

2020 CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT OF THE 36TH ASEAN SUMMIT

Adopted on 26 June 2020

COHESIVE AND RESPONSIVE ASEAN

1. We, the Heads of State/Government of ASEAN Member States, gathered for the 36th ASEAN Summit on 26 June 2020. Under the theme of Cohesive and Responsive ASEAN in 2020, we underscored the need to enhance ASEAN's unity, cooperation and solidarity, economic integration, ASEAN awareness and identity, and emphasized the importance of promoting ASEAN pro-activeness and capacity in seizing opportunities as well as in addressing the challenges brought about by rapid changes in the regional and global landscape.
2. We recognized the unprecedented challenges posed by the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic in the region and the world. We noted with grave concerns the human cost and socio-economic impacts of COVID-19 and reaffirmed our commitment to implementing targeted policies to assure our peoples that ASEAN is at the forefront of this critical battle and future crises.
3. We acknowledged the ongoing whole-of-government efforts of ASEAN Member States and commended ASEAN's collective response thus far, through a holistic, multi-stakeholder, multi-sectoral approach. We commended the active works of the ASEAN Coordinating Council Working Group on Public Health Emergencies (ACCWG-PHE), and recalled the successful convening of the Special ASEAN Summit and Special ASEAN Plus Three Summit on COVID-19 on 14 April 2020 via video conference that reaffirmed our strong commitment to effectively contain and control the pandemic while mitigating its profound impacts on our economies and societies.
4. We also appreciated the joint efforts and continued commitment of ASEAN Ministers to work together in the face of this pandemic. To this end, we commended the adoption of the Statement by ASEAN Defence Ministers on Defense Cooperation against Disease Outbreaks (19 February 2020); Joint Statement of ASEAN Economic Ministers on Strengthening ASEAN's Economic Resilience in Response to the Outbreak of COVID-19 (10 March 2020); Joint Statement Special Video Conference of the ASEAN Health Ministers in Enhancing Cooperation on COVID-19 Response (7 April 2020); Joint Statement Special Video Conference of ASEAN Plus Three Health Ministers in Enhancing Cooperation on COVID-19 Response (7 April 2020); ASEAN Plus Three Economic Ministers' Joint Statement on Mitigating the Economic Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic (4 June 2020); Statement of ASEAN Ministers on Agriculture and Forestry in Response to The Outbreak of The Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) to Ensure Food Security, Food Safety and Nutrition in ASEAN (16 April 2020); Joint Statement of the ASEAN Tourism Ministers on Strengthening Cooperation to Revitalise ASEAN Tourism in the context of COVID-19 (29 April 2020); Joint Statement of ASEAN Labour Ministers on Response to the Impact of COVID-19 on Labour and Employment (14 May 2020); Joint Statement of the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Social Welfare and Development on Mitigating Impacts of COVID-19 on Vulnerable Groups (10 June 2020).
5. We especially appreciated the pro-active and timely actions by the ASEAN Health Sector, in collaboration with ASEAN's Dialogue Partners, relevant international organizations, and other external partners in the prevention, detection, control and response to the COVID-19 pandemic, including through the convening of Special Video Conferences of the ASEAN Health Ministers, Senior Officials on Health Development, and epidemiology experts among ASEAN Member States and with Dialogue Partners; and recognized the ongoing technical exchanges, information sharing, risk assessment and use of big data analytics and visualisation, diseases surveillance, and the public health preparedness and emergency operation responses carried out through existing ASEAN Health Sector mechanisms.

6. We underscored the importance of strengthening the capacity of ASEAN and existing regional mechanisms on public health and emergency response to optimise their operations and enhance regional preparedness and health security, through regional and international coordination and cooperation with external partners and international organisations to address the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases and other public health emergencies. We welcomed the holding of Ministerial meetings with Dialogue Partners, including Australia, China, the EU, Russia and the U.S. via videoconference to exchange views and explore cooperation to mitigate, control and respond to the impact of COVID-19, including joint collaboration on scientific research and development of vaccines and medicines, building and maintaining resilient, open and connected supply chains and utilizing ASEAN-led regional mechanisms to put forward people-centered healthcare, treatment and consular assistance policies in responding to pandemics and supporting a sustained economic recovery.
7. We emphasized the importance of undertaking responsive and timely measures to address the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on vulnerable sectors, including women, children, youth, the elderly, and persons with disabilities, taking into account how disasters and other challenges can further heighten their vulnerabilities, as well as strengthening their capacities to respond to the impacts of the pandemic.
8. We announced the establishment of the COVID-19 ASEAN Response Fund and the commencement of the process of moving forward ASEAN's efforts to recover from the impacts of COVID-19 and develop a comprehensive recovery framework that is robust, holistic, inclusive, gender-responsive and science-based as well as effective in taking the region through the reopening and recovery stages, towards longer-term resilience, preparedness, and competitiveness. We looked forward to fostering cross-pillar and cross-sectoral collaboration within ASEAN as well as renewing commitments for collaboration with relevant stakeholders to ensure a collective and coordinated regional response to curb the further transmission of COVID-19 and mitigate the multi-faceted impact of this pandemic. To this end, we tasked the ASEAN Community Councils to undertake relevant works in their respective pillars to contribute to an ASEAN comprehensive recovery plan, with the support of the ASEAN Secretariat and to be coordinated by the ASEAN Coordinating Council, along the line of a whole-of-ASEAN Community approach, to be submitted to the 37th ASEAN Summit for the Leader's guidance and instructions.
9. We encouraged active efforts by ASEAN Member States and ASEAN sectoral bodies toward early establishment of the ASEAN Regional Reserve of Medical Supplies (RRMS) and the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) to further enhance ASEAN's preparedness and capacity to respond to emerging diseases and future public health emergencies.
10. In these uncertain times, we reiterated the importance of maintaining an open, inclusive, transparent and rules-based regional architecture with ASEAN at the centre and agreed to continue strengthening the efficiency of and promoting mutually-reinforcing synergy between the 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).

