

# 2018 CHAIRMAN’S STATEMENT OF THE 32<sup>ND</sup> ASEAN SUMMIT

*Adopted in Singapore on 28 April 2018*

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## 2018 CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT OF THE 32<sup>ND</sup> ASEAN SUMMIT

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1. We, the Heads of State/Government of ASEAN Member States, gathered in Singapore for the 32nd ASEAN Summit on 28 April 2018. Our discussions emphasised building a resilient and innovative ASEAN, amidst rapid changes in Southeast Asia and beyond.
2. We reaffirmed the importance of maintaining ASEAN Centrality and unity in our Community-building efforts and engagement of external partners. We welcomed initiatives that reinforce an ASEAN-centric regional architecture that is open, transparent, inclusive and rules-based. These initiatives will build upon ASEAN-led mechanisms including the ASEAN Plus One, ASEAN Plus Three (APT), East Asia Summit (EAS), ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), and ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM-Plus). We looked forward to further discussion on recent initiatives, including the Indo-Pacific concept.
3. 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 the universally recognised principles of international law, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

### KEY DELIVERABLES

4. We adopted the ASEAN Leaders' Vision for a Resilient and Innovative ASEAN, as an articulation of ASEAN's strategic position and intent in the context of a shifting geopolitical and economic landscape. We reaffirmed ASEAN's commitment to foundational principles enshrined in the ASEAN Charter, the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC) and the ASEAN Community Vision 2025. We agreed on the initiatives which ASEAN, as a grouping of developing countries, will undertake across its three pillars during Singapore's ASEAN Chairmanship this year, in response to current and emerging challenges.
5. We agreed on the growing importance for ASEAN Member States to leverage on innovation and technology to improve the lives of our people. In this regard, we agreed to establish an ASEAN Smart Cities Network (ASCN) to synergise development efforts, share best practices, and catalyse more opportunities for growth, innovation, capacity-building and sustainable development. We further agreed that the ASCN would promote an inclusive approach and take into account city-specific needs, potential, local and cultural uniqueness, as well as level of development. We took note with satisfaction the finalisation of the list of 26 ASCN 'pilot cities'.

### ASEAN POLITICAL-SECURITY COMMUNITY

6. We adopted the ASEAN Leaders' Statement on Cybersecurity Cooperation in recognition of the growing urgency and sophistication of transboundary cyber threats. We tasked relevant Ministers from all ASEAN Member States to closely consider and recommend feasible options of coordinating cybersecurity policy, diplomacy, cooperation, technical and capacity building efforts among various platforms of the three pillars of ASEAN. We further tasked relevant Ministers from all ASEAN Member States to make progress on discussions by ASEAN Information and Communications Technology (ICT)

and Cybersecurity Ministers at the ASEAN Ministerial Conference on Cybersecurity (AMCC), ASEAN Telecommunications and Information Technology Ministers' Meeting (TELMIN), as well as other relevant sectoral bodies such as the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime (AMMTC), to identify a concrete list of voluntary, practical norms of State behaviour in cyberspace that ASEAN can work towards adopting and implementing, and to strengthen cooperation on personal data protection in cyberspace. We recognised the importance of strengthening a coherent and comprehensive framework for personal data protection, in accordance with the domestic laws, policies and regulations of ASEAN Member States. We acknowledged the work that has been done in fostering greater regional cybersecurity cooperation and capacity building through efforts such as Singapore's ASEAN Cyber Capacity Programme, and looked forward to the launching of the ASEAN-Japan Cybersecurity Capacity Building Centre in Bangkok.

7. We underscored the importance of the ADMM and ADMM-Plus as key components of the region's security architecture, which provide platforms for strategic dialogue and practical cooperation for the defence sector. We welcomed the Joint Statement by the ASEAN Defence Ministers on Countering Terrorism in ASEAN on 8 February 2018, and discussed the need for enhanced regional cooperation in countering terrorism and preventing violent extremism. We further support the annualisation of the ADMM-Plus and welcome the conduct of the ASEAN-China Maritime Exercise. We commended the on-going work of the AMMTC in developing the ASEAN Plan of Action to Prevent and Counter the Rise of Radicalisation and Violent Extremism.

8. We appreciated the ongoing work of the Directors-General of Immigration Departments and Heads of Consular Affairs Divisions of Ministries of Foreign Affairs Meeting (DGICM) in developing the Guidelines on Consular Assistance by ASEAN Member States Missions in Third Countries to Nationals of Other ASEAN Member States, and looked forward to the finalisation of the Guidelines before the 33rd ASEAN Summit.

9. We welcomed the finalisation of the text of the Model ASEAN Extradition Treaty (MAET) at the 8th meeting of the ASEAN Senior Law Officials Meeting (ASLOM) Working Group on the MAET in Bangkok from 26 to 28 March 2018. We looked forward to the draft text of the MAET being endorsed by the ASEAN Senior Law Officials Meeting (ASLOM) and the Law Ministers at the upcoming ASEAN Law Ministers Meeting (ALAWMM) in Vientiane in October 2018. We noted that work could commence on an ASEAN Extradition Treaty as a next step, to strengthen ASEAN's resilience and capacity to combat transnational crime, and to enhance cooperation within ASEAN to ensure respect for the rule of law. We also appreciated the ongoing work of the ASEAN Institute for Peace and Reconciliation (ASEAN-IPR) and noted that the signing of the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Indonesia and the ASEAN-IPR on Hosting and Granting Privileges and Immunities to the ASEAN-IPR on 1 February 2018 was a milestone for the ASEAN-IPR.

10. We remained resolute in our shared commitment to preserve the Southeast Asian region as a Nuclear Weapon Free Zone that is also free of all other weapons of mass destruction as enshrined in the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ) Treaty and the ASEAN Charter. We reaffirmed our commitment to continuously engage the Nuclear Weapon States (NWS) and intensify the on-going efforts of all Parties to resolve all outstanding issues in accordance with the objectives and principles of the SEANWFZ Treaty.

11. We welcomed the successful convening of the 7th ASEAN Maritime Forum (AMF) and 5th Expanded AMF (EAMF) in Jakarta, Indonesia, from 6 to 7 December 2017, and encouraged stronger cooperation and constructive dialogue on maritime issues of common interests and concerns. We encouraged stronger coordination among ASEAN cross-sectoral bodies and other relevant ASEAN

mechanisms such as the ARF, ADMM-Plus and the EAS in enhancing maritime cooperation in the region. We looked forward to the convening of the 8th AMF and 6th EAMF this year in the Philippines.

## **ASEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY**

12. We applauded the economic thrusts identified by Singapore for 2018, i.e. promoting innovation and e-commerce; improving trade facilitation; deepening services and investment integration; cultivating a conducive regulatory environment; and progressing ASEAN's external relations; and acknowledged their potential contribution to a stronger ASEAN Economic Community. We welcomed the early adoption of the ASEAN Joint Declaration on Cruise Tourism, and recognised the good momentum this provides towards realising the other priority economic deliverables for the year. We commended our officials for intensifying work on trade facilitation. In particular, we welcomed the live operation of the ASEAN Single Window (ASW), which includes, among its features, the readiness of five ASEAN Member States, namely Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam, to exchange the e-ATIGA Form D beginning 1 January 2018. We encouraged the remaining ASEAN Member States to exert efforts to implementing the e-ATIGA Form D and also look forward to the expansion of the ASW to include other customs and trade-related documents. We also noted the targeted implementation of the ASEAN-wide Self Certification Scheme within the year. We welcomed the proposed study on the feasibility of the implementation of an ASEAN-wide Mutual Recognition Agreement on Authorised Economic Operators. On services, we look forward to the signing of the Protocol to Implement the 10th Package of Commitments under the ASEAN Framework Agreement on Services (AFAS) this year. We noted with appreciation the significant progress made in the negotiations for the ASEAN Trade in Services Agreement (ATISA), and look forward to the signing of the Agreement this year. We also noted the meeting of the Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors on 6 April 2018 in Singapore and the continued commitment towards financial integration by focusing on initiatives to sustain growth, boost resilience, and foster innovation.

13. Recognising the importance of capitalising on the opportunities presented by the digital age, and the need to promote cross-border electronic commerce (e-Commerce) in the region, we are also pleased with the progress made so far in concluding negotiations for an ASEAN Agreement on Electronic Commerce and look forward to its signing this year. We noted the initiative to develop the ASEAN Digital Integration Framework to monitor the progress of ASEAN's digital integration. We also welcomed the initiative to develop the ASEAN Innovation Network, which aims to strengthen linkages between innovation ecosystems to spark new collaborations and solutions, and address the demand from the increasingly sophisticated and growing consumer base in the region. We tasked officials to continue efforts to better prepare the AEC for the digital age including through strengthening cross-sectoral coordination in the implementation of the ASEAN Work Programme on Electronic Commerce 2017- 2025. We also welcomed the Leaders' announcement at the ASEAN-Australia Special Summit on 18 March 2018 on the ASEAN-Australia Digital Trade Standards Cooperation Initiative, and tasked our officials to discuss and finalise the details of this initiative in a timely manner.

14. We supported the efforts made by both Indonesia and Malaysia to address the sustainability of palm oil.

## **ASEAN SOCIO-CULTURAL COMMUNITY**

15. We welcomed the renewal of the Singapore-ASEAN Youth Fund, with a S\$5 million top-up by Singapore to support ground-up initiatives by ASEAN youths, and noted the Regional Action Plan of the Vientiane Declaration on the Transition from Informal Employment to Formal Employment towards Decent Work Promotion in ASEAN. We also expressed support for Singapore's other priority areas

under the ASCC pillar, including hosting the first ASEAN eSports tournament, introducing an ASEAN Youth Fellowship programme, strengthening ASEAN's commitment to addressing climate change, affirming the importance of digital literacy and cyber wellness, and developing a more socially responsible media in ASEAN. We reiterated the need to institutionalise a culture of prevention to address the root causes of social issues, and called on all sectors from the three pillars to continue discussions to advance the culture of prevention.

16. We recalled the signing of the ASEAN Consensus on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers and looked forward to the adoption of its action plan at the 25th ASEAN Labour Ministers' Meeting (ALMM) in August 2018. We also recalled the adoption of the ASEAN Leaders Declaration on Antimicrobial Resistance and the ASEAN Leaders Declaration on Ending All Forms of Malnutrition at the 31st ASEAN Summit in Manila, and noted ongoing efforts by ASEAN to deepen cooperation in these areas. We noted with satisfaction ASEAN's efforts to promote complementarities between the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We also noted Thailand's efforts to develop an ASEAN Centre for Sustainable Development Studies and Dialogue, as well as Thailand's proposal for an ASEAN Centre to look into promoting healthy and active ageing for the well-being of all in the society. We acknowledged the progress made in addressing transboundary haze pollution, and agreed on the need to remain vigilant.

17. We discussed and received a briefing from Myanmar on the humanitarian situation in Rakhine State. We expressed continued support for Myanmar's humanitarian relief programme in Rakhine State and welcomed the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on disaster management (AHA Centre)'s ongoing work with the Myanmar Government-led mechanism to deliver humanitarian assistance to all displaced persons without discrimination. We welcomed the Arrangement on Return of Displaced Persons from Rakhine State between Myanmar and Bangladesh signed on 23 November 2017. We also looked forward to the expeditious commencement of the voluntary return of displaced persons to Myanmar in a safe, secure and dignified way without undue delay, and stressed the need to find a comprehensive and durable solution to address the root causes of the conflict and to create a conducive environment so that the affected communities can rebuild their lives. We urged Myanmar to continue to implement the recommendations of the final report of the Advisory Commission on Rakhine State and welcomed the establishment of the Advisory Board for the implementation of the recommendations on Rakhine State led in his individual capacity by Prof. Dr. Surakiart Sathirathai, former Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand. We expressed our support for the Myanmar Government in its efforts to bring peace, stability, the rule of law, to promote harmony and reconciliation among the various communities, as well as to ensure sustainable and equitable development in Rakhine State.

## **INITIATIVE FOR ASEAN INTEGRATION**

18. We noted the active roles of the Initiative of ASEAN Integration (IAI) Task Force, and welcomed the good progress in the implementation of the IAI Work Plan III to assist CLMV countries in meeting ASEAN-wide targets and in narrowing the development gap within ASEAN.

## **ASEAN CONNECTIVITY**

19. We noted the importance of enhancing ASEAN Connectivity to build a more competitive, inclusive, resilient and integrated ASEAN Community, and valued the continued efforts by the ASEAN Connectivity Coordinating Committee (ACCC), National Coordinators (NCs), National Focal Points (NFPs) relevant ASEAN Sectoral Bodies as well as Dialogue Partners and external parties to implement

projects under the 15 Initiatives of the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity (MPAC) 2025. We also welcomed the establishment of the Lead Implementing Body for Sustainable Infrastructure in March 2018, to spearhead sustainable infrastructure development in the region. We further welcomed the ongoing efforts to: (a) establish an initial list of potential priority infrastructure projects; (b) conduct a study to advance sustainable urbanisation in ASEAN which is aimed at increasing the deployment of smart urbanisation models across ASEAN, complementing the ASCN, and developing the ASEAN Sustainable Urbanisation Strategy; and (c) review how micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises are responding to challenges posed by the digital economy.

## **ASEAN'S EXTERNAL RELATIONS**

20. We reaffirmed the important role of the APT cooperation framework in promoting peace, security, stability and prosperity in East Asia. We agreed to further strengthen the EAS as a Leaders-led forum for dialogue and cooperation on broad strategic, political, and economic issues of common concern. We looked forward to further strengthening the EAS by implementing the Manila Plan of Action to Advance the Phnom Penh Declaration on the EAS Development Initiative (2018-2022), including through the promotion of practical cooperation in new priority areas such as maritime cooperation. We welcomed the commemoration of the 25th anniversary of the ARF this year, and the strengthening of its role as an inclusive forum in the Asia-Pacific region for fostering constructive dialogue and cooperation on political and security issues of common concern.

21. We took stock of ASEAN's relations with external partners, and discussed ways to expand and deepen our external engagement. We welcomed the successful convening of the ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit in New Delhi on 25 January 2018 and the ASEAN-Australia Special Summit in Sydney on 18 March 2018. We looked forward to the commemoration of the 15th Anniversary of ASEAN-China Strategic Partnership and 45th Anniversary of ASEAN-Japan Dialogue Relations, which will add momentum to strengthen these partnerships. We agreed to further strengthen our cooperation with international and regional organisations in Asia, Europe, Latin America and Africa through meetings and concrete activities.

22. We are deeply concerned over the rising tide of protectionism and anti-globalisation sentiments. We also reiterated ASEAN's continued support for the multilateral trading system and reaffirmed our commitment to uphold the open regionalism principle while maintaining ASEAN centrality. We are committed to keeping the momentum towards improving ASEAN+1 FTAs and deepening our engagement with other trading partners. We encouraged the swift conclusion of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) negotiations, in line with the mandate provided by the 1st RCEP Summit and based on the Guiding Principles and Objectives for Negotiating the RCEP. To this end, we instructed Ministers and officials to exert all efforts to resolve outstanding issues to bring the RCEP negotiations to a conclusion expeditiously. We also look forward to the early implementation of the ASEAN Hong Kong, China (HKC) Free Trade and Investment Agreements, which were signed in November 2017.

## **REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ISSUES AND DEVELOPMENTS**

23. 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 and prosperity. We underscored the importance of the full and effective implementation of the 2002 Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) in its entirety. We warmly welcomed the improving cooperation between ASEAN and China and were encouraged by the official commencement of the substantive negotiations towards the

early conclusion of an effective Code of Conduct in the South China Sea (COC) on a mutually-agreed timeline. We welcomed practical measures that could reduce tensions, and the risks of accidents, misunderstandings and miscalculation, such as the successful testing of the ASEAN Member States and China MFA-to-MFA hotline to manage maritime emergencies in the South China Sea, and the operationalisation of the Joint Statement on the Application of the Code for Unplanned Encounters at Sea (CUES) in the South China Sea adopted on 7 September 2016. We discussed the matters relating to the South China Sea and took note of the concerns expressed by some Leaders on the land reclamations and activities in the area, 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 and avoid actions that may further complicate the situation, and 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 DOC that could further complicate the situation and escalate tensions in the South China Sea.

24. We welcomed the Inter-Korean Summit on 27 April 2018, the recent visit of Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) leader Kim Jong Un to China, the announcement of plans for a meeting between US President Donald Trump and DPRK leader Kim in the near future, as well as efforts by the Republic of Korea and all concerned parties to reduce tensions and work towards a peaceful resolution of the situation on the Korean Peninsula. We also noted the DPRK's reported commitment to denuclearisation and its pledge to refrain from further nuclear and missile tests during this period. We reiterated our support for international efforts to bring about the complete, verifiable, and irreversible denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula in a peaceful manner and expressed hope for a peaceful and amicable resolution to the issue.

## **OTHER MATTERS**

25. We noted the expansive and transformative changes brought about by the Fourth Industrial Revolution. We recognised the need for ASEAN to take a holistic and long-term perspective in assessing and building its readiness for the new era, by addressing related challenges and developing capabilities to capitalise on the new opportunities presented. To this end, we look forward to the timely completion of the ASEAN Secretariat's study on ASEAN's readiness for the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

26. To enhance policy coherence, efficiency and coordination across the three ASEAN Community Pillars, we encouraged the expeditious secondment of officials from the AEC and ASCC Pillars to the Permanent Missions of ASEAN Member States to ASEAN in Jakarta. We looked forward to the completion of the construction of the new ASEAN Secretariat building in early 2019, which would not only enhance the ASEAN Secretariat's ability to host ASEAN meetings, but also reduce costs and underline ASEAN unity and centrality. We further noted the need for the ASEAN Secretariat to enhance its analysis and monitoring capacity to fully support ASEAN Member States in their regional integration and Community-building efforts.