reliance (AVSSR) and ASEAN Drug Security and Self-Reliance (ADSSR) towards ASEAN health resiliency.

120. We reaffirmed our commitment to strengthening regional cooperation in education, aligned with the ASEAN Community Vision 2045: Our Shared Future and the ASEAN Work Plan on Education 2026–2030. We underscored the necessity of building inclusive, resilient, and future-ready education systems that ensure equitable access to quality education and lifelong learning. Furthermore, we emphasised the importance of prioritising foundational learning and future-ready skills, including digital and green competencies for sustainability, while advocating for the safe, responsible, inclusive and ethical integration of digital technologies and artificial intelligence (AI) within ASEAN's educational landscape.

121. We recognised foundational learning as a fundamental pillar of human development and future readiness. In this regard, we looked forward to the adoption of the ASEAN Declaration on Foundational Learning, spearheaded by the Philippines. We welcomed ongoing regional efforts to address the challenges faced by out-of-school children and youth (OOSCY), building on the ASEAN Declaration on Strengthening Education for OOSCY, and encouraged enhanced cross-sectoral and cross-pillar collaboration. We further called for innovative, evidence-based approaches to improve participation, retention, and the well-being of both learners and teachers, ensuring that improved learning outcomes are realised across the region.

122. We noted the successful convening of the Ministerial Roundtable on Access and Sustainable Development in Higher Education, which focused on AI-enabled teaching and learning, and digital transformation. We welcomed the adoption of the corresponding ASEAN Ministerial Statement and reaffirmed the importance of regional synergy in higher education. We emphasised that our priorities remain

centered on advancing inclusive access, digital innovation, academic mobility, and research collaboration. We remained committed to promoting a responsible, ethical, and human-centered approach to artificial intelligence in teaching and learning environments across ASEAN.

123. We reiterated the ASEAN Leaders' commitment to promote the critical role of youth in socio-economic development and ASEAN Community-building, and to empower ASEAN youth as active agents of sustainable development, inclusiveness, and innovation, including through their full, effective, and meaningful participation in shaping the region's future.

124. We welcomed the adoption of the ASEAN Declaration on the Empowerment of Youth in Climate Action and Disaster Resilience and reiterated our commitment to enable ASEAN youth to contribute meaningfully to climate action and disaster resilience, including through participation in disaster risk reduction, preparedness, anticipatory action and humanitarian response efforts, as well as by facilitating youth access to green skills and green jobs to drive sustainability, innovation, and inclusive development.

125. We looked forward to deepening regional cooperation to strengthen youth participation and leadership in policy development, capacity-building, and community-based resilience initiatives, including through inclusive platforms, education, and innovation.

126. We took note of the finalisation of the ASEAN Work Plan on Youth 2026–2030 as a strategic and forward-looking framework to strengthen ASEAN's capacity to harness its demographic dividend by mainstreaming meaningful youth participation across sectors. We further noted that the Work Plan aims to ensure that ASEAN youth are not only beneficiaries but also active contributors to economic transformation, social cohesion, environmental sustainability, and regional integration, particularly through enhancing digital capabilities, youth entrepreneurship, and volunteerism in line with ASEAN's vision of a people-centred, inclusive, and resilient Community by 2045.

127. We reaffirmed our commitment to harness sports as a means to promote regional solidarity, youth empowerment, health, and socio-cultural development.

128. We noted ongoing efforts to strengthen ASEAN cooperation in sports and to advance sustainable and inclusive development, as reflected in the Joint Statement of the Eighth ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Sports (AMMS-8), held in Ha Noi, Viet Nam, in October 2025.

129. We looked forward to the effective implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding between ASEAN and the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA), including through the establishment of a working group comprising representatives of ASEAN Member States and football associations, to support implementation of the MoU. We also looked forward to continued cooperation to uphold the integrity of sports through the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding between ASEAN and the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA), including through capacity-building initiatives.

130. We welcomed the finalisation of the ASEAN Work Plan on Sports 2026–2030, which will provide strategic guidance for ASEAN cooperation in sports, including to promote health and well-being, youth empowerment and inclusion, peace and people-to-people ties, as well as sustainable socio-economic and cultural development.