ASEAN COMMUNITY BUILDING

11. We reaffirmed our commitment to realising the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 towards a rules-based, people-oriented, and people-centred ASEAN Community, where our peoples enjoy human rights and fundamental freedoms, higher quality of life and a sense of togetherness and common identity, guided by the purposes and principles of the ASEAN Charter. We reaffirmed the importance of maintaining ASEAN centrality and unity in our community-building efforts, engagement with external partners and the regional architecture.

12. We welcomed the commencement of the Mid-Term Review for the three ASEAN Community Blueprints 2025. The Mid-Term Review provides an opportunity for assessment, reflection, and evaluation five years after the establishment of the ASEAN Community. It will look beyond the progress and achievements to date, and will also assess the changes on the strategic landscape of ASEAN community building efforts and identify emerging issues that need to be taken into consideration towards 2025 and beyond. We look forward to considering the outcomes and recommendations resulting from the Mid-Term Review at the 37th ASEAN Summit.
13. 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).
14. With the successful holding of the Special Session of the ASEAN Leaders on Women Empowerment in the Digital Age, being held for the very first time within an ASEAN Summit, which was a vivid manifestation of ASEAN's contributions to the effective realization of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, we reaffirmed ASEAN's steadfast commitment and staunch efforts to promoting gender equality and empowerment. The ASEAN Leaders' Interface with the ASEAN Inter-parliamentary Assembly (AIPA), representatives of ASEAN youth and the ASEAN Business Advisory Council (ABAC) during the 36th ASEAN Summit have further demonstrated ASEAN's consistent approach of engaging multi-stakeholder contribution to ASEAN Community building process, toward an inclusive, people-centered, people-oriented ASEAN Community.

KEY DELIVERABLES

15. We adopted the ASEAN Leaders' Vision Statement for a Cohesive and Responsive ASEAN, which reflects ASEAN's strong commitment to upholding ASEAN unity, solidarity and centrality while enhancing ASEAN's capacity to embrace the opportunities and effectively address emerging challenges.
16. As stated in the Vision Statement, we underscores the need to expedite the effective and timely realisation of the ASEAN Community Vision 2025; stresses the importance of conducting the Mid-Term Review of the ASEAN Community Blueprints 2025 in moving forward the regional integration process. Being forward- looking, we agreed to commence deliberations on charting the next path of development for ASEAN beyond 2025. We emphasized the importance of review of the implementation of the ASEAN Charter and looked forward to the timely completion of the scoping assessment by the ASEAN Secretariat on the functions of ASEAN institutional structure established by the Charter and the application of rules and procedures that govern the operations of ASEAN as provided for in the Charter. We also encouraged further assessment on ways and means to enhance the ASEAN Community awareness and visibility, including the pronounced display of ASEAN Flags in ASEAN Member States and the use of ASEAN Anthem at ASEAN's official functions. We commit to continue promoting ASEAN's international profile for enhanced partnership and sustainable development at the same time, strengthening ASEAN's institutional capacity through improved ASEAN work processes and coordination
17. We also emphasizes ASEAN's collective efforts and collaboration in response to COVID-19 and addresses the pandemic's profound impacts on ASEAN. We dedicate utmost efforts to realizing the key initiatives of the Special ASEAN Summit and Special ASEAN Plus Three Summit to this aim, including the establishment of an COVID- 19 ASEAN Response Fund; the ASEAN Regional Reserve of Medical Supplies and Equipment, the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for Public Health Emergencies Response and the development of a framework to move forward ASEAN's comprehensive efforts to recover from the impact of COVID-19 in a comprehensive and holistic manner.

18. The Leaders' Vision Statement also emphasized the importance of promoting mutual trust and confidence, enhanced dialogue and cooperation in inter-state relations, and a multilateral approach in addressing emerging challenges, as well as support for a rules-based regional and international order, anchored in international law.

INITIATIVE FOR ASEAN INTEGRATION

19. We welcomed efforts to address all remaining actions and substantially achieve the targeted outputs for the remaining period of the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) Work Plan III (2016-2020). We looked forward to the formulation of the new IAI Work Plan that would outline the strategic framework to move ASEAN integration forward and bridge the development gap for the next five years. We tasked the IAI Task Force to take into account the emerging issues and current trends to ensure that the new Work Plan is relevant and would prepare the CLMV countries in meeting their regional commitments.

