



**CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT OF THE 42<sup>ND</sup> ASEAN SUMMIT  
LABUAN BAJO, INDONESIA, 10-11 MAY 2023**

1. We, the Heads of State/Government of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), gathered in Labuan Bajo, Indonesia, for the 42<sup>nd</sup> ASEAN Summit on 10-11 May 2023 under the Chairmanship of the Republic of Indonesia. The Summit was chaired by H.E. Joko Widodo, President of the Republic of Indonesia, and convened in accordance with the ASEAN Charter.
2. We reiterated our support for Indonesia's ASEAN Chairmanship under the theme "ASEAN Matters: Epicentrum of Growth" and were encouraged by the progress made in the realization of ASEAN's priorities in 2023, aimed to strengthen ASEAN as an organization that is robust and agile, equipped with strengthened capacity and institutional effectiveness to address today's challenges and to remain relevant for its people, the region, and the world while continuing to serve as the region's epicentre of growth and prosperity.
3. Following our agreement, in principle, to admit Timor-Leste as the 11<sup>th</sup> member of ASEAN, we welcomed the participation of the Prime Minister of Timor-Leste for the first time in the ASEAN Summit as observer. We reaffirmed our support for Timor-Leste in their efforts to embrace the path of ASEAN Community building.
4. We reaffirmed our commitment to further strengthen the ASEAN Community, ASEAN unity and centrality to maintain and promote peace, security, and stability in the region, as well as to the peaceful resolution of disputes, including full respect for legal and diplomatic processes, without resorting to the threat or use of force, in accordance with the universally recognized principles of international law.
5. We reiterated the importance of maintaining an ASEAN-centred regional architecture that is open, inclusive, transparent and rules-based, and we are working to strengthening our engagement with external partners in promoting peace, stability and development to enhance our regional resilience to response to common and emerging challenges.
6. We reaffirmed our strong commitment to upholding regionalism and multilateralism founded on the principles of the UN Charter and anchored in international law, and emphasized the importance of adhering to key principles, shared values, and norms enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations (UN), the ASEAN Charter, the Declaration on Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality (ZOPFAN), the 1976 Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC), the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), the Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ), the

2011 Declaration on the East Asia Summit on the Principles for Mutually Beneficial Relations and the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP).

7. We recalled the ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on Upholding Multilateralism and reaffirmed our belief that regionalism and multilateralism are important principles and frameworks of cooperation and that their strength and value lie in their inclusivity, rules-based nature, transparency and openness with emphasis on mutual benefit and respect.
8. We supported the strengthening of multilateralism, with the UN at its core, by reinforcing the principles of the UN Charter, ensuring that no one is left behind, and promoting mutually beneficial partnerships with the UN. In this connection, we look forward to concrete and successful outcomes of the SDG Summit and the High-Level Meetings on health-related issues, including on Universal Health Coverage at the UN in September this year, and to effective preparations for a successful Summit of the Future in 2024.
9. We committed to intensify our work towards a people-oriented, people-centered, and rules-based ASEAN, and continued to encourage the participation of the people and other stakeholders of ASEAN in the ASEAN Community building process.

## **ASEAN COMMUNITY BUILDING**

10. We emphasized our dedicated efforts to sustain the momentum of ASEAN Community building, ensuring the full and effective implementation of the ASEAN Community Vision 2025, and reiterated the importance of cross-pillar, cross-sectoral coordination and the significance of a holistic, coordinated response and coherent perspective in addressing the increasingly multi-dimensional character and complexities of issues facing ASEAN.
11. We noted with satisfaction the progress of the implementation of the recommendations of Mid-Term Reviews (MTRs) of the ASEAN Community Blueprints 2025 and the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity (MPAC) 2025. We commended the active efforts by ASEAN Member States and Sectoral Bodies across the three ASEAN Community pillars in ensuring the effective realisation of the ASEAN Community Blueprints 2025 in the face of global and regional challenges.
12. We, in principle, endorsed the Core Elements of the ASEAN Community's Post-2025 Vision that would enable ASEAN to be responsive and adaptive amidst the fast-evolving world. In developing the ASEAN Community's Post-2025 Vision, we are cognizant of the need to balance pragmatism and ambition so that ASEAN remains stable and progressive while staying true to its identity.
13. We commended the convening of the first interface with the *High-Level Task Force on the ASEAN Community Post-2025 Vision (HLTF-ACV)* and were encouraged by the progress of their works since its establishment in 2022. We supported the decision taken on the 20-year timeframe for the vision and encourage HLTF-ACV to develop a visionary, inspirational, robust,

comprehensive, inclusive, and forward-looking ASEAN Community's Post-2025 Vision in an effective, efficient, balanced, inclusive, participatory, and coordinated manner, based on the Core Elements of the ASEAN Community's Post-2025 Vision.

14. We welcomed the ASEAN Leaders' Interface with the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA), representatives of ASEAN youth, the ASEAN Business Advisory Council (ASEAN-BAC), and the High-Level Task Force on ASEAN Community Post-2025 Vision (HLTF-ACV) on the occasion of the 42<sup>nd</sup> ASEAN Summit, expanded further our engagement with other relevant stakeholders to continue contributing to the ASEAN Community building process.
15. We reiterated ASEAN's resilience as a key priority in a highly-evolving regional and global security environment, and underscored the necessity for ASEAN to be forward-looking, to anticipate and address emerging challenges. We are determined to make Southeast Asia the centre of regional economic growth and an engine for global growth through robust cooperation, including in the food, energy, health, and finance sectors.
16. We noted the importance of the Strategic and Holistic Initiative to Link ASEAN Responses to Emergencies and Disasters (ASEAN SHIELD), which focuses on a whole-of-ASEAN approach and enhanced cross-sectoral coordination in preparing our people for the future.

## KEY DELIVERABLES

### ASEAN Matters: Epicentrum of Growth

17. We were deeply concerned with the rising cases of Trafficking in Person (TIP) exacerbated by the misuse of technology and therefore adopted ***the ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on Combating Trafficking in Persons Caused by the Abuse of Technology***, which emphasized the need to synergize various ASEAN mechanisms, modalities, and commitments and promote cross-pillar activities to address, prevent, and combat TIP.
18. We expressed concern over at the increasing cases of irregular movement of persons, including its connection to people smuggling and trafficking in persons in our region. We stressed that victims of trafficking have a fundamental right to be protected in accordance with international law and relevant international conventions.
19. We underscored the need to strengthen cross-sectoral and cross-pillar cooperation to combat transnational crimes and the contribution of the various ASEAN Sectoral Bodies, led by the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime (AMMTC), and look forward to the finalization of the Bohol Multi-Sectoral Work Plan Against Trafficking in Persons 2023-2028 and its subsequent implementation. We welcomed the adoption of the Terms of Reference (TOR) of the National ASEAN Convention Against Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (ACTIP) Representatives, and

looked forward to enhanced monitoring and reporting of the implementation of the ACTIP as guided by the TOR.