131. We commended the ASEAN Committee on Women (ACW), through the leadership of the Philippines, in pursuing the development of an ASEAN Declaration on the Transformative Implementation of the ASEAN Community Vision 2045 and Its Strategic Plans Towards Gender Equality. We underscored the importance of high-level political commitment of ASEAN in strengthening gender-responsive approaches across the ASEAN Community pillars and ASEAN Connectivity which will further elevate ASEAN cooperation to address policy, institutional, structural and systemic barriers that lead to persistent gender inequalities. We encouraged all ASEAN Sectoral Bodies and ASEAN Entities to engage in the implementation of commitments under the ASEAN Declaration as it further strengthens our collective efforts on advancing gender equality and women's empowerment in the next two decades.

132. We recognised the great strides made by ASEAN Sectoral Bodies, ASEAN Entities, Centres and Networks in mainstreaming gender perspectives across the ASEAN Community. We reaffirmed the strategic importance of the ASEAN Gender Mainstreaming Strategic Framework (AGMSF) in providing a forward-looking and coherent strategy that guides the introduction and integration of gender perspectives in ASEAN sectoral work plans. We were encouraged by the work being undertaken by the ASEAN Gender Mainstreaming Steering Committee (AGMSC) which is co-chaired by ACW and ACWC, as it serves as a cross-sectoral and interpillar platform for coordination and learning on advancing gender equality and women's empowerment. We commended the Philippines' leadership in championing the ongoing efforts towards the proposed establishment of the ASEAN Centre of Excellence on Gender Equality and Women Empowerment and looked forward to the centre's envisioned role in building on the momentum and gains made across the ASEAN Community.

133. We commended the ASEAN Women Entrepreneurs' Network (AWEN) in continuing to promote women entrepreneurship and strengthen women's participation in the economy across the region. We were encouraged by the outcomes of the AWEN Regional Workshop on Strategy and Governance held on 27 January 2026, in Vientiane, Lao PDR, and looked forward to AWEN's engagements across the ASEAN Community pillars.

134. We noted with satisfaction the endorsement of the ASEAN Guidance Note on Disability Inclusion in Violence Against Women and Girls Policies and Programmes that was developed by the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC) and encouraged its use by all stakeholders, including policymakers and frontline service providers, to promote accessible, inclusive, and survivor-centred responses.

135. We reaffirmed our commitment to promoting and protecting the rights of women and children and strengthening efforts to prevent and address all forms of violence, abuse and exploitation. We commended the ACWC in shepherding the consultative process for the development of the successor frameworks of the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (EVAW) and ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on the Elimination of Violence Against Children (EVAC). We recognised the significance of the Common Chapter shared by the two frameworks to support more coordinated, effective, and impactful interventions to women and children.

136. We applauded the ACWC for convening the Regional Dialogue on Sharing Good Practices and Lessons Learned on Social Inclusion of Climate Change on Women and Children in ASEAN on 12-13 February 2026 in Siem Reap, Cambodia. We acknowledged the importance of recognising the social impacts of climate change and the roles of women and children as empowered stakeholders in pursuing a more inclusive, sustainable and climate resilient ASEAN Community.

137. We commended the Senior Officials' Meeting on Social Welfare and Development (SOMSWD), in convening the ASEAN Conference and Workshop on Family Development Network held on 12-14 May 2026, via video conference. We recognised the importance of establishing the ASEAN Family Development Network, which will provide a collaborative platform for policy dialogue and capacity building towards strengthening families as the fundamental units of ASEAN societies. We commended the convening of the ASEAN High-Level Forum on Unlocking the Silver Economy organised by SOMSWD Philippines on 3-4 June 2026 and looked forward to the finalisation of the Regional Action Framework on Unlocking the Silver Economy.

138. We recognised SOMSWD's leadership in establishing the Technical Working Group on the Development of the new ASEAN Enabling Master Plan: Mainstreaming the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The TWG convenes representatives from ACWC, AICHR, SLOM, STOM, and ACCMSME, as well as from the ASEAN Disability Forum (ADF) and other organisations of persons with disabilities, partners, and stakeholders. We further recognised the support of Australia through the Aus4ASEAN Futures Initiative in the development of the new ASEAN Enabling Masterplan and its socialisation, as well as building capacities for its operationalisation, with the aim of promoting the rights, inclusion, accessibility, and meaningful participation of persons with disabilities across ASEAN Community-building efforts.

139. Acknowledging that each life cycle and stage comes with its own distinct challenges, we recognised the need for an integrated, lifecycle-based social protection system through cross-sectoral collaboration, productive inclusion approach, and adaptive social protection systems to ensure that no one is left behind. In this regard, we welcomed the efforts of ASEAN Member States to explore comprehensive and coordinated social protection policies, including through discussion on the proposed ASEAN Declaration on Advancing Social Protection Towards a People-Centred Community.