ASEAN CONNECTIVITY

20. We were encouraged by notable progress in the implementation of the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity (MPAC) 2025 towards a cohesive and responsive ASEAN. We welcomed the ongoing efforts to promote the Initial Rolling Priority Pipeline of ASEAN Infrastructure Projects to attract investments and to support cities in ASEAN to implement the ASEAN Sustainable Urbanisation Strategy (ASUS). Noting the good progress, we looked forward to the finalisation of the project on the "Development of an ASEAN Database on Trade Routes and Framework for Enhancing Supply Chain Efficiency" to assist in strengthening the competitiveness of regional trade network and improve cross-border trade and supply chain efficiency, taking into account the impact of COVID-19 and trends in trade patterns. ASEAN Community-building will only be complete with people-to-people connectivity. In this regard, we were pleased to note ASEAN's endeavour to boost human capital, education linkages, and people mobility through the initiatives on TVET and higher education. We commended the ASEAN Connectivity Coordinating Committee (ACCC), the Lead Implementing Bodies (LIBs), and relevant ASEAN Sectoral Bodies for their steadfast support to implement the MPAC 2025, and valued the contributions of our Dialogue Partners and external partners. We called for stronger partnership and collaboration among all Dialogue Partners and stakeholders to effectively implement MPAC 2025 and synergise MPAC 2025 with various key connectivity strategies and initiatives, including through the Connecting the Connectivities approach. We also looked forward to the Second Progress Review Report and Mid-Term Review of MPAC 2025 with recommendations to enhance MPAC 2025 implementation.
21. We encouraged the maintenance of necessary interconnectedness in the region by facilitating to the extent possible the essential movement of people, including business travels, while ensuring the safeguarding of public health in line with our efforts to combat the COVID-19 pandemic.

ASEAN SMART CITIES NETWORK

22. We welcomed the continued progress in ASEAN's agenda of a smart and sustainable urban development in the region through strengthening of partnerships of the ASEAN Smart Cities Network (ASCN) to support the implementation of the Smart City Action Plans. We were encouraged by the continued interest from ASEAN External Partners in supporting smart city policy making and the implementation of various joint activities as well as providing ASEAN Member States the opportunity to explore collaboration, identify and implement solutions, enhance capacity-building, and exchange knowledge and best practices with other cities.

ASEAN POLITICAL-SECURITY COMMUNITY

23. We noted with satisfaction the encouraging progress made in the implementation of the ASEAN Political – Security Community (APSC) Blueprint 2025, with 96% of the action lines having been addressed. We noted that the Mid-Term Review of the APSC Blueprint 2025 is being undertaken and looked forward to its report and recommendations by the end of this year.

24. We reaffirmed the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC) as the key code of conduct governing inter-State relations in the region and as a foundation for maintaining regional peace and stability. We welcomed the increasing number of interested parties to accede to the TAC. We reiterated our commitment to further promote the principles embodied in the TAC in the wider region and emphasised the importance of all High Contracting Parties' commitment to their obligations under the Treaty. We also reaffirmed our commitment to preserve the Southeast Asian region as a Nuclear Weapons Free Zone, free of all other weapons of mass destruction as enshrined in the Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapons-Free Zone (SEANWFZ Treaty) and the ASEAN Charter. We stressed the importance of the full and effective implementation of the SEANWFZ Treaty, including under the Plan of Action to Strengthen the Implementation of the SEANWFZ Treaty (2018-2022). We reaffirmed our commitment to continuously engage the Nuclear Weapon States (NWS) and intensify the ongoing efforts of all Parties to resolve all outstanding issues in accordance with the objectives and principles of the SEANWFZ Treaty. We looked forward to the implementation of the Practical Arrangements between ASEAN and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in the areas of nuclear science and technology and applications, nuclear safety, security and safeguards.
25. We commended the significant progress made and reaffirmed our continued commitment in combating transnational crimes, including through the strengthening of cross-sectoral and cross-pillar cooperation. We acknowledged the continuous effort of implementing the ASEAN Convention Against Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (ACTIP), which has now been ratified by all ASEAN Member States. We shared the concern that the source of trafficking in persons continues to victimise displaced persons in the region and will further enhance cooperation to address this issue. We also noted the upcoming conduct of ASEAN collaboration meeting for the final review and discussion on the ways forward of the Bohol Trafficking in Persons Work Plan 2017-2020. We looked forward to the implementation of the recently adopted Work Plan of the ASEAN Plan of Action to Prevent and Counter the Rise of Radicalisation and Violent Extremism (Bali Work Plan) 2019- 2025 as an important step to comprehensively address radicalisation and violent extremism in the region. We also noted that work is underway to enhance border management cooperation based on Thailand's draft Concept Paper on "A Regional Border Management Cooperation Roadmap" which is being discussed by the Senior Officials' Meeting on Transnational Crime (SOMTC) and the Directors-General of Immigration Departments and Heads of Consular Affairs Divisions of Ministries of Foreign Affairs Meeting (DGICM) with an aim for endorsement at the 14th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime in 2020.
26. We recognised the importance of cybersecurity cooperation in ensuring an open, secure, stable, accessible and resilient cyberspace to support the ASEAN digital economy. We welcomed on-going efforts undertaken at the various ASEAN sectoral bodies to strengthen a rules-based cyberspace and advance regional cybersecurity policy coordination and capacity building, including through the proposed ASEAN Coordinating Committee on Cybersecurity (ASEAN-Cyber CC) and the cybersecurity training programmes conducted by the ASEAN-Japan Cybersecurity Capacity Building Centre (AJCCBC) in Bangkok and the ASEAN-Singapore Cybersecurity Centre of Excellence (ASCCE) in Singapore. We looked forward to the establishment of the ASEAN Cybersecurity Coordination Committee.
27. We reaffirmed our commitment towards a drug-free region and a zero-tolerance approach towards illicit drugs. We noted that the Mid- Term Review of the ASEAN Work Plan on Securing Communities Against Illicit Drugs will be conducted in due course and look forward to its outcome. We also noted that work is underway to publish the next series of the ASEAN Drug Monitoring Report (ADM) 2019 by the ASEAN Narcotics Cooperation Center (ASEAN NARCO), a key trademark of ASEAN's cooperation in combating illicit drugs.
28. We noted that the defence sector is entering its new cycle, and in this regard, the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM) Three- Year Work Programme 2020-2022 and the ADMM-Plus Experts' Working Groups Work Plans 2020-2023 are currently being finalised, to chart the future direction of its practical cooperation. We welcomed the commemoration of the 10th anniversary of the founding of the ADMM-Plus, which shall reflect its achievements and aspirations in maintaining regional security.