20. We acknowledged the contribution of migrant workers to the region's economy and recognized the need to further strengthen the protection of migrant workers and their family members. In this regard, we adopted ***the ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on the Protection of Migrant Workers and Family Members in Crisis Situations*** and ***the ASEAN Declaration on the Placement and Protection of Migrant Fishers***. We look forward to the ongoing development of the ASEAN Guidelines on the Protection of Migrant Workers and Family Members in Crisis Situations, the ASEAN Guidelines on the Placement and Protection of Migrant Fishers.
21. We recognized the increased risk and vulnerabilities of each Member State towards the threats to humans, animals, plants, and the environment with epidemic and pandemic potential, including zoonoses, food hazards, antimicrobial resistance, climate change and underscored the importance of a multi-sectoral and collaborative One Health approach. In this regard, we adopted ***the ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on One Health Initiative*** to promote the One Health approach in the region.
22. We underscored the importance of promoting rural development and poverty eradication in the region, and the need to fast-track rural transformation. In this regard, we adopted ***the ASEAN Leaders' Joint Statement on the Establishment of an ASEAN Villages Network*** to establish a platform of collaboration among villages and also with external partners and private sectors.
23. We adopted ***the ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on Developing Regional Electric Vehicle Ecosystem***, recognizing the significant role of adopting electric vehicles to improve energy security in the region. We committed to developing a regional electric vehicle ecosystem that supports the adoption of electric vehicles and improving the electric vehicles industry in the ASEAN Member States as well as building ASEAN as a global production hub for the electric vehicles industry.
24. We adopted ***the ASEAN Leaders Declaration on Advancing Regional Payment Connectivity and Promoting Local Currency Transaction*** to foster bilateral and multilateral payment connectivity arrangements to strengthen economic integration by enabling fast, seamless, and more affordable cross-border payments across the region. We commit to encourage the use of local currencies for economic and financial transactions among ASEAN Member States to deepen regional financial integration and promote the development of currency market in local currency to strengthen financial stability in the region.
25. Following decision to accept, in principle, Timor-Leste as the 11<sup>th</sup> member of ASEAN, we adopted ***the Roadmap for Timor-Leste's Full Membership in ASEAN*** and its Annexes, and encouraged Timor-Leste to intensify efforts towards the preparations for its full ASEAN membership. We reaffirm support

for Timor-Leste to achieve the milestones through the provision of capacity-building assistance and any other necessary and relevant support for Timor-Leste's full membership in ASEAN.

26. We emphasized the need for ASEAN to strengthen its capacity and institutional effectiveness to ensure its robustness and agility in facing present and future challenges and to match ASEAN's commitment to advance regional integration and deepen its Community-building process. We took note of the Progress Report by the High-Level Task Force on ASEAN Community's Post-2025 Vision (HLTF-ACV) to the ASEAN Leaders at the 42<sup>nd</sup> ASEAN Summit.
27. We adopted ***the ASEAN Leaders' Statement on the Strengthening of ASEAN's Capacity and Institutional Effectiveness and the ASEAN Leaders' Statement on the Development of the ASEAN Community's Post-2025 Vision*** and encouraged the HLTF-ACV to continue drafting the ASEAN Community Post-2025 Vision, building upon the said Core Elements. We recognised that our new Vision should have political, economic and socio-cultural relevance that binds our whole Community together, which can then truly help become a united, resilient and inclusive Community.
28. Recalling the recommendation of the HLTF-ACV on Strengthening ASEAN's Capacity and Institutional Effectiveness in particular strengthening ASEAN decision-making process, we welcomed the progress of the development of a proposed outcome document to surface issues to the ASEAN Summit to arrive at decisions in a timely manner, including in urgent and specific situations through the ASEAN Coordinating Council and we looked forward to the finalization of the outcome document prior to the 43<sup>rd</sup> ASEAN Summit.

## **ASEAN OUTLOOK ON THE INDO-PACIFIC**

29. Recalling the ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on Mainstreaming Four Priority Areas of the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP) within ASEAN-Led Mechanisms, and the ASEAN Roadmap for Promoting ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific, we reaffirmed the common interest to maintain and promote peace, stability, and prosperity in Southeast Asia and the wider Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean regions.
30. We committed to mainstreaming the implementation of AOIP through concrete projects and activities based on its agreed principles and look forward to the convening of the ASEAN-Indo-Pacific Forum: Implementation of AOIP this year that will focus on creative economy, infrastructure, business and investment and the role of youth on digital development for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). By actively promoting and implementing the AOIP, we can ensure that ASEAN remains a platform for dialogue and cooperation toward continued progress, peace and prosperity.
31. We noted the interest and benefit to engage further with the wider Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean regions while maintaining ASEAN Centrality, and looked forward to develop cooperation and establish a Secretariat-to-Secretariat cooperation between ASEAN- the Pacific Island Forum (PIF) and the ASEAN-

the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) as well as the participation of the Chairs of PIF and IORA as the Guests of the Chair at the 18<sup>th</sup> East Asia Summit.

32. We commended the ongoing work of the ADMM in developing the Concept Paper on the Implementation of the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific from a Defence Perspective, which aimed at enhancing ASEAN's central and strategic role in addressing shared security challenges in the region, as well as strengthen its engagement with external partners to promote confidence-building measure, and looked forward to the adoption of the Paper and its implementation.

### **INITIATIVE FOR ASEAN INTEGRATION (IAI)**

33. We reaffirmed the importance of narrowing the development gap within ASEAN to enhance ASEAN's competitiveness as a region through among others, the implementation of the Initiative of ASEAN Integration (IAI) Work Plans. We commend the concerted effort of all stakeholders and their contribution to the positive progress in the implementation of the IAI Work Plan IV (2021-2025) in jointly achieving the ASEAN Community Vision 2025.

### **ASEAN CONNECTIVITY**

34. We underlined the importance of enhancing regional connectivity, as part of the Epicentrum of Growth, which encompasses economic and socio-cultural matters in support of the region's recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic toward a sustainable and resilient future.
35. We commended the work of the ASEAN Connectivity Coordinating Committee (ACCC) and relevant ASEAN Sectoral Bodies, as well as the MPAC 2025 National Coordinators and National Focal Points in advancing the implementation of MPAC 2025 and ASEAN Connectivity and welcomed the finalization of the Assessment of Future Sustainable Infrastructure Trends and Priorities in a Post-Pandemic ASEAN, the City Technical Proposals for eight cities, and the ASEAN Sustainable Urbanisation Report. We also looked forward to the finalization of the Framework on ASEAN Supply Chain Efficiency and Resilience and encouraged further efforts to promote people-to-people connectivity.
36. We reaffirmed our commitment to enhancing regional connectivity and agreed on the development of the ASEAN Connectivity Post-2025 Agenda as part of the ASEAN Community's Post-2025 Vision. We underscored the importance of strengthening the engagement and coordination with private sectors, international and regional organizations, relevant stakeholders, and external partners, in supporting the implementation of MPAC 2025 and the development of the ASEAN Connectivity Post-2025 Agenda and its implementation.
37. We expressed our appreciation to our Dialogue Partners and other external partners for their continued support to MPAC 2025 as well as the growing interest in developing stronger cooperation on connectivity. We reaffirmed our commitment to forging further collaboration and cooperation, including through

enhancing synergies between relevant connectivity initiatives within and beyond ASEAN in line with the Connecting the Connectivities Initiative and commended the successful convening of the in-person 13<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Connectivity Symposium on Enhancing Connectivity Towards an Inclusive, Sustainable and Resilient ASEAN Community Post-2025 Vision and the ACCC Consultations with Dialogue Partners and Other External Partners on Connectivity.

## **ASEAN SMART CITIES NETWORK**

38. We were pleased with the progress made by the ASEAN Smart Cities Network (ASCN) at the city and network level. We welcomed the commencement of the project on Development of ASEAN Smart City Investment Toolkit. We commended Indonesia for organizing two ASEAN Smart Cities Network Discussion Series on Industry and Innovation as well as on Safety, Security, and Built Infrastructure. We appreciated our external partners' support and collaboration in implementing ASEAN Smart Cities Network Initiatives.