140. Recognising culture and the arts as cross-cutting catalysts integral to resilient, innovative, dynamic and people-centred community building, we welcomed the substantive progress in developing the ASEAN Work Plan for Culture and Arts 2026-2035. We looked forward to its implementation to guide the sector in safeguarding cultural heritage, developing a conducive ecosystem for cultural and creative industries, fostering a shared regional identity, building resiliency in the culture sector, and nurturing partnerships to address cross-cutting matters. We further welcomed the establishment of the ASEAN Cultural Center in Manila in August 2026 as a national hub with a regional outlook to advance the ASEAN cultural agenda, and we looked forward to synergising its efforts with the ASEAN Cultural Centre in Bangkok and the ASEAN Center of Excellence on Creative Industries (ACE-CI) which is a Priority Economic Deliverable of the 2026 Philippines' Chairship of ASEAN.

141. We commended the ongoing finalisation of the ASEAN Work Plan for Information and Media 2026-2035, which will guide the sector on improving access to information, strengthening information integrity, fostering content production and development, adapting to AI and digital transformation, and building partnerships and cross-cutting cooperation. We also looked forward to the Guidelines for Safe and Responsible Use of Social Media Platforms for ASEAN that is being developed to address the challenges of social media misuse and enhance online safety.

142. We expressed appreciation for the various initiatives to advance a resilient and future-ready information sector under the Philippines' Chairship, including the convening of ASEAN Symposium on Enhancing Public Access to Information, and looked forward to the Ministerial Roundtable Meeting on "AI: A boon or bane for Information and Media Cooperation", ASEAN Senior Officials' Meeting on Harnessing New Media for a Stronger ASEAN Narrative, Policy Dialogue on Emerging Trends in Digital Broadcasting, and Dialogue on Access to Information Programs of ASEAN Member States.

143. We reaffirmed our commitment to further strengthening ASEAN's disaster preparedness and response capacity in addressing the challenges posed by the evolving disaster risk landscape. We welcomed 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, which will serve as a complementary mechanism to strengthen regional interoperability, enhance anticipatory action and early response capacities, streamline operational processes, and translate the vision of "One ASEAN, One Response" into measurable and practical outcomes. We also welcomed the development of the ASEAN Ministerial Statement on 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, which reaffirms ASEAN's commitment to continue to strengthen ASEAN's capacity for faster response, mobilising greater resources, and establish stronger coordination to ensure collective response to disasters.

144. We commended ongoing efforts to enhance disaster resilience in the region through the implementation of the AADMER Work Programme 2026-2030. We welcomed the strengthening of collaboration with ASEAN external partners in

disaster management. We also looked forward to the completion of the development of the ASEAN-China Work Plan on Disaster Management 2026-2030, ASEAN-Japan Work Plan on Disaster Management 2026-2030, ASEAN-the Republic of Korea Work Plan on Disaster Management 2026-2030, and ASEAN-United Nations Joint Strategic Plan of Action on Disaster Management (JSPADM) V (2026-2030).

145. We reaffirmed the importance of implementing the Bandar Seri Begawan Declaration on the Strategic and Holistic Initiative to Link ASEAN Responses to Emergencies and Disaster (ASEAN SHIELD), as well as the ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on Sustainable Resilience, in order to prepare for and manage disaster and climate-related risks and their impacts in the region through a holistic, cross-pillar and cross-sectoral approach, and to enhance collaboration in strengthening climate and disaster resilience, including through anticipatory action and protection of people in vulnerable situations, with particular attention to children, older persons and persons with disabilities, in disaster preparedness, response and recovery efforts. We noted the ongoing efforts in reviewing the Terms of Reference of Secretary-General of ASEAN as the ASEAN Humanitarian Assistance Coordinator (SG-AHAC) in line with the ASEAN SHIELD.

146. We also underlined the continued importance of the ASEAN Disaster Resilience Platform (ADRP) as a cross-sectoral platform to promote a whole-of-ASEAN approach to disaster management, and encouraged the active participation of relevant ASEAN Sectoral Bodies across the three ASEAN Community pillars in the ADRP.

147. We commended the continuous efforts of the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on disaster management (AHA Centre) in strengthening the ASEAN Disaster Information Network (ADINet) and the Disaster Monitoring and Response System (DMRS). We expressed appreciation for the strong commitment and support of ASEAN Member States and ASEAN partners to the Disaster Emergency Logistics System for ASEAN (DELSA) and the ASEAN Emergency Response Assessment Team (ASEAN-ERAT).