29. We acknowledged the defence sector's response to COVID-19 pandemic, as reflected in the Joint Statement by the ASEAN Defence Ministers on Defence Cooperation Against Disease Outbreaks issued in February 2020. We observed that its implementation is currently on-going particularly through the conduct of the virtual ADMM COVID-19 Table-Top Exercise on 27 May 2020 under the ASEAN Center of Military Medicine, and a virtual workshop in June 2020 under the Network of ASEAN Chemical, Biological and Radiological Defence Experts.
30. We looked forward to the convening of the Fact-Finding Missions (FFM) to Timor-Leste by the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) and ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) Pillars when circumstances allow, after which a comprehensive assessment of Timor-Leste's application for ASEAN membership should be developed at the soonest. We reiterated the importance for all ASEAN Community Pillars to identify areas that need to be further improved and explore ways to provide capacity building assistance to Timor-Leste, including the encouragement of their participation in non-policy making activities in ASEAN.
31. We commended the work of the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR), including its efforts to increase engagement with relevant stakeholders in the region. We look forward to AICHR's continuous work in responding to the human rights challenges and priorities of the region, as well as ensuring synergy with the relevant ASEAN bodies and entities, research institutions, and civil society organisations on the promotion and protection of human rights in ASEAN. We encouraged the ASEAN Institute for Peace and Reconciliation (ASEAN-IPR), including the ASEAN Women for Peace Registry (AWPR), in accordance with its terms of reference, to continue its efforts in advancing the role of women in peace and reconciliation processes in both conflict and post-conflict contexts, in line with the Joint Statement on Promoting Women, Peace and Security in ASEAN in 2017. Such efforts shall be in coordination with the ASEAN Committee on Women (ACW), ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC). We also encouraged the ASEAN-IPR to forge partnerships with relevant ASEAN bodies and regional and international institutes to further promote the culture of peace and moderation in ASEAN.
32. We acknowledged the importance of the participation of women, youth, elderly, persons with disabilities, and other vulnerable and marginalised groups in peacebuilding and reaffirmed our commitment to continue to engage them in a meaningful manner and promote the implementation of gender-responsive and rights-based policies, programs, and projects in ASEAN.
33. We recognised the importance of initiatives to promote dialogue, tolerance and conflict prevention in combating radicalisation and violent extremism. We encouraged cooperation to build more cohesive relationships, including through interfaith and inter-cultural dialogue, in pursuit of greater peace and stability in the region.
34. We welcomed the inclusion of the ASEAN Ministers/Attorneys- General Meeting of the Central Authorities on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters (AMAG-MLAT) and its Senior Officials' Meeting of the Central Authorities on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters (SOM-MLAT) as an ASEAN Sectoral Ministerial Body in Annex 1 of the ASEAN Charter, which would further strengthen ASEAN institutions on criminal justice and combating transnational crime. We looked forward to the work progress of the ASEAN Law Ministers Meeting (ALAWMM) supported by its ASEAN Senior Law Officials Meeting (ASLOM) which will consider and discuss the development of an ASEAN Extradition Treaty at the 19th ASLOM to be held in Myanmar.
35. We welcomed the work and the achievement of the ASEAN Regional Mine Action Center (ARMAC) as a center of excellence in promoting the efforts to address the issue of explosive remnant of war (ERW) for interested ASEAN Member States as well as to enhance public awareness of the dangers of ERW among affected communities.