## **ASEAN POLITICAL-SECURITY COMMUNITY**

39. We reaffirmed the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC) as the key code of conduct in governing inter-state relations in the region and as a foundation for maintaining regional peace and stability. We emphasized the importance of all High Contracting Parties in fulfilling their obligations under the Treaty. We welcomed the growing interest of non-regional countries to accede to the TAC, on the basis of respect for and in conformity with the purposes and principles of the TAC and looked forward to the accession of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Kingdom of Spain, the Republic of Panama, and the United Mexican States to the TAC.
40. We reiterated our commitment to preserving the Southeast Asian region as a Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone and free of all other weapons of mass destruction as enshrined in the Treaty of Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ Treaty) and the ASEAN Charter, and stressed the importance of the full and effective implementation of the SEANWFZ Treaty.
41. We reaffirmed our commitment to continuously engage the Nuclear Weapon States (NWS) and intensify efforts of all parties to resolve all outstanding issues in accordance with the objectives and principles of the SEANWFZ Treaty. The Member States expressed their flexibility in exploring the possibility of allowing one NWS to sign onto the Protocol first if there was formal assurance in writing that they were willing to sign and ratify the SEANWFZ Treaty without reservations. In this regard, we noted ongoing discussions with all Nuclear Weapon States on the possible signing and ratification of the Protocol of the SEANWFZ Treaty without reservations. We encouraged our ASEAN experts to explore ways to bridge the differences, including the possibility of engaging with the NWS experts and tasked the relevant officials to work toward the submission of the biennial SEANWFZ Resolution through the First Committee of the 78<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA).

42. We welcomed the progress made by the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) on the promotion and protection of human rights through the implementation of its Five-Year Work Plan 2021-2025, Priority Programmes and Activities on various topics and the successful convening of the ASEAN Human Rights Dialogue 2022 in conjunction with the 10th Anniversary of the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration (AHRD) and the Phnom Penh Statement on the Adoption of the AHRD in Siem Reap, Cambodia, in November 2022. We also welcomed the convening the 36th Meeting of AICHR in Jakarta and the AICHR's Country Learning Visit to Bogor, Indonesia to facilitate dialogues on various human rights issues with stakeholders and commended the continuous efforts of AICHR to work with ASEAN organs and other relevant stakeholders to mainstream human rights across all pillars of the ASEAN Community. We took note of the plan to convene the ASEAN Human Rights Dialogue 2023 in Indonesia to further strengthen AICHR roles in upholding human rights and fundamental freedoms in the region as well as institutionalizing the ASEAN Human Rights Dialogue.
43. We stressed the importance of the full and effective implementation of the Work Plan of the ASEAN Plan of Action to Prevent and Counter the Rise of Radicalisation and Violent Extremism (Bali Work Plan) 2019-2025 to address radicalization and violent extremism in the region in a holistic manner.
44. We welcomed the successful convening of the ASEAN Regional Conference on the 40th Anniversary of the 1982 UNCLOS: Promoting Legal Order for the Seas and Oceans in the ASEAN Secretariat on 29 November 2022, initiated by Indonesia and reaffirmed that the 1982 UNCLOS is the basis for determining maritime entitlement, sovereign rights, jurisdiction and legitimate interest over maritime zone. We further reaffirmed that the 1982 UNCLOS sets out the legal framework within which all activities in the oceans and seas must be carried out and is of strategic importance as the basis for national, regional and global action and cooperation in the marine sector and that its integrity needs to be maintained.
45. We welcomed the adoption of the Concept Paper on the Development of an ASEAN Maritime Outlook (AMO) and looked forward to the publication of the first edition of the Outlook in the third quarter of 2023 to serve as a practical tool to understand regional maritime trends, strengthen synergies, and avoid duplication of work among relevant mechanism. We noted the discussion on the possible establishment of a Coast Guard Forum (ACF) in ASEAN and encouraged further consideration in this regard. We also supported the hosting and chairing of the annual ASEAN Maritime Forum back-to-back with the Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum (EAMF) to follow the ASEAN's chairmanship year. We noted various initiatives to strengthen the Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum (EAMF) while ensuring ASEAN centrality.
46. We reiterated the importance of cross-sectoral and cross-pillar coordination to combat illicit drugs in the region and reaffirmed our commitment towards a drug-free region. We also remained steadfast in realizing this commitment amidst global attempts to reschedule certain types of illicit drugs.

47. We acknowledged the importance of the ADMM and ADMM-Plus as primary platforms for ASEAN defense establishments and their counterparts from the Plus countries to work closely in promoting security and stability in the region. We welcomed the defense sector's commitment to advancing the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) agenda. We commended the progress made on practical defence cooperation under the ADMM-Plus Experts' Working Groups (EWGs) for 2021-2024 on humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, peacekeeping operations, maritime security, counter-terrorism, military medicine, humanitarian mine action and cybersecurity. We further applauded the commencement of the Observership Program of the ADMM-Plus EWG activities this year and looked forward to deepening engagement with partner countries in the defense area.
48. We commended the ASEAN Law Ministers Meeting (ALAWMM) and the ASEAN Senior Law Officials Meeting (ASLOM) on the work in the area of laws and legal matters to support the ASEAN Community building processes and enhance ASEAN as a rules-based organization. We welcomed the significant progress in the negotiation of the ASEAN Extradition Treaty and looked forward to its conclusion, which will complement the Treaty on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters (MLAT).
49. We welcomed the progress of the work of the Senior Officials' Meeting of the Central Authorities on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters (SOM-MLAT) in formulating a template for Mutual Legal Assistance (MLA) requests and also looked forward to the inaugural Meeting of the ASEAN Ministers/Attorneys General Meeting of the Central Authorities on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters (AMAG-MLAT) in ensuring effective implementation of the ASEAN MLAT which will further strengthen ASEAN's capacity and resilience to combat transnational crimes.
50. We congratulated the ASEAN Institute for Peace and Reconciliation (ASEAN-IPR) on the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of its establishment and welcomed the completion of the ASEAN-IPR Research – Aceh Case: Peacebuilding and Post-Tsunami Recovery. We noted with appreciation by the ASEAN-IPR's activities to promote the culture of peace and moderation in ASEAN and encouraged all ASEAN Member States to contribute to supporting the operations of the Institute for each budget year, as agreed in the Terms of Reference of the ASEAN-IPR. We also noted ASEAN-IPR's continued support for the ASEAN Women for Peace Registry (AWPR) to implement the ASEAN Leaders' Joint Statement on Promoting Women, Peace and Security (WPS) in ASEAN. We encouraged the ASEAN-IPR to engage with other relevant stakeholders, including the AWPR and Southeast Asian Network of Women Peace Negotiators and Mediators, to further implement the Joint Statement.
51. We commended the role of the ASEAN Regional Mine Action Centre (ARMAC) as a centre of excellence in promoting ASEAN's efforts to address humanitarian aspects of landmines and explosive remnants of war, and raise awareness of the danger of ERW among affected communities. We reiterated the importance of mine action in national rehabilitation and sustainable development and

welcomed efforts to promote mine action at the regional and global level, including at the UN.

## **ASEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY**

52. We are encouraged by the region's continued growth momentum despite being confronted with various challenges. We noted that the ASEAN economy is expected to achieve a growth of 4.7% in 2023 and 5.0% in 2024, propelled by strong domestic consumption, net exports, and accelerated recovery in services. We further reaffirmed ASEAN's concerted efforts to achieve fair, inclusive, and sustainable regional economic growth against the backdrop of multidimensional crises.
53. We are determined to make Southeast Asia as the centre of regional economic growth and an engine for global growth through robust cooperation by ensuring that ASEAN remains relevant, competitive, forward-looking, resilient, and responsive to future regional and global challenges, as well as to strengthen the region's capacity as the epicentre of growth.
54. We reaffirmed our commitment to continue deepening ASEAN economic integration, enhancing intra-ASEAN trade and investment, strengthening supply chain connectivity, and enhancing the implementation of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) Blueprint 2025 to achieve an economically integrated, competitive, connected, resilient, sustainable, and inclusive region, with special emphasis on narrowing the development gap among its Member States.
55. We welcomed Indonesia's Priority Economic Deliverables (PEDs) and flagship initiatives under its chairmanship, which anchored on the three strategic thrusts of (i) Recovery and Rebuilding, (ii) Digital Economy, and (iii) Sustainability aim to address the immediate challenges in ensuring the region's recovery and rebuilding post-pandemic, and further the momentum for ASEAN as an epicentre of growth through inclusive digital economy integration, sustainable economic development, financial stability, energy security, and food security as well as accelerate the implementation of AOIP.
56. We welcomed the convening of the ASEAN Conference to Strengthening Food Security Integration in Jakarta, Indonesia on 17 April 2023 pursuant to our efforts to secure ASEAN as an epicentre of growth and help curtail impacts from unprecedented shocks to ASEAN's agriculture and food systems. We committed to building a long-term resilience and sustainability of agriculture and food systems, as well as their links to food security. In this regard, we reiterated our commitment to synergize regional actions to address cross-cutting issues for rapid response to food security and nutrition in times of crises. We supported initiatives to contribute to financing food security, which foster prosperity and stability in the ASEAN region.
57. We reiterated ASEAN's commitment to pursuing sustainable energy security through enhancing interconnectivity and accelerating energy transition. We, therefore, further encouraged the continuation of cooperation on energy

interconnectivity, among others, through the implementation of the ASEAN Power Grid (APG) and Trans ASEAN Gas Pipeline (TAGP). We looked forward to an ASEAN declaration on sustainable energy security through interconnectivity and the initiation of the Brunei Darussalam-Indonesia-Malaysia-the Philippines Power Integration Project (BIMP-PIP).

58. We supported the acceleration of digital transformation in ASEAN with an approach that is people-centred, safe, secure and relevant to the needs of end users and various stakeholders, and noted the successful convening of the 3<sup>rd</sup> ASEAN Digital Ministers' Meeting in Boracay, Philippines, on 9 February 2023. We encouraged the continued effort to implement the ASEAN Digital Masterplan 2025 (ADM 2025), which laid a strong foundation in accelerating the region's digital transformation and transforming ASEAN into a leading digital community and economic bloc, powered by secure and transformative digital services, technologies and ecosystem.
59. We welcomed the progress made on the implementation of ASEAN Cybersecurity Cooperation Strategy 2021-2025 and the ASEAN Regional CERT proposal. We recognized the continuing role of cybersecurity awareness activities and capacity-building programs of the ASEAN-Singapore Cybersecurity Centre of Excellence (ASCCE) and the ASEAN-Japan Cybersecurity Capacity Building Centre (AJCCBC) in complementing existing ASEAN efforts in building regional cybersecurity posture.
60. We noted the progress of the implementation of the Bandar Seri Begawan Roadmap including the development of the ASEAN Digital Economy Framework Agreement (DEFA) study. We looked forward to the completion and endorsement of the study at the 55<sup>th</sup> AEM Meeting in August 2023 and the subsequent launch of the DEFA negotiations at the 23<sup>rd</sup> AEC Council Meeting in September 2023, as well as the announcement of an ASEAN Leaders' Statement to Develop the ASEAN DEFA at the 43<sup>rd</sup> ASEAN Summit in September 2023, with a view to achieve inclusive digital transformation toward an ASEAN Digital Economic Community 2045.
61. We welcomed the successful convening of the ASEAN Tourism Forum 2023 in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, on 4 February 2023, where ASEAN Tourism Ministers noted the 1,706.61% year-on-year increase in tourism receipts and 1,222.99% year-on-year increase in international arrivals in ASEAN in 2022. We committed to ensure ASEAN tourism continues to be resilient and sustainable through expediting the digital tourism transformation and upgrading the capacity of tourism professionals through the comprehensive implementation of the Mutual Recognition Arrangement for Tourism Professionals (MRA-TP) and the Protocol to amend the MRA-TP.
62. We welcomed the successful convening of the 9<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Finance Ministers' and Central Bank Governors Meeting (AFMGM) in Bali, Indonesia on 31 March 2023 and recognized the importance of developing an interconnected payments network across the region that is fast, seamless, and affordable, making ASEAN a global leader in payments connectivity network. In this regard, we welcomed the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

on Cooperation on Regional Payment Connectivity among Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and the Philippines in November 2022 and we looked forward to the MOU's expansion to cover all ASEAN Member States.

63. We commended the ASEAN Taxonomy Board's (ATB) progress in facilitating the sustainable ASEAN agenda through the publication of the ASEAN Taxonomy for Sustainable Finance Version 2 and encouraged the ATB to advance this important work. This overarching guide and common language for sustainable finance for ASEAN will help support the orderly, just, and affordable transition needed for the region, including the introduction of technical screening criteria to address the early retirement of coal plants in the region.
64. We recognized the importance of collaboration between finance and health authorities to strengthen regional health capacity and supported the plan to hold a Joint Finance and Health Ministers Meeting later this year. We noted the progress of the report on the gap assessment of global financing and existing international financing mechanisms for pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response (PPR), and the continued discussion to provide a report on modalities for a possible regional financial facility.
65. We noted the progress of the ASEAN Trade in Goods Agreement (ATIGA) upgrade negotiations to become a modern, comprehensive, forward-looking agreement relevant to business communities and more responsive to regional and global developments. We encouraged the ATIGA Upgrade Trade Negotiating Committee (TNC) to intensify negotiations in accordance with the ATIGA Upgrade Negotiations Work Plan. We also noted the progress made in ASEAN's Free Trade Agreements (FTA) with its external partners, in particular the finalization of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Protocol to Amend the ASEAN-Australia-New Zealand Free Trade Area (AANZFTA), and the on-going negotiations with Canada for an ASEAN-Canada Free Trade Agreement and the ongoing ASEAN-China Free Trade Area 3.0 Upgrade.
66. We welcomed the full ratification and progress in the implementation of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Agreement that seeks to contribute to regional post-pandemic economic recovery and achieve inclusive, rules-based trade and promote investment. We reaffirmed our commitment to RCEP's full and effective implementation on all aspects, including tariff reduction, trade facilitation, as well as the establishment of the RCEP Support Unit within the ASEAN Secretariat, which could gradually transition into a stand-alone RCEP Secretariat to strengthen the regional supply chain and contribute to ASEAN economic integration agenda and to maintain ASEAN Centrality in RCEP.
67. We reiterated the importance of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in our economies. We expressed optimism that our current endeavours with our trade partners will increase the role of MSMEs in ASEAN and global economy by providing equal opportunities and access through capacity building and digital transformation.

68. We underscored the importance of the industrial sector as one of the main pillars of ASEAN's economy. Therefore, we reiterated our commitment to encouraging industrial cooperation by developing a framework for industrial project-based initiatives that focus on forward-looking sectors and specific areas, considering technological advancements, private sector participation, intra-ASEAN complementarity, and collaboration with the relevant Dialogue Partners and external parties.
69. We are cognizant of the urgent need to strike a balance between economic growth and sustainable use of natural resources and protection of environment. We recalled the initial idea to establish an ASEAN Green Deal at the 40<sup>th</sup> and 41<sup>st</sup> ASEAN Summits and Related Summits and the importance for ASEAN to continue its sustainability agenda toward sustainable development in the region, as well as in achieving ASEAN Member States' commitments under the Paris Agreement. We welcomed the adoption of the Implementation Plan of the Framework on Circular Economy for AEC and the Concept Note for the development of the ASEAN Strategy for Carbon Neutrality by the AEC Council in February 2023, which will all serve as a complement to the ASEAN Member States' climate action and decarbonization efforts.
70. We noted the progress made in the development of the ASEAN Sustainable Aviation Action Plan focusing on Sustainable Aviation Fuels, which demonstrates ASEAN's strong commitment to support the International Civil Aviation Organisation's long-term aspiration goal of net-zero carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions from aviation by 2050. We also noted progress on the development of the Guidelines on Smart Ports for ASEAN, which would assist ASEAN Member States to define the concept of smart ports, with a view to catalyze digitalization and innovation development of ports in the region to reduce the carbon footprint.
71. We further reiterated our commitment to sustainability as a universal call to end poverty, protect the planet, and improve the livelihood of the people. We, therefore, welcomed the initiative on ASEAN Harmonised Standards to support the achievement of SDGs 2030 as it enables all three dimensions of sustainability (social, economic, and environmental), which is essential for ASEAN Member States to reduce costs and increase productivity and efficiency. In this regard, we looked forward to the completion of the roadmap to support the SDGs implementation, which contributes to the complementary effort in the region to ensure the safety, health, and protection of the environment throughout ASEAN.
72. We recognized the potential of patents in attracting foreign direct investments, stimulating growth and development, and enhancing economic integration. We therefore welcomed the good progress on the Feasibility Study on an ASEAN Patent System, which is in line with ASEAN's broad goals of building regional platforms that would support a stronger and more competitive region.
73. We acknowledged the importance of enabling cooperation on competition cross-border cases to address the growing intra-ASEAN trade. Therefore, we welcomed the endorsement of the ASEAN Guidelines for Sharing Merger

Cases as a reference to develop the ASEAN Information Portal on Merger Cases. The Guidelines aim to strengthen cooperation of ASEAN Member States authorities, when reviewing cross-border merger cases, and may effectively protect ASEAN businesses against distortions of competition.

74. We recognized the importance of consumer protection and its impact towards the digital economy during the COVID-19 pandemic and within the ASEAN Agreement on E-Commerce. We believe that comprehensive consumer protection legislations are critical in maintaining consumer confidence, especially within the realm of digital economy. Therefore, we welcomed the completion of the ASEAN Guidelines on Consumer Protection in E-Commerce, which provides a comprehensive and principle-based framework to develop and refining regulatory responses and institutional mechanisms for consumer protection in e-commerce.
75. We recalled the adoption of the ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on the Blue Economy and reaffirmed our commitment to the overall implementation of the Declaration. In this regard, we welcomed the discussion by the High-Level Task Force on ASEAN Economic Integration (HLTF-EI) to develop the ASEAN Blue Economy Framework in order to advance Blue Economy as a new engine of economic growth. We welcomed the convening of the Multi-stakeholder Dialogue on the Development of the ASEAN Blue Economy Framework at the sidelines of the 43<sup>rd</sup> meeting of HLTF-EI on 1 March 2023, which will serve as inputs in developing the ASEAN Blue Economy Framework.
76. We noted the importance of the Creative Economy as one of the streams for competitiveness in ASEAN and noted the proposal on the creation of an ASEAN Working Group on Creative Economy at the 43<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the High-Level Task Force on ASEAN Economic Integration. We looked forward to the next Creative Economy Forum, that provides an inclusive platform of collaboration and cooperation, as part of the ASEAN-Indo-Pacific Forum this year.
77. We exchanged views with the ASEAN Business Advisory Council (BAC) and noted its priorities for 2023, which aligns with ASEAN economic priorities for 2023. We noted ASEAN-BAC's five priority issues in 2023, namely Digital Transformation, Sustainable Development, Health Resilience, Food Security, and Trade and Investment Facilitation, to be implemented into various legacy programs. We commended ASEAN BAC for conducting roadshows in several ASEAN Countries to acquire first-hand information on the needs of business in the region. We encouraged enhanced coordination and collaboration between the government and private sector through conducting regular interface meetings with relevant sectoral bodies under the AEC. We noted ASEAN BAC's aspiration to contribute to the development of ASEAN Community's Post-2025 Vision, particularly from a business perspective.
78. We appreciate to the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA) continued support to ASEAN's economic integration and Community building efforts, particularly in supporting Indonesia's Chairmanship of ASEAN in 2023, including the ASEAN Services Facilitation Framework and Nutrition in

Times of Crises, and the ASEAN Blue Economy Framework. We also welcome ERIA's support to flagship events under Indonesia's Chairmanship, the ASEAN Indo-Pacific Forum and the ASEAN Blue Economy Forum. We look forward to further collaboration with ERIA, particularly in advancing ASEAN's priorities, especially in the areas of digitalization, sustainability and supply chain resiliency.

## **ASEAN SOCIO-CULTURAL COMMUNITY**

79. We committed to realizing ASEAN as an epicentre of growth through increased investment in human resources development to be more competitive and agile towards the future of work and stay ahead of digital transformation; strengthened regional health security architecture, which serves as the foundation to achieve better socio-economic growth and well-being for the peoples of ASEAN; as well as scaled-up cooperation and partnership in addressing climate change and environmental issues including through the finalisation of the Establishment Agreement of the ASEAN Centre for Climate Change in Brunei Darussalam, accelerated rural development; and strengthened disability-inclusive development.
78. We reaffirmed our commitment to doubling our efforts in the attainment of SDGs, and the advancement of sustainable cooperation in the region, including through promoting the Complementarities between the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and the UN 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development as well as existing ASEAN frameworks and centres including the ASEAN Centre on Sustainable Development Studies and Dialogue (ACSDSD). We noted the convening of the 2nd ASEAN Ministerial Dialogue on Accelerating Actions to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals as a platform to exchange best practices among the national development planning agencies in the ASEAN Member States to accelerate the achievement of SDGs.
79. We reiterated the need to build the momentum towards a strong and sustainable recovery to ensure that ASEAN will have a more effective prevention, preparedness and response mechanism to deal effectively with potential public health threats posed by emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases, both at present and in the future. We emphasized the need to enhance multisectoral and multilateral collaborations under the framework of One Health, which brings together health, animal, plant and environmental sectors into a holistic and sustainable approach.
80. We affirmed our commitment to strengthening regional health architecture beyond COVID-19 towards achieving resilience in the ASEAN Community taking into account the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework. We agreed to expand the COVID-19 ASEAN Response Fund to respond to other public health emergencies and emerging diseases and encourage the finalization of Establishment Agreement and preparatory phase of the ASEAN Center for Public Health Emergencies and Emerging Diseases (ACPHEED); and the operationalization of ASEAN Bio Diaspora Virtual Centre (ABVC) and the ASEAN Institute of Disaster Health Management (AIDHM) in Indonesia.

81. We highlighted the importance of ensuring the highest standard of health for ASEAN peoples through the different phases of life by, among others, addressing health risks due to climate change, and the degradation of ecosystems, as well as providing essential health care services for Communicable and Non-Communicable Diseases, and, in particular, eliminating TB and eradicating malaria in the region.
82. We highlighted the need to also strengthen efforts to enhance capacities for virology and vaccines development, exposed by the recent pandemic, and support the implementation of interventions to accelerate the regional strategies for ASEAN Vaccine Security and Self-Reliance (AVSSR) and ASEAN Drug Security and Self-Reliance (ADSSR). We also noted the discussion on the possible establishment of an ASEAN Manufacturing and R&D hub for Vaccines, Therapeutics, and Diagnostics, and look forward to the proposed workplan.
83. We underscored the importance of scaled-up efforts for the protection of migrant workers and their family members, including through the continuation of the tripartite dialogue involving representatives from government, private sectors and CSO networks, and the ongoing development of ASEAN Guidelines on Portability of Social Security Benefits for Migrant Workers.
84. We encouraged an accelerated implementation of the ASEAN Declaration on Human Resources Development (HRD) for the Changing World of Work through, among others, the development of a pooled-funding mechanism for ASEAN HRD and the continuation of the work of the ASEAN Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Council (ATC) to enhance future skills needs of the region. We noted the development of a guiding document of the ASEAN Declaration on Promoting Competitiveness, Resilience and Agility of Workers for the Future of Work by the ASEAN Labour Ministers.
85. We recognize the importance of preparing youth to address future challenges in ASEAN and acknowledge their role in regional development, particularly as youth are more adept to utilizing technology, and therefore welcomed the recommendation of the ASEAN Youth Dialogue 2023 to strengthen regional cooperation towards equitable access for digital infrastructure, education, resource mobilization, and capacity building conveyed at the ASEAN Leaders' Interface with the Representative of ASEAN Youth during the 42nd ASEAN Summit.
86. We also commended the successful convening of the ASEAN Youth Dialogue (AYD) 2023 on Digitalization for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) on 11-13 April 2023 in Jakarta, Indonesia, to engage youth on their role in making the region an epicentrum of digital development for SDGs and in promoting inclusive, equitable, and sustainable growth in the region. The AYD has conducted capacity-building workshops for ASEAN Digital Champion to equip the participants with the knowledge and basic skills to develop their community-based programs in their respective countries and encourage the continuation of capacity-building workshops as part of the ASEAN Youth Dialogue.

87. We noted with appreciation the progress of the ASEAN Work Plan on Youth 2021-2025 implementation and the efforts made to promote and prioritize youth participation and engagement in ASEAN Community building. We looked forward to the launch of the Second Report of the ASEAN Youth Development Index by the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Youth (AMMY) and the convening of the ASEAN Youth Interfaith Camp (AYIC) in 2023 for the youth to learn firsthand about diversity in ASEAN.
88. We commended the implementation of the ASEAN Junior Fellowship Programme with the ASEAN Secretariat (AJFP), which is aimed at increasing the knowledge and effectiveness of junior officials of ASEAN Member States in performing their work on regional cooperation through engagement with the ASEAN Secretariat. We looked forward to the continued organization and development of this initiative as part of the larger ASEAN Community building agenda, encouraging sustainability in our efforts to harness the potential of ASEAN's youth.
89. We support ongoing learning recovery efforts across the region and encourage the implementation of projects that contribute to the realization of resilient education systems across Southeast Asia especially in the areas of digital transformation, out-of-school youth, and lifelong learning.
90. We recognized the need to ensure that the people of ASEAN are equipped with the relevant skills, competencies, and values to address the challenges derived from megatrends influencing the future of education in ASEAN such as the rapid rise of digitalization, the risk of climate change, the importance of mental health and wellbeing as well as Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) and the changing world of work, in order to be able to participate meaningfully in the ASEAN Community building.
91. We acknowledged the global megatrends influencing the future of education in ASEAN, the need for digital transformation and resilience of ASEAN education systems, climate change and green education and the promotion of mental health and wellbeing of teachers and students, to ensure that the people of ASEAN are equipped with the relevant skills, competencies and values to address the challenges of the 4IR, the changing world of work, and participate in ASEAN Community building.
92. We reaffirm the necessity to increase investment in education to address the foundational learning crisis which was exacerbated by the pandemic. We noted the initiatives to scale up and deepen efforts in tackling the crisis in a strategic and sustainable approach through the implementation of the ASEAN Workplan on Education 2021-2025. We welcomed the convening of the Ministerial Policy Dialogue on Early Childhood Care and Education in July 2023. We underscored the importance and benefits of people-to-people connectivity within ASEAN, and supported the ongoing implementation of Phase 1 of the Intra-ASEAN Scholarship Programme for ASEAN Nationals to increase accessible and sustainable regional student mobility scholarships for higher education students in each ASEAN Member State.

93. We noted the efforts to widen and deepen cooperation on ASEAN civil service matters through the implementation of the ASEAN Cooperation on Civil Service Matters Work Plan 2021-2025, particularly on promoting good governance and digitalization to strengthen capacity and capability of ASEAN civil services to be more responsive, open and adaptive ASEAN civil services, as well as to enhance more cooperative relations, including cross-sectoral and cross-pillar initiatives, with potential partners to share information and best practices.
94. We appreciated the rollout of the Regional Plan of Action on Implementing the Kuala Lumpur Declaration on Ageing: Empowering Older Persons in ASEAN, which will accelerate ASEAN's efforts to address the challenges of demographic change and ensure inclusive and sustainable development. We noted the convening of the Regional Validation Workshop on Old Age, Poverty and Active Ageing in ASEAN countries: Trends and Opportunities.
95. We reiterated the importance of implementing the ASEAN Enabling Masterplan 2025: Mainstreaming the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and committed towards a disability-inclusive development in the region. We look forward to convening the High-Level Forum on Disability Inclusive Development and Partnership beyond 2025 in Indonesia and its outcome, as well as the 12<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Para Games in Cambodia.
96. We reaffirmed the vital role of social workers and the wider social service workforce in promoting and protecting the rights vulnerable and marginalized groups in the region. We are encouraged by the implementation of the Roadmap to Implement the Ha Noi Declaration on Strengthening Social Work Towards Cohesive and Responsive ASEAN Community, particularly through the development of regional guidelines on the roles of social work in the health and justice sectors, and in providing essential services to victims of violence against women and violence against children.
97. We reiterated the importance of continuing to enhance women's role in peace and security as well as women's empowerment in all work of ASEAN. We welcomed the proposed plan to convene WPS High-Level Dialogue to strengthen women's capacities as mediators in the region, establish regional institutional mechanisms to promote regional collaboration and exchange practices to leverage women's meaningful participation and contribution to conflict prevention, resolution and recovery.
98. We reaffirmed the relevance of eliminating violence against women, the advancement of children's rights and the rights of people with disabilities in the region and supporting the implementation of the ASEAN Gender Mainstreaming Strategic Framework through convening an ASEAN Gender Mainstreaming Conference and establishment of the ASEAN Gender Mainstreaming Steering Committee with representatives from all Community pillars.
99. We recognized the continued implementation of the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on the Elimination of Violence against Children (ASEAN P A on EVAC) and the Regional Plan of Action on the Protection of Children from All Forms of

Online Exploitation and Abuse in ASEAN (ASEAN RPA on COEA), and the SOMSWD-endorsed Work Plan 2021- 2025.

100. We supported the identification of the ASEAN Children's Forum (ACF) as one of the planned actions towards ensuring the implementation of the aforementioned plans. We reiterated the importance of this forum as it provides the ASEAN children with an opportunity to propose recommendations on providing support for children, especially the most vulnerable ones, and put forward the children's best interests.
101. Cognizant with the high rates of poverty in rural areas, we reaffirm our commitment to poverty eradication and called on the implementation of the ASEAN Master Plan on Rural Development and the Framework Action Plan on Rural Development and Poverty Eradication 2021-2025 (FAP-RDPE 2021-2025) to fast-tracking rural development in the region through the promotion of the linkages between regional action with national programs and by promoting whole-of-government and whole-of-community approaches.
102. We recognized the importance to enhance effort to promote our shared values of tolerance and respect for diversity as well as fostering a Culture of Prevention (CoP), we welcome the conduction of activities related to the implementation of CoP and noted the issuance of Strategy Playbook on Promoting an Adaptive ASEAN Community of Greater Understanding, Tolerance and a Sense of Regional Agendas among the Peoples of ASEAN. The Meeting also take note on the planned ASEAN Conference on Shared Civilizational Values in 2023 host by Indonesia aimed to among others identify and foster a greater understanding of shared civilization values derived from the region's culture and religions and provide recommendations on how the shared civilization values can play an essential role in sustaining the region of peace and as an Epicentrum of Growth.
103. We emphasized the importance of governments' role in dealing with and curbing the spread of fake news and disinformation. We looked forward to the development of the Guideline on Management of Government Information in Combatting Fake News and Disinformation in the Media to support the work of the ASEAN Task Force on Fake News (TFFN) in tackling the proliferation and repercussion of fake news. We further acknowledged the need to continue media and information literacy efforts to protect the public from the negative impact of disinformation.
104. We recognized the importance of the implementation of the ASEAN Strategic Plan for Culture and Arts 2016-2025, which supported the vital role of cultural and creative industries in building a progressive, inclusive, dynamic, resilient, harmonious, and inclusive ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community that is aware and proud of its identity, culture, and heritage, and with the strengthened capacity to innovate and proactively contribute to the global community.
105. We acknowledged that transboundary haze pollution has adverse impacts on the public health, well-being, and economies of ASEAN. We recognized that transboundary haze pollution arising from land and forest fires remains a major

concern in the region. We reaffirmed our commitment to the full and effective implementation of the ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution (AATHP), including stepping up measures to mitigate land and forest fires and address transboundary haze with a view to achieving a Haze-Free ASEAN. We welcomed the progress towards finalization of the Second Roadmap for ASEAN Cooperation towards Transboundary Haze Pollution Control with Means of Implementation, the ASEAN Peatland Management Strategy (APMS) 2022-2030, and the Investment Framework for Haze-Free Sustainable Land Management in Southeast Asia. We stressed the importance of remaining vigilant and noted the ongoing preventive efforts to minimize transboundary smoke haze during periods of drier weather. We looked forward to the establishment and full operationalization of the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Transboundary Haze Pollution Control (ACCTHPC) in Indonesia, which will facilitate faster and effective implementation of all aspects of the AATHP to address transboundary haze pollution in the ASEAN region.

106. We reiterated the need to continue efforts towards advancing interlinkages between climate action and promoting the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and ecosystem services, with the support of the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB).
107. We reiterated the necessity of forward-looking plans to enhance cooperation and joint actions among ASEAN Member States to allow for addressing the drivers of nature and biodiversity loss, such as Invasive Alien Species (IAS). We also support the collaborative efforts of ASEAN Member States – with Indonesia as the lead ASEAN Member State on invasive alien species (IAS) concerns – and the ACB, in developing the ASEAN Action Plan for Invasive Alien Species Management and addressing IAS in the region.
108. We continued our efforts to strengthen disaster management and risk reduction efforts, including through the enhancement of climate and disaster-resilient infrastructure and implementation of nature-based/ecosystem-based approach as well as advancement in science, technology, and innovation to accelerate the achievement of sustainable resilience. Given the importance of financial instruments and policies to reduce disaster risks, we encouraged the finalization of the Revised Financial Rules of the ASEAN Disaster Management and Emergency Relief (ADMER) Fund as a platform for the public and private entities to contribute voluntarily towards ASEAN's disaster response and management efforts.
109. We encouraged further implementation of the Bandar Seri Begawan Declaration on the Strategic and Holistic Initiative to Link ASEAN Responses to Emergencies and Disasters (ASEAN SHIELD) towards ensuring ASEAN's collective, rapid, effective and timely response in mitigating the impacts of different types of emergencies and disasters affecting the region.
110. We were pleased to note the ongoing process to review the Terms of Reference of the Secretary-General of ASEAN as the ASEAN Humanitarian Assistance Coordinator (SG-AHAC) and stressed the crucial role of the SG-AHAC in emergency response and recovery processes. To ensure its synergy with other

related regional mechanisms and to determine areas for improvement, we looked forward to testing the TOR of SG-AHAC in a tabletop exercise at ASEAN Regional Disaster Emergency Response Simulation Exercise (ARDEX) 2023, which will be held in Indonesia. The ARDEX fosters a close and effective collaboration among the ASEAN member states toward the operationalization of the One ASEAN, One Response Declaration.

111. We reaffirmed our continued support for Myanmar's efforts to bring peace and harmony among various communities concerned and to promote inclusive and sustainable development in Rakhine State. We noted engagement and cooperation between Myanmar and Bangladesh on repatriation process particularly on the outcomes of the negotiations between Myanmar and Bangladesh to start the first batch of repatriation of more than one thousand verified displaced persons on mid-May under the Pilot Project and the plan to receive more than seven thousand returnees by the end of 2023. We also welcomed the recent diplomatic tour to Rakhine State from 8 to 9 March 2023 to observe the preparatory works done by Myanmar to kick-start the repatriation with a pilot project and reiterated the need to ensure safe, secure, and dignified voluntary return of displaced persons. We expressed concern about limited funding support to displaced persons in and from Rakhine State and called for concerted support of related multi-sector partners to contribute to the achievement of durable solutions that will ensure the long-lasting impact of humanitarian assistance.

## **ASEAN EXTERNAL RELATIONS**

112. We emphasized the critical importance for ASEAN to maintain its unity and centrality in our engagement with external partners to further promote dialogue and cooperation; and enhance mutual trust and confidence through ASEAN led mechanisms such as ASEAN-Plus One, ASEAN Plus Three (APT), East Asia Summit (EAS), ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and ADMM-Plus, to strengthening an open, transparent, inclusive, and rules based regional architecture that upholds international law and contribute to the continued efforts towards the realization of the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and our proactive responses to emerging challenges.
113. We looked forward to intensifying our Leaders' engagement as well as to building concrete cooperation at the ASEAN-Japan Commemorative Summit for the 50<sup>th</sup> Year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation on 16-18 December 2023, in Tokyo, the ASEAN-Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Summit in October 2023 in Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and the Special Summit to Commemorate the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of ASEAN-Australia Dialogue Relations on 4-6 March 2024, in Australia. We also look forward to the convening of ASEAN-Canada Summit to launch the ASEAN-Canada Strategic Partnership during the 43<sup>rd</sup> ASEAN Summit and related Summits.
114. Furthermore, we welcomed the convening of the ASEAN-ROK Day in ASEAN, hosted by Viet Nam in 2023, which will contribute to strengthening ASEAN-ROK relations towards the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ASEAN-ROK relations in 2024 and look forward to the convening of the ASEAN-Australia High-Level Dialogue

on Climate Change and Energy Transition in Viet Nam in 2023, that will contribute to enhancing practical actions and cooperation towards energy transition and promoting regional resilience and adaptation to increasing climate change impacts.

115. We reaffirmed the importance of the APT cooperation and underscored the need to further strengthen and deepen functional cooperation including through the implementation of the APT Cooperation Work Plan (2023-2027). We are committed to strengthening APT mechanisms including, among others, Chiang Mai Initiative Multilateralization (CMIM) and APT Emergency Rice Reserve (APTERR) in strengthening regional resilience and preparedness against future shocks and crises.
116. We reaffirmed our commitment to the EAS as a leaders-led forum for dialogue on broad strategic, political, and economic issues of common interest and concern with the aim of promoting peace, stability, and economic prosperity in the region with ASEAN as the driving force. We underscored the need to promote an enabling environment for peace, stability and prosperous development for all through ensuring a culture of dialogue and cooperation, instead of rivalry, enhancing mutual trust and confidence and respect for international law. We are committed to a single EAS statement as the outcome document of the 18<sup>th</sup> East Asia Summit that emphasized EAS participating countries' commitment to support the region as an epicentre of growth by building resilience against future shocks through cooperation on financial stability, climate change strengthening regional health architecture, building food security and resilience, we looked forward to the adoption of the successor Plan of Action (2024-2028).
117. We reiterated the importance of the ARF's role in promoting dialogue and cooperation among its members for the past 30 years and as a key platform for building mutual trust and confidence, as well as consultation on regional political and security issues of common interest and concern. We reaffirmed the need to further enhance its effectiveness and maintain its relevance in the evolving regional security architecture with the view to build capacity, develop expertise and enhance coordination in areas that can contribute to the region's collective security objectives. We noted with satisfaction the progress of cooperation in the ARF and commended the provisional measures undertaken to ensure the continuity of cooperation and operations of the ARF in the post-COVID-19 recovery. We were encouraged by the progress made in the implementation of the Ha Noi Plan of Action II (2020-2025) and looked forward to further discussion on efforts and follow-up actions to streamline and enhance the efficiency of the ARF based on the agreed Guide to ARF Processes, Procedures, Practices and Protocol.

## **REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ISSUES**

118. We recognized the strategic importance of our region for our security, stability and prosperity, as well as for those of our external partners. ASEAN and ASEAN-led mechanisms continue to be the only inclusive avenue that facilitates constructive dialogue and concrete cooperation, therefore

contributing to the development of the region's comprehensive security architecture in accordance with the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific.

119. We discussed the situation in the South China Sea, during which concerns were expressed by some ASEAN Member States on the land reclamations, and serious incidents in the area, including damage to the marine environment, which has eroded trust and confidence, increased tensions, and may undermine peace, security, and stability in the region. We reaffirmed the need to enhance mutual trust and confidence, exercise self-restraint in the conduct of activities that would complicate or escalate disputes and affect peace and stability, and avoid actions that may further complicate the situation. We further reaffirmed the need to pursue peaceful resolution of disputes in accordance with the universally recognized principles of international law, including the 1982 UNCLOS. We emphasized the importance of self-restraint in the conduct of activities by claimants and all other states, including those mentioned in the 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.
120. 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 recognized the benefits of having the South China Sea as a sea of peace, stability, and prosperity. We underscored the importance of the full and effective implementation of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) in its entirety. We welcomed the successful convening of the Workshop on the 20th Anniversary of the DOC: Achievements and Future Directions on 20 December 2022, initiated by Cambodia, as well as a similar workshop on 25 July 2022 in Beijing.
121. We welcomed ongoing efforts to strengthen cooperation between ASEAN and China and were encouraged by the progress of the substantive negotiations towards the early conclusion of an effective and substantive Code of Conduct in the South China Sea (COC) consistent with international law, including the 1982 UNCLOS, within a mutually agreed timeline. We welcomed the progress of negotiation of the Single Draft COC Negotiating Text (SDNT) through the convening of the 38<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the ASEAN-China Joint Working Group on the Implementation of the DOC (JWG-DOC) on 8-10 March 2023 in Jakarta, and looked forward to the early conclusion of an effective and substantive COC that is in accordance with international law, including the 1982 UNCLOS. We welcomed the initiative to expedite the COC negotiation, including the proposal to develop guidelines for accelerating the early conclusion of an effective and substantive COC. We emphasized the need to maintain and promote an environment conducive to the COC negotiations, and thus welcomed practical measures that could reduce tensions and the risk of accidents, misunderstandings, and miscalculations. We stressed the importance of undertaking confidence-building and preventive measures to enhance, among others, trust and confidence among parties, and we reaffirmed the importance of upholding international law, including the 1982 UNCLOS.
122. We stressed the importance of continued peaceful dialogue among all concerned parties in order to realize lasting peace and stability in a

denuclearized Korean Peninsula. The recent surge in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK)'s intercontinental ballistic missile testing and ballistic missile launches and the increased tension in the Korean Peninsula are a worrisome development that threatens peace and stability in the region. We urged all concerned parties to exercise utmost restraint, avoid actions and military reciprocations that may escalate the situation, resume peaceful dialogue and continue working towards the realization of lasting peace and stability in a denuclearized Korean Peninsula. We reiterated our commitment to the full implementation of all relevant United Nations Security Council Resolutions and noted international efforts to bring about the complete, verifiable, and irreversible denuclearization 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 utilizing ASEAN-led platforms such as the ARF in promoting a conducive atmosphere to peaceful dialogue among the concerned parties.

123. We expressed concern over the developments in the Middle East region. We reiterated the need for a comprehensive, just, and sustainable solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in order to achieve peace and stability in the Middle East region. We urged both sides to actively take positive steps to allow for negotiations to gain traction and work together towards the resumption of negotiations to achieve an enduring peace. We fully support the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people for an independent State of Palestine with the realization of two states, Palestine and Israel living side by side in peace and security based on pre-1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital.
124. 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 creation of an enabling environment for peaceful resolution. This situation continues to negatively affect us and we are therefore committed to redoubling our effort to mitigate its impact and work toward ensuring that our ASEAN remains as the epicentre of growth for the region and the world.
125. We discussed the development in Myanmar and reiterated our unified position that the Five-Point Consensus remains our main reference. We supported the Chair's continued engagement with all stakeholders in Myanmar to find a peaceful and durable solution, that is Myanmar-owned and Myanmar-led, to create a conducive environment for facilitating an inclusive national dialogue. We observed some movements on the humanitarian front, with the completion of the Joint Need Assessment (JNA) by the AHA Centre, as facilitated by the Chair and relevant stakeholders in Myanmar. We commended the partial delivery of humanitarian aid to the people of Myanmar on 7 May 2023, despite the challenging security situation. We strongly condemned the recent attack on the convoy of the AHA Centre and the ASEAN Monitoring Team in Shan State. ASEAN will continue to mobilize additional resources and take the lead in the provision of humanitarian assistance through the AHA Centre. We remained deeply concerned on the escalation of the armed conflicts and violence in

Myanmar. We urged for immediate cessation of all forms of violence to create a conducive environment for the delivery of humanitarian assistance and inclusive national dialogues. We reiterated that the ASEAN Leaders' Review and Decision on the implementation of the Five-Point Consensus as agreed during the 40<sup>th</sup> and 41<sup>st</sup> ASEAN Summits remain.