148. We reaffirmed ASEAN's continued support for Myanmar's efforts to bring peace, stability, and the rule of law, promote harmony and reconciliation among the various communities, as well as ensure sustainable and equitable development in Rakhine State. We emphasised the importance of and reiterated our continued support for Myanmar's commitment to ensuring safety and security for all communities in Rakhine State as effectively as possible and facilitating the voluntary return of displaced persons in a safe, secure, and dignified manner. We looked forward to ASEAN's continued facilitation of the repatriation process through the implementation of projects as the follow-up to the recommendations of the Preliminary Needs Assessment. We also looked forward to the Comprehensive Needs Assessment when conditions allow.

149. We emphasised the need for a comprehensive, evidence-based, forward-looking and integrated regional approach to environmental challenges, including rising sea-levels and shifting crop harvests that threaten food and water security, among others, through halting and reversing biodiversity loss, averting,

minimising, and addressing loss and damage associated with the adverse effect of climate change, enhancing climate mitigation and adaptation efforts including for coastal and marine ecosystem, ensuring the sustainable use and management of water resources and promoting sustainable development. We acknowledged the increasing need to enhance regional cooperation and coordination on cross-cutting environmental issues such as circular economy, sustainable consumption and production, blue and green economy, ecosystem based approach and nature-based solutions, water resources management, and other emerging issues such as plastic pollution, air pollution, and other emerging issues in alignment with the ASEAN Community Vision 2045 and its Strategic Plans, and global sustainable development agenda.

150. We looked forward to the finalisation of the ASEAN Strategic Plan on Environment (ASPEN) 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 and cross-cutting challenges to build an inclusive and sustainable resilient ASEAN.

151. We 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) to advance collective action and strengthen regional cooperation in addressing the global challenge of climate change.

152. We also welcomed the development of the ASEAN Joint Statement on Biodiversity at the Seventeenth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP17) in reaffirming our concerted actions to support the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework through the implementation of the ASEAN Biodiversity Plan, with the support of the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity, hosted by the Philippines.

153. We reaffirmed our commitment to fully and effectively implement the ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution (AATHP) and the ongoing 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, supported by the ASEAN Investment Framework for Haze-Free Sustainable Land Management to strengthen partnerships and collaboration among ASEAN stakeholders and partners to achieve a haze-free ASEAN by 2030. We also acknowledged the complementary efforts within the sub-region, including the CLEAR Sky Strategy.

154. We were pleased with the signing of the Establishment Agreements of the ASEAN Centre for Climate Change (ACCC) in Brunei Darussalam and the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Transboundary Haze Pollution Control (ACC THPC) in Indonesia. We looked forward to the entry into force of the said Establishment Agreements and encourage ASEAN Member States to expedite their respective national ratification process, to enable the Centres to collaborate with other relevant Centres such as the ASEAN Specialised Meteorological Centre (ASMC),

the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on disaster management (AHA Centre), the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB), as well as the ASEAN Research and Training Centre for Space Technology and Applications (ARTSA), and the ASEAN Centre for Sustainable Development Studies and Dialogue (ACSDSD), in accordance with their respective mandates to advance efforts to sustain a safe and clean environment.

155. We commended the successful convening of the ASEAN Climate Week 2026 which reaffirmed ASEAN's commitment to advancing regional climate cooperation and served as a platform to strengthen collective efforts in implementing regional climate priorities, mobilising climate finance, and enhancing resilience to climate impacts across the region.

ASEAN EXTERNAL RELATIONS

156. We underscored the importance of strengthening ASEAN unity and Centrality, while remaining actively engaged, outward-looking, inclusive, and non-discriminatory in our relations with external partners. We stressed that ASEAN's external engagements should be guided by ASEAN's priorities, including narrowing development gaps within ASEAN by supporting the Initiative for ASEAN Integration, deliver practical outcomes of strategic value, and contribute meaningfully to ASEAN Community-building. Amidst intensifying strategic competition and economic fragmentation, we emphasised the importance of preserving ASEAN's strategic autonomy, while reinforcing regionalism, strengthening resilience and enhancing ASEAN's relevance as a primary driving force in the evolving regional architecture. 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.

157. We reaffirmed our commitment to reinforcing an open, transparent, resilient, inclusive, and rules-based regional architecture that upholds international law, with ASEAN at the centre. We emphasised the need to cultivate a culture of dialogue and cooperation, instead of rivalry, through enhancing mutual trust and confidence, and respect for international law, to promote peace, stability, and prosperous development.