ASEAN OUTLOOK ON THE INDO-PACIFIC

36. We reaffirmed the importance of the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP) as a guide for ASEAN's engagement in the wider Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean regions. We agreed to continue promoting further the objectives and principles contained in the Outlook, as well as encouraging external partners to support and undertake cooperation with ASEAN on the four key areas; namely maritime cooperation, connectivity, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and economic and other possible areas of cooperation, through practical projects to promote mutual trust, mutual respect, and mutual benefit through ASEAN-led mechanisms.

ASEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY

37. We reaffirmed our commitment to achieve a sustainable, balanced, and inclusive economic growth and to safeguard our economies against global risks and uncertainties. We noted with satisfaction the encouraging progress made in the implementation of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) Blueprint 2025. Out of the 171 annual priorities for 2019 under the AEC Blueprint 2025, 132 have been implemented. We noted that the Mid-Term Review of the AEC Blueprint 2025 is being undertaken and looked forward to its report and recommendations in a timely manner.
38. We noted with concern the economic fallout from COVID-19, and the significant impact on hard-hit sectors such as health, agriculture, fisheries, transport, tourism and hospitality, as well as on vulnerable and at-risk businesses and individuals, including Micro-Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), informal workers, and migrant workers. While the region's economic growth appears to be stabilising with an estimated GDP growth of 4.6% in 2019, we noted that the COVID-19 pandemic will affect the prospect of further recovery in the region in 2020.
39. We remain committed to keeping our markets open for trade that is free from unnecessary trade restrictions as well as for investment, and to coordinating, as appropriate, the implementation of pertinent policy measures to mitigate the economic impacts of the outbreak, particularly on Micro-Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), business start-ups, creative artists, and the more vulnerable sectors in the region. We underscored the importance of strengthening intra-ASEAN trade and investment to regional supply chains and bolster collective resilience against internal and external shocks. Among others, we recognised the important role of the private sector in the post-pandemic recovery efforts, which include restarting the economy, rehiring, and restoring business and consumer confidence as well as studying a proposal for the creation of a high-level special committee that will address the aftermath of the pandemic alongside other ASEAN mechanisms. To this end, we welcomed the adoption of the Ha Noi Plan of Action on Strengthening ASEAN Economic Cooperation and Supply Chain Connectivity in Response to the COVID-19 pandemic by the ASEAN Economic Ministers, and tasked our officials to ensure its implementation in a swift and efficient manner.
40. We welcomed the 13 Priority Economic Deliverables (PEDs) under Viet Nam's 2020 ASEAN Chairmanship. These PEDs will help promote intra-ASEAN economic integration and connectivity; deepen ASEAN engagement with the global community for sustainable development; and enhance the responsiveness and institutional capacity of ASEAN, all of which contribute to the achievement of a cohesive and responsive ASEAN. We look forward to the timely and successful delivery of the PEDs by the relevant sectoral bodies.

41. We also welcomed the key progress made towards further economic integration. We commended the onboarding of 10 ASEAN Member States in the Live Operation for the exchange of the ASEAN Trade in Goods Agreement (ATIGA) e-form D via the ASEAN Single Window (ASW) and looked forward to the expansion to other trade-related documents among ready ASEAN Member States this year. We are pleased with the conclusion of the Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA) for Type Approval of Automotive Products and look forward to its signing this year. In promoting strong regional competition, we welcomed the development of the ASEAN Peer Review Guidance Document, the Trainers' Guide for Market Studies, the Toolkit for Formulating National Enforcement Strategies, and the research paper on commonalities and differences in competition legislations in ASEAN. We also applauded the development of the ASEAN Framework on Cross-Border Cooperation for ASEAN consumer protection authorities, the Capacity Building Roadmap for Consumer Protection 2019-2025, and the ASEAN Guidelines on Cross Border B2C Dispute Resolution. We noted with appreciation the publication of the ASEAN Online Business Code of Conduct, the Business Guide to IP Institutions, and the Handbook on IP Commercialisation.
42. We recognised the indispensable role of digital technologies in our recovery efforts and to this end, resolved to redouble our efforts to build our preparedness for the fourth industrial revolution (4IR), including through the development of the ASEAN consolidated strategy on the 4IR, which should take a whole-of-community approach, and our work towards a robust, integrated, and inclusive digital economy.
43. We welcomed the continued enhancement in transport connectivity through the conclusion of Protocol 3 on the Expansion of Fifth Freedom Traffic Rights Between Contracting Parties to the ASEAN China Air Transport Agreement between the Governments of the Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the Government of the People's Republic of China (AC-ATA) and the adoption of the Implementation Framework of ASEAN Framework Agreement on Multimodal Transport (AFAMT) and its Action Plan. We also welcomed the signing of the Protocol to Implement the Eleventh Package of Commitments on Air Transport Services under the ASEAN Frameworks Agreement on Services. We reaffirmed our commitment to strengthen regional food security through the implementation of the ASEAN Guidelines on Promoting Responsible Investment in Food, Agriculture and Forestry that contributes to regional economic development, food and nutrition security, food safety and equitable benefits, as well as the sustainable use of natural resources. We welcomed the adoption of the ASEAN Innovation Roadmap 2019 – 2025, which would contribute to advancing ASEAN innovation transformation. To this end, we noted that strategic partnerships are being established with all relevant stakeholders to create a vibrant Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) ecosystem.
44. We reaffirmed ASEAN's commitment to enhance energy security in the region, provide energy for socio-economic development, and promote energy accessibility for all. We looked forward to the ASEAN Ministers on Energy Meeting to ensure ASEAN energy transition to support sustainable development.
45. We recognized the importance of public-private sector engagement and urged relevant ASEAN bodies to continue efforts and work closely with the private sector in facilitating trade and investment, so as to regenerate employment to address the socio-economic impacts of COVID-19, particularly in the advent of 4IR. We welcomed the contribution of the ASEAN Business Advisory Council (ASEAN-BAC), in close partnership with the Joint Business Councils, in strengthening ASEAN's efforts to address the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and thanked its members for their active coordination and promotion of private sector collaboration in ASEAN. We welcomed initiatives by the ASEAN-BAC to provide opportunities for Micro-Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), particularly ASEAN-BAC's current legacy project, DIGITAL STARS, that aims to empower business start-ups and enterprises by promoting innovation and digitalisation of MSMEs.

46. We expressed support for the initiatives of the Healthcare Services Sectoral Working Group (HSSWG) towards the implementation of the ASEAN's MRAs for Nursing Services, Medical Practitioners, and Dental Practitioners, thereby facilitating the movement of health professionals within the ASEAN Region, as well as progress in discussions on Health Tourism and e-Healthcare Services, noting the increasing demand for healthcare services delivered through digital technologies and telecommunications especially during disasters and pandemics.

FREE TRADE AGREEMENTS

47. We noted the progress in the implementation of ASEAN's free trade area (FTA) and comprehensive economic partnership (CEP) agreements with major trading partners i.e. China, India, Japan, Korea, Australia and New Zealand, and Hong Kong, China as well as engagement with new FTA partners. We underscored the importance of these agreements not only in transforming the region into a global ASEAN but also in contributing to the post-pandemic recovery and in creating resilient supply chains. Noting that the global pandemic may have slowed down work on upgrading ASEAN's various FTAs, we tasked our officials to redouble efforts and ensure that ASEAN's FTAs incorporate mechanisms for the smooth flow of supply chains and continue to deliver new opportunities to businesses especially the vulnerable groups, MSMEs, creative artists, and business start-ups in these times of global economic uncertainties. We welcomed the progress made for the full conclusion of the negotiations of the RCEP Agreement and looked forward to the signing of this Agreement by the end of this year. This Agreement demonstrates the firm commitment of ASEAN and its partners to upholding an open, inclusive and rules-based multi-lateral trading system.

ASEAN SOCIO-CULTURAL COMMUNITY

48. We noted the importance of the conduct of the Mid-Term Review (MTR) of the implementation of ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) Blueprint 2025. The Mid-Term Review will inform us on the progress and challenges, and recommend ways forward in building an ASCC Pillar that will be more engaging and beneficial to the ASEAN peoples. We welcomed efforts by the ASCC and remain steadfast in our commitment to leaving no one behind in pursuing inclusive and sustainable development. We noted with satisfaction ASEAN's collective efforts to promote complementarities between the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including through the effective implementation of the Complementarities Roadmap (2020-2025) and the work of the ASEAN Centre for Sustainable Development Studies and Dialogue (ACSDD), which leverages regional cooperation to accelerate national actions towards attaining the sustainable development goals (SDGs). We noted the preparation of the ASEAN Development Outlook which we expect to receive by the 37th ASEAN Summit later this year. We also looked forward to strengthening cooperation on realising the SDGs through the conduct of the Fifth ASEAN-China-United Nations Development Program (UNDP) Symposium and the Second ASEAN Regional Forum with National Development Planning Agencies on the SDGs.

