H.E. DR. Kao Kim Hourn, Secretary-General of ASEAN

Remarks

Welcome Ceremony of the 14th AMMDM and 15th COP to AADMER and related Meetings

25 November 2026, Jakarta, Indonesia

- *Your Excellency Lieutenant General* ***Kristomei Sianturi,*** *Minister and Head of National Disaster Management Authority of the Republic of Indonesia, Chair of AMMDM 2026.*
- *Your Excellencies Deputy Prime Minister, Ministers, Heads of Delegations,*
- *Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen*,

1. A very good morning. It is my great pleasure to join you today at the 14th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Management (AMMDM) and the 15th Conference of the Parties to the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER). I wish to express my sincere appreciation to Indonesia for its leadership in advancing ASEAN's disaster resilience in 2026 under the theme, *"From ASEAN to Global: Strengthening Community Preparedness and Promoting Leadership for Sustainable Resilience."*

2. I wish also to thank the Government of Indonesia for hosting this important gathering, just a bit outside of Jakarta. My appreciation also goes to all Excellencies and Delegates from ASEAN Member States, for your continued commitment to strengthening regional cooperation in disaster management and humanitarian assistance. Your presence today reflects the importance that ASEAN and its partners attach to building a safer and more resilient region.

3. I wish to take this opportunity to express my sincere condolences for the loss of life and for those who were injured in the tragic incident took place at the candy factory in Serang, Banten Province, on 21 November 2026. Our heartfelt condolences go out to the families and loved ones of those who lost their lives. Our thoughts and prayers are also with those who were injured and everyone affected by this unfortunate tragedy.
We express our deepest sympathy during this difficult time and hope that the injured make a swift recovery. May the families affected find strength, comfort, and courage in facing this tremendous loss. Our thoughts are with everyone impacted by this tragedy. Southeast Asia is a region of remarkable diversity and dynamism, yet it also ranks among the most disaster-prone in the world. The risks we face are becoming increasingly complex and interconnected. Climate change is driving more frequent and severe natural disasters, while rapid industrial urbanisation and technological vulnerabilities add new dimensions of risk. These developments call for a forward-looking approach that emphasises prevention, preparedness, and resilience - not just response. Our AMMDM Chair has just mentioned this in his opening remarks just now.

4. In this regard, the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) remains the cornerstone of our regional cooperation in disaster management. This year marks the first year of implementation of the AADMER Work Programme 2026–2030, which provides an important framework for guiding ASEAN's collective efforts to strengthen regional disaster management over the coming years. Its effective implementation will be essential to translating our shared commitments into concrete actions and meaningful outcomes.

5. These efforts are closely aligned with the ASEAN Community Vision 2045, which envisions a resilient, innovative, dynamic and people-centred ASEAN Community. This year is the first year of the implementation of ASEAN Community Vision 2045. Disaster resilience is not only a matter of protecting lives and livelihoods; it is also essential to safeguarding development gains, sustaining economic and social progress. A major disaster can reverse years of development efforts, disrupt economic activities and place additional pressure on vulnerable communities. We must therefore ensure that disaster management is an integral part of ASEAN's broader development agenda and that resilience is considered in our policies, planning and investments.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

6. This year also marks the 10th anniversary of the ASEAN Declaration on One ASEAN, One Response. This milestone provides an opportunity to reflect on ASEAN's progress in strengthening regional coordination and responding to disasters as one. Over the past decade, the vision has helped reinforce ASEAN's collective approach to disaster response and humanitarian assistance. It also reaffirms ASEAN's commitment to enhancing its capacity and resilience to provide assistance both within and beyond the region, guided by the spirit of unity, solidarity and cooperation.

7. As ASEAN looks towards 2045, I believe there is an opportunity for ASEAN to further strengthen its regional leadership and become a global leader in disaster management. ASEAN's experience over the years in implementing AADMER and advancing the One ASEAN, One Response approach offers valuable lessons in regional cooperation, collective preparedness and coordinated response. ASEAN has the opportunity to share these experiences, promote good practices and contribute to shaping the global disaster risk reduction agenda.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

8. Furthermore, I wish to commend Indonesia for its efforts and leadership in producing 10 Outcome Documents have been successfully developed, which represent an important contribution to strengthening ASEAN's regional cooperation and advancing our shared disaster

management agenda. Those Outcome Documents include the Work Plans with China, Japan, the Republic of Korea, and the United Nations for 2026–2030, which will further support our collective efforts to strengthen regional disaster management.

9. I would also like to acknowledge and express my appreciation to the Philippines for its imperative role in advancing ASEAN's disaster resilience agenda, particularly through hosting the ASEAN Ministerial Conference on Disaster Resilience and relevant Outcome Documents, which would help strengthen coordination and cooperation among existing ASEAN mechanisms. I look forward to seeing these commitments translated into concrete actions that benefit ASEAN Member States and, of course, their peoples.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

10. The commemoration of ASEAN Day on Disaster Management and the International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction serves as a timely reminder that building resilience is a continuous and shared responsibility. It is a work in progress. It also reminds us that preparedness begins with each individual, family and community, supported by effective institutions and strong regional cooperation.

11. With the continued commitment of ASEAN Member States and the cooperation of our partners, I am confident that we can further strengthen

ASEAN's disaster management capacity, reinforce our spirit of regional solidarity and contribute to a more resilient and sustainable future for our region and beyond.

I wish Excellencies productive and successful deliberations.

Thank you./.