158. We were committed to advancing an outward-looking ASEAN Community that supports equitable, inclusive, and sustainable growth across the region and strengthens regional resilience through inclusive cooperation and collaboration with external partners. We noted the increasing interest from countries and regional organisations outside the region in developing stronger relations and substantive, meaningful, and mutually beneficial cooperation with ASEAN, including applications to establish formal partnerships with ASEAN, which could contribute to ASEAN Community-building, regional integration, and development cooperation efforts. In this regard, we welcomed the conferment of Sectoral Dialogue Partnership of ASEAN on Denmark, Germany and Qatar.

159. We underscored ASEAN's rising global relevance and its unique convening power in an emerging multipolar global architecture. We agreed on the importance of expanding engagement with new and potential external partners, taking into account ASEAN's institutional capacity and development priorities, including through ASEAN-led mechanisms based on shared interest, mutual benefit, and constructive engagement, including on the AOIP four priority areas, in support of and to advance the implementation of *ASEAN 2045: Our Shared Future*.

160. We encouraged the support of all our partners for the AOIP, to promote and mainstream the implementation of concrete AOIP projects and activities, including through workstreams under the AOIP's four priority areas, as well as explore further substantive, tangible and practical cooperation through relevant ASEAN-led mechanisms centres and institutions. In this regard, we looked forward to the adoption of the *ASEAN-United Kingdom Joint Ministerial Statement on Cooperation on the AOIP: Advancing Together* at the ASEAN Post-Ministerial Conference with the UK. We noted India's proposed Work Plan to celebrate the year 2026 as the "ASEAN-India Year of Maritime Cooperation" and looked forward to the successful implementation of the proposed activities in the Work Plan.

161. We adopted the revised List of Criteria and Indicators for Dialogue Partnership as a supplement of Annex A of the *2014 Guidelines for ASEAN's External Relations (GER)*, pursuant to the ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Decision on Enhancing ASEAN Relations with External Parties. We agreed that the adoption of the revised *List of Criteria and Indicators* provides a fair, holistic, and objective basis for the consideration of future Dialogue Partnership applications. We agreed to continue discussing appropriate modalities to operationalise this process and the moratorium on Dialogue Partnership, in line with ASEAN Centrality. We looked forward to the comprehensive review of the GER, with a view to ensuring greater coherence and effectiveness across ASEAN's external engagements.

162. We recalled the ASEAN Leaders' in-principle decision at the 47th ASEAN Summit to confer Dialogue Partnership status upon Türkiye and agreed to formally accord Türkiye the status of ASEAN Dialogue Partner, taking into account Türkiye's engagement with ASEAN since becoming a Sectoral Dialogue Partner in 2017, as well as its strong commitment to undertake more comprehensive and substantive cooperation with ASEAN. We looked forward to further discussions on modalities of engagement of Türkiye as Dialogue Partner of ASEAN, including the development of a Plan of Action to implement the ASEAN-Türkiye Dialogue Partnership.

163. We welcomed continued engagement with external partners, including through the 97 non-ASEAN Ambassadors accredited to ASEAN (NAAAs). We also acknowledged the active role played by the 56 ASEAN Committees in Third Countries and International Organisations in promoting ASEAN's collective interests and advancing partnerships globally.

164. We noted with satisfaction the significant progress in ASEAN's relations with our Dialogue Partners, Sectoral Dialogue Partners, and Development Partners through existing frameworks, Plans of Action (POAs), Practical Cooperation Areas (PCAs) and development cooperation programmes. In this regard, we welcomed the adoption of the Comprehensive POA to Implement ASEAN-Russia Strategic

Partnership (2026-2030), the ASEAN-Norway PCA (2026-2030) and noted the extension of the implementation period of the current PCA with Chile (2021-2026) to the end of 2027. We looked forward to the adoption of the of the ASEAN-Canada POA (2026-2030) and the ASEAN-UK POA (2027-2031), as well as the Comprehensive Work Plan to Implement the ASEAN-United States Leaders' Joint Vision Statement to Promote Stronger, Safer, and More Prosperous ASEAN and America (2026-2030).

165. We welcomed the activities and initiatives to commemorate anniversaries with our external partners this year, including the 5th anniversary of the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (CSP) with Australia; the 5th anniversary of CSP with China and the 35th ASEAN-China Dialogue Relations; the 35th anniversary of ASEAN-Russia relations; the 5th anniversary of ASEAN-UK Dialogue Relations; as well as the 10th anniversary of the ASEAN-Germany Development Partnership in 2026. We commended the successful convening of the Commemorative Summit for the 35th Anniversary of ASEAN-Russian Federation Relations on 18 June 2026 in Kazan, Russian Federation. We also looked forward to commemorative events to mark the 50th Anniversary of ASEAN's Dialogue Relations with Canada, the European Union, and the United States in 2027.

166. We further welcomed the adoption of key statements with our Dialogue Partners, including the Joint Ministerial Statement of the 25th ASEAN-EU Ministerial Meeting, and looked forward to the adoption of the *ASEAN-New Zealand Joint Statement on Strengthening Regional Resilience*, *ASEAN-Australia Joint Foreign Ministers' Statement on the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC)*, and the *ASEAN-China Foreign Ministers' Joint Statement on Addressing the Regional Impacts of Developments in the Middle East and Strengthening Regional Energy Cooperation*.

167. We looked forward to the convening of ASEAN Post-Ministerial Conferences with ASEAN Dialogue Partners, as well as the individual trilateral meetings between the ASEAN Chair, the Secretary-General of ASEAN, and Brazil, Norway, Switzerland, and Türkiye.

168. We also looked forward to the successful outcome of the ASEAN Plus One Summits to be held during the 49th ASEAN Summit and Related Summits in November 2026, in the Philippines: 6th ASEAN-Australia Summit; 29th ASEAN-China Summit; 23rd ASEAN-India Summit; 29th ASEAN-Japan Summit; 27th ASEAN-Republic of Korea (ROK) Summit; and 14th ASEAN-United States Summit.

169. We reaffirmed the importance of multilateralism and international cooperation, and emphasised the value of ASEAN's partnerships with regional and international organisations. These partnerships are vital in addressing global challenges, advancing shared goals, and promoting sustainable development for the benefit of our peoples. In this regard, we looked forward to the continued high-level engagement between ASEAN and the UN, including the convening of the 16th ASEAN-UN Summit at the 49th ASEAN Summit and Related Summits. We noted the extension of the implementation period of the current ASEAN-Pacific Alliance Work Plan (2021-2026) to the end of 2027, and looked forward to the adoption of the Cooperation Plan between ASEAN and the Pacific Islands Forum

(PIF) and the convening of the ASEAN-PIF Ministerial Dialogue and the ASEAN-GCC Foreign Ministers' Meeting (FMM) on the sidelines of the 81st UNGA High-Level Week in September 2026.

170. We underscored the importance of the APT cooperation framework in promoting peace, stability, security, prosperity in the East Asian region, with ASEAN as the driving force. We noted 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 Initiative (DRFI), the ASEAN+3 Macroeconomic Research Office (AMRO) and the ASEAN Plus Three Emergency Rice Reserve (APTERR). We reaffirmed our commitment to further deepen APT cooperation, including on the AOIP's four priority areas, food and energy security, and disaster preparedness to contribute to greater regional sustainability and resilience, in support of the implementation of ASEAN 2045: Our Shared Future.

171. We reaffirmed our commitment for 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. We welcomed the adoption of the *Kuala Lumpur Declaration on the 20th anniversary of the EAS* in 2025. We reaffirmed our support for further strengthening the EAS process by ensuring its strategic value, relevance, adaptability, and responsiveness to emerging regional and global challenges, with the aim of promoting peace, stability and economic prosperity in the East Asia region, with ASEAN as the driving force. We expressed our commitment to advancing common goals and interests among EAS participating countries while underscoring the importance of ASEAN unity and Centrality in guiding cooperation under the EAS.

172. We noted the progress in implementing the EAS Plan of Action (2024-2028) and looked forward to deepening practical cooperation in the EAS streams of work. We welcomed ongoing efforts to further enhance the EAS, including intensifying regular engagements between the CPR and non-ASEAN Ambassadors of EAS participating countries in Jakarta, and support for the EAS Unit at the ASEAN Secretariat. We stressed the importance of enhancing strategic coordination between EAS and the other ASEAN-led mechanisms while underscoring the importance of ASEAN Unity and Centrality in guiding cooperation under EAS, and reaffirmed our commitment to further deepen and broaden cooperation among EAS participating countries, including on the EAS streams of work and the AOIP's four priority areas with a view to ensure implementation of EAS Leaders' statements, declarations, and initiatives to ensure that all engagements are ASEAN-driven, relevant, strategic, mutually beneficial, and responsive to current and emerging challenges.