49. We adopted the ASEAN Declaration on Human Resources Development for the Changing World of Work, which commits ASEAN Member States to promote lifelong learning with a view to preparing the region's human resources to adapt to the changing world of work due to technological advances, demographic transition and greening economies. We looked forward to the finalisation of a multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder roadmap to translate those commitments into actions for notation at the 37th ASEAN Summit. We supported the establishment of the ASEAN Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Council and welcomed the adoption of its terms of reference by the ASEAN Economic, Education, and Labour Ministers. We noted that ASEAN Member States had completed the self-assessment of their respective implementation of the ASEAN Consensus on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers. The results of the self-assessment will serve as the basis in identifying regional initiatives to implement the ASEAN Consensus on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers in the next five years. We noted that as the follow-up initiatives to the ASEAN Declaration on Strengthening Social Protection, four regional studies on the Extension of Social Security to Workers in Informal Employment in the ASEAN Region; Old-Age Income Security in ASEAN Member States; Informal Employment Statistics to Support Decent Work Promotion in ASEAN; and Managing Technology's Implications on Work, Workers, and Employment Relationships in ASEAN have been completed and will be considered as input to the development of post-2020 sectoral work plans.
50. In ASEAN's efforts to develop and foster ASEAN Identity, we noted the ongoing consultations, spearheaded by the Senior Officials Meeting on Culture and Arts (SOMCA), with the three ASEAN Community Pillars to develop the Narrative of ASEAN Identity. This Narrative will further inculcate a sense of belonging and popularise ASEAN as a people-centred, people-oriented community. We were pleased to note the progress made by the ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Youth (SOMY) in undertaking the second phase of the ASEAN Youth Development Index, which seeks to assess the domain of ASEAN Awareness, Values and Identity. Recalling the aspiration to forge a common regional identity through sporting activities, we look forward to the development of the Terms of Reference of Technical Working Group for the preparation of ASEAN's Joint Bid for the FIFA World Cup 2034 and the convening of its first meeting in Malaysia under the leadership of Thailand, and in coordination with national football associations of ASEAN Member States, the ASEAN Football Federation (AFF) and the Asian Football Confederation (AFC). We looked forward to celebrating our region's important achievements in the global sports arena.
51. We encouraged continuing efforts to address persistent gender-based inequalities, to amplify the voices of children in the region to respond to emerging threats and challenges, to mainstream the rights and welfare of persons with disabilities and to promote healthy and active ageing to respond to ageing societies. We reaffirmed our strong commitment to realising gender equality as a key ingredient to sustainable development through the conduct of the ASEAN Leaders' Special Session on Women's Empowerment in the Digital Age. We looked forward to the finalisation of the ASEAN Gender Mainstreaming Strategic Framework which will mainstream gender perspectives across the three ASEAN Community Pillars. We likewise looked forward to the finalisation of the ASEAN Regional Study on Women, Peace and Security which will raise responsive and practical recommendations to strengthen the role of women in ensuring peace in the ASEAN region.

52. We reaffirmed the importance of advancing cooperation on environmental protection and conservation with greater efforts to address cross-cutting issues for sustainable development, such as climate change, marine debris, biodiversity conservation, and transboundary haze pollution. We reiterated our commitment to combating marine plastic debris and operationalising the ASEAN Framework of Action on Marine Debris, among others through the development of an ASEAN Regional Action Plan on Marine Debris. We reaffirmed our commitment to contributing to the goals of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Paris Agreement, and looked forward to the 26th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP26) to the UNFCCC in 2021 in Glasgow, United Kingdom. We noted the successful conduct of the 6th ASEAN Heritage Parks (AHP) Conference held on 21-24 October 2019 in Pakse, Lao PDR, organised by the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB) and looked forward to increased designation of protected areas in ASEAN Member States as AHPs. We renewed our commitment to addressing transboundary haze under the ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution (AATHP) and noted the progress of implementation of the Roadmap on ASEAN Cooperation towards Transboundary Haze Pollution Control with Means of Implementation (Roadmap) 2016-2020, ASEAN Peatland Management Strategy (APMS) 2006-2020, and the ASEAN Programme on Sustainable Management of Peatland Ecosystems (APSMPE) 2014-2020. We looked forward to the final review of the APMS and the Roadmap to evaluate the achievement of a haze-free ASEAN.
53. We reaffirmed our commitment in preventing and mitigating the impact of slow onset disasters such as drought in the region and looked forward to the formulation of the ASEAN Declaration on Building Resilience to Drought and its subsequent Regional Action Plan. We noted the development of the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) Work Programme 2021-2025 that will set out priorities and activities toward the realisation of the ASEAN Vision 2025 on Disaster Management. We were pleased to note the successful organisation of the ASEAN High-Level Symposium on Disaster Management on 26 February 2020 at the ASEAN Secretariat as an important platform for ASEAN in ensuring seamless collaboration among ASEAN Community Pillars and strengthening its cross-sectoral coordination in reducing disaster risks and responding to disasters.

We reaffirmed the importance of strengthening coordination between ASEAN Member States in disaster management and supporting the operationalisation of the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on disaster management (AHA Centre), including the DELSA Regional Warehouse and Satellite Warehouses, in emergency response. We noted the development of the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) Work Programme 2021-2025 that will set out priorities and activities toward the realisation of the ASEAN Vision 2025 on Disaster Management.

We reaffirmed our support for Myanmar's commitment in addressing the humanitarian situation in the Rakhine State. We supported a more visible and enhanced role of ASEAN in supporting Myanmar through providing humanitarian assistance, facilitating the repatriation process and promoting sustainable development in Rakhine State. We welcomed the second high-level visit to Cox's Bazar by the Government of Myanmar accompanied by the ASEAN Secretariat, the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA Centre), and the ASEAN Emergency Response and Assessment Team (ASEAN-ERAT) on 18-19 December 2019 to share information on the repatriation process to the displaced persons. We appreciated the efforts of the Secretary-General of ASEAN in leading the implementation of the recommendations of the ASEAN Preliminary Needs Assessment (PNA) and noted operationalisation of the Ad Hoc Support Team of the ASEAN Secretariat to expedite the implementation of the recommendations of the PNA. We appreciated the contribution from ASEAN Member States and some external partners in supporting ASEAN activities, including the prioritised projects in Rakhine State to facilitate the repatriation process and to promote sustainable development.

54. We stressed the importance of and support Myanmar's efforts in ensuring safety and security for all communities in Rakhine State and facilitating voluntary return of displaced persons in a safe, secure and dignified manner. We looked forward and stood ready to support and facilitate the full implementation of the Arrangement on Return of Displaced Persons from Rakhine State between the Government of Myanmar and the Government of Bangladesh signed in 2017 and the renewed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Myanmar Government, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) as well as to further substantive dialogue between Myanmar and Bangladesh to facilitate the repatriation process. We encouraged Myanmar to continue to implement the remaining recommendations of the final report of the Advisory Commission on Rakhine State. We noted that the Independent Commission of Enquiry (ICOE) submitted its Final Report to the Government of Myanmar in January 2020 and reiterated 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 reaffirmed ASEAN's continued support for Myanmar's efforts to bring peace, stability, the rule of law, and to promote harmony and reconciliation among the various communities as well as to ensure sustainable and equitable development in the Rakhine State.
55. We acknowledged the ongoing implementation of health-related ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on ending all forms of malnutrition combating antimicrobial resistance, disaster health management, vaccine security and self-reliance, non-communicable diseases, and prevention of HIV and AIDS, which further complements the development and enhancement of accelerating health for all in ASEAN through the ASEAN Post-2015 Health Development Agenda for 2021-2025. We looked forward to the robust collaboration between ASEAN and the World Health Organization, and engagements with Dialogue Partners and external partners, in external partners such as the ASEAN Plus Three, the European Union (EU), the United States (U.S) and Canada in further responding to all hazards and emerging health threats including pandemics and emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases, and strengthening public health systems and access to healthcare. We noted the proposal to establish an APT Task Force on pandemic to handle the issue of public health emergencies and to anticipate the emergence of future pandemics.
56. We recognised that the onset of COVID-19 has resulted in the spread of fake news and misinformation which have created a climate of distrust, intolerance and fear that could undermine effective preparedness, resiliency and responsiveness of our peoples toward addressing the outbreak. We therefore remained steadfast in not only continuing our efforts to fight fake news through the implementation of the Framework and Joint Declaration to Minimise the Harmful Effects of Fake News adopted by ASEAN Ministers Responsible for Information (AMRI) but also in intensifying our efforts through AMRI's targeted actions in response to the proliferation of fake news relating to the COVID-19 pandemic.
57. We also recognised with appreciation immense contributions of social work and social workers in times of COVID-19 pandemic and in ensuring overall health, safety and well-being of vulnerable peoples in ASEAN. We commended Viet Nam for the leadership in developing the ASEAN Declaration on Promoting Social Work and looked forward to its adoption at the 37th Summit in November 2020. We recognised further the need to continue our collective efforts to increase visibility and recognition of social work, and to promote the development of social workers and social service workforce by utilising existing initiatives such as the ASEAN Social Work Consortium, and the ASEAN Training Centre for Social Work and Social Welfare.

ASEAN EXTERNAL RELATIONS

58. We noted with satisfaction the strengthening of ASEAN's external relations with Dialogue Partners, Sectoral Dialogue Partners and Development Partners through existing frameworks and the effective implementation of various Plans of Action and development cooperation programmes. We agreed to further enhance and strengthen partnerships and cooperation with our external partners, including through adoption of the successor Plans of Action for the next five years (2021-2025) with several of our partners which will contribute to continued efforts towards the realisation of the ASEAN Community Vision 2025.

59. We expressed appreciation for the continuous support of our external partners to ASEAN Community-building and development cooperation efforts, including through increased technical assistance and financial contribution to numerous regional cooperation programmes and projects. We looked forward to holding the ASEAN- New Zealand Leaders' Summit to Commemorate the 45th Anniversary of Dialogue Relations at a time and venue agreeable to all, to further strengthen the mutually beneficial strategic partnership. We also looked forward to the resumption of the Special ASEAN- U.S. Summit with a view to further advancing the ASEAN-U.S. strategic partnership, which reaches its 5th Anniversary in 2020.
60. We took note of the growing interests from countries and regional organisations outside the region to engage and develop stronger cooperation with ASEAN, including through the Committee of Permanent Representatives to ASEAN (CPR) with the 93 Ambassadors of non-ASEAN Member States accredited to ASEAN. We welcomed the role of the 54 ASEAN Committees in Third Countries and International Organisations (ACTCs) to promote ASEAN's interest and to forge partnerships in their respective host countries and organisations. We also highlighted the importance of ASEAN's partnerships with other external partners as well as regional and international organisations, including the United Nations to address global concerns, to pursue shared goals and complementary initiatives, and to promote sustainable development for the benefit of our people. In this connection, we welcomed the presence of two ASEAN Member States, Indonesia and Viet Nam, as the non-permanent members of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). We also welcomed the briefing by the Secretary-General of ASEAN at the UNSC on "Cooperation between the UN and Regