

# 2019 JOINT STATEMENT ON REAFFIRMATION OF COMMITMENT TO ADVANCING THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD IN ASEAN

*Adopted in Bangkok, Thailand on 2 November 2019*

**WE**, the Heads of State/Government of the Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), namely Brunei Darussalam, the Kingdom of Cambodia, the Republic of Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, the Republic of the Philippines, the Republic of Singapore, the Kingdom of Thailand and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, on the occasion of the 35th ASEAN Summit;

**COGNISANT** that all ASEAN Member States ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and acknowledging that the Sustainable Development Agenda 2030 and its 17 goals as well as ASEAN Community Vision 2025, contributing to further the implementation of the CRC;

**RECOGNISING** that the ten ASEAN Member States, together and individually, have made significant progress in improving the lives of millions of children across the region, and providing an environment towards a happier childhood, more opportunities for realising their potential and sustained good health and well-being;

**FURTHER RECOGNISING** that there are new and emerging threats to child rights and new opportunities to realise child rights, posed by global trends such as climate change, online safety, protracted conflict, mass migration and demographic shifts, among others;

**DO HEREBY REAFFIRM THE COMMITMENT TO FULLY IMPLEMENT THE CRC AND AGREE TO:**

1. **ACCELERATE** efforts to remove barriers that hinder equity, inclusion and quality across all child rights sectors by generating data and utilising evidence to address causes of exclusion as well as mobilising political will, resources and partnerships with civil society, private sector, and other relevant stakeholders; and strengthen monitoring of SDGs including on prevalence of violence against children, climate and environmental impacts on children, and ensuring availability of children's sex-disaggregated data;
2. **COMMIT** to achieve gender equality and empowerment of children as enshrined in ASEAN Community Vision 2025 including addressing social norms that act as barriers to children's rights and gender equality and the disproportionate impacts and vulnerability of children during and after disasters;
3. **INCREASE** coverage of quality services in all ASEAN Member States by strengthening national policies and programmes in relation to health, nutrition, education, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), child protection and social work and protection, and by mainstreaming child rights in cross-cutting areas such as early childhood and development, adolescent empowerment, multi-dimensional poverty, disabilities, migration, environmental degradation, urbanisation, climate change and disaster risk reduction;
4. **STRENGTHEN** child rights legal frameworks across relevant sectors, including preventing all forms of violence against children, protecting children's rights to a clean and safe environment, and promoting universal health coverage, among others;

5. **LEVERAGE** innovation and technology in the digital age to promote actions that support children's rights, and to assist disadvantaged groups to access new technologies including technical tool for safer internet experience for children, and climate smart technology to address climate change;

6. **SAFEGUARD** the rights of children to express themselves under Article 13 of the CRC by providing a safe space to them, and creating opportunities for children to participate and be responsible and engaged in defining and designing policies that address 21st century skills;

7. **INCREASE** social investments to lift children out of poverty, to address the persistent challenge of multiple deprivations experienced by children, and to support continued and future economic growth and progress toward implementation of the CRC and achievement of SDG targets and ASEAN Community Vision 2025;

8. **CONTINUE** to work closely with UNICEF and other UN and intergovernmental bodies, CSOs, private sector and other stakeholders including children themselves to reinforce regional cooperation, cross-border collaboration as well as national policies and programmes that promote implementation of Member States' international child rights commitments, all of which recognise the need for specific actions for children from vulnerable groups; and

9. **TASK** the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Social Welfare and Development (AMMSWD) to work together with all ASEAN Member States to support the full implementation of the CRC in the ASEAN region.

**ADOPTED** in Bangkok, Kingdom of Thailand on this Second Day of November in the Year Two Thousand and Nineteen, in a single original copy, in the English language.