173. We looked forward to the adoption of the *EAS Declaration on Navigating Our Future, Together: Stability and Renewal* and the *EAS Leaders' Statement on Strengthening Cooperation Against Cyber-enabled Fraud and Related Offenses* at the 21st EAS, reflecting ASEAN's shared priorities and collective responses to current and emerging challenges.

174. We reaffirmed the importance of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) as the leading regional security forum in the Asia-Pacific region for fostering constructive dialogue and cooperation on political and security issues of common interest and concern, with ASEAN as the primary driving force. We further encouraged ARF Participants to continue efforts in enhancing the effectiveness of its cooperation to move forward its cooperation from Stage I, confidence building measures to Stage II, Development of Preventive Diplomacy, of the three-stage process in accordance with the 1995 ARF Concept Paper.

175. We reaffirmed the importance to strengthen the collective efforts and undertake a comprehensive approach to revitalise the ARF and enhance its relevance in the evolving strategic landscape and regional security architecture to be better equipped to address emerging political and security challenges while fostering a more substantive, constructive, and interactive dialogue among the Participants. In this regard, we support the ongoing efforts to revitalise the ARF based on the *Recommendations to Revitalise the ARF*, which was adopted by the ASEAN Foreign Ministers in October 2025.

176. We looked forward to the adoption of the ARF Manila Plan of Action 2026-2036 (MPOA) at the 33rd ARF and the gradual implementation of the *Recommendations to Revitalise the ARF*. We envisioned that these efforts would bolster the Forum's effectiveness, significance, and relevance, and ensure its continued contribution to regional peace and stability.

REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ISSUES

Situation in the South China Sea

177. We discussed the situation in the South China Sea, during which concerns were expressed by some Ministers on the land reclamations, activities, serious incidents in the area, including actions that put the safety of all persons at risk, and damage to the marine environment, which have eroded trust and confidence, increased tensions, and may undermine peace, security, and stability in the region. We reaffirmed the need to enhance mutual trust and confidence, exercise self-restraint in the conduct of activities that would complicate or escalate disputes and affect peace and stability and avoid actions that may further complicate the situation. We further reaffirmed the need to pursue peaceful resolution of disputes, in accordance with international law, including the 1982 UNCLOS. We emphasised the importance of non-militarisation and self-restraint in the conduct of all activities by claimants and all other states, including those mentioned in the 2002 Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) that could further complicate the situation and escalate tensions in the South China Sea.

178. We reaffirmed the importance of maintaining and promoting peace, security, stability, safety, and freedom of navigation in and overflight above the South China Sea and recognised the benefits of having the South China Sea as a sea of peace, stability, prosperity, and sustainable development. In this regard, we underscored the importance of the full and effective implementation of the DOC in its entirety. We were pleased with the sustained positive momentum in the ongoing

negotiations on the Code of Conduct in the South China Sea (COC) and, in this regard, welcomed the significant progress achieved so far. We looked forward to continued efforts in endeavouring to conclude the negotiation of an effective and substantive COC that is in accordance with international law, including the 1982 UNCLOS, within this year. We emphasised the need to maintain and promote an environment conducive to the COC negotiations, including the situation in the South China Sea, 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.

Developments in Myanmar

179. We expressed our deep concern over the ongoing conflicts and humanitarian situation in Myanmar, and encouraged progress on the implementation of the ASEAN Leaders' Five-Point Consensus (5PC). We reaffirmed our united position that the 5PC remains our main 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 infrastructures, and create a conducive environment for the delivery of humanitarian assistance to the people in need in Myanmar without discrimination, and inclusive national dialogue. We also welcomed the continued progress in the provision of humanitarian assistance to Myanmar by the AHA Centre in support of Point 4 of the ASEAN Leaders' 5PC. We appreciated the contributions by ASEAN Member States, external partners, the United Nations (UN), the private sector and the continued support from all stakeholders in Myanmar that have enabled the AHA Centre to ensure an effective response. We noted with appreciation the continued support from the international community for ASEAN in the implementation of the Five-Point Consensus. We also noted the conclusion of the three phases of Myanmar's general elections and the succeeding developments. We recalled our informal discussion on 12 July 2026 in Bangkok, Thailand, guided by the mandate of the Leaders to continue constructive and principled engagement with Myanmar consistent with the 5PC. We discussed the possible elements for assessing progress in Myanmar, in line with the 5PC which serve as a reference for ASEAN to consider further steps in its continued engagement with Myanmar.

180. We commended the dedicated efforts of H.E. Ma. Theresa P. Lazaro as 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. The Special Envoy has also engaged ASEAN Member States, ASEAN Dialogue Partners, Myanmar neighbouring countries, international and regional partners, civil society organisations, humanitarian actors, and think tanks towards finding an inclusive and sustainable resolution to the crisis. This inclusive engagement reflects ASEAN's commitment to collaborative efforts in addressing the complex challenges in Myanmar. We looked

forward to the Special Envoy's plan to visit Myanmar in the last quarter of the year. We will conduct our comprehensive review of the 5PC implementation and submit our recommendations to the 49th ASEAN Summit. We took note of the deliberations of the ASEAN Senior Officials on the *Non-Paper on the Elements for the Terms of Reference of the Special Envoy of ASEAN on Myanmar* and recognised the importance of concluding their discussions on the proposal in line with the mandate given by the ASEAN Leaders.

Situation along the Cambodia-Thailand Border

181. We welcomed the efforts and commitments of Cambodia and Thailand to uphold and consolidate the ceasefire, and reaffirmed our support for the full and effective implementation, in its entirety, of the Joint Statement of the Third Special General Border Committee (GBC) between the two countries signed on 27 December 2025, which is essential for the maintenance of peace and stability along the shared border. We underscored the importance of the ASEAN Observer Team (AOT), currently under the Philippines' coordination, in ensuring the effective implementation of the ceasefire. We welcomed the Trilateral Meeting between the Prime Ministers of Cambodia and Thailand, together with the President of the Philippines, in his capacity as ASEAN Chair, on the sidelines of the 48th ASEAN Summit in Cebu on 7 May 2026, which underlined the importance of constructive dialogue in order to restore trust and confidence between the two countries.

Developments in the Korean Peninsula

182. We expressed concern over the recent developments in 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. We expressed grave concern over the recent surge in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's (DPRK) intercontinental ballistic missile testing and ballistic missile launches and the increased tension in the Korean Peninsula, which are a worrisome development that threatens peace and stability in the region. We 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. We called for the full implementation of all relevant UNSC Resolutions and noted international efforts to bring about the complete, verifiable, and irreversible denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula in a peaceful manner. Diplomatic efforts, including the creation of a conducive environment for peaceful dialogue among all concerned parties should remain a priority. We reiterated our readiness to play a constructive role, including through utilising ASEAN-led platforms such as the ARF in promoting a conducive atmosphere for peaceful dialogue amongst the concerned parties.

Situation in Ukraine

183. 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 an inclusive 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, and for the protection of civilians, humanitarian personnel, and persons in vulnerable situations.

Situation in the Middle East

184. 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, 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 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.

185. We expressed deep concern over the humanitarian situation in Lebanon and the escalation of tensions, which cost 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.

186. 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. 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.

187. 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).

188. We welcomed the signing by the United States of America and the Islamic Republic of Iran of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on 18 June 2026. We expressed deep concern about the recent developments and called upon parties to exercise restraint and to return to the path of diplomacy to achieve a peaceful and lasting solution to the conflict. We continue to support diplomatic efforts in bringing lasting and sustainable peace in the Middle East and commended the efforts of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, State of Qatar and all other parties involved for the collaborative efforts in this regard.

189. We expressed grave concern over the dire humanitarian situation in Gaza, which has been exacerbated following the 7 October 2023 attacks and the resumption of hostilities on 18 March 2025. We condemned all attacks against civilians and civilian infrastructure. 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, which we all voted in favour.

190. We acknowledged the immediate and long-term effects of the Middle East crisis on the well-being of our people. We noted the ongoing initiatives, both at the regional and national levels, to ensure the timely and targeted delivery of social welfare and social protection services to address the disproportionate impact of the crises, including on health and livelihoods.

Impact of El Niño

191. We expressed deep concern over the potential escalation of impacts of El Niño, which could be intensified by climate change and its consequences for the region's people, ecosystems, and development trajectory particularly through prolonged droughts, impacts on agricultural productivity and food security, heat stress and land/forest fires. We committed to deepen cooperation to mitigate these risks and transboundary impacts to protect public health and minimise economic repercussions, and underscore the urgent need for early warning systems, coordinated regional preparedness, strengthened disaster risk reduction, and resilience-building measures to safeguard the well-being of ASEAN peoples and the long-term sustainability of the region's development.

60th ASEAN FOREIGN MINISTERS' MEETING

192. We looked forward to the convening of the 60th AMM, Post-Ministerial Conferences, 28th APT Foreign Ministers' Meeting, 17th EAS Foreign Ministers' Meeting, and 34th ARF in Singapore, in 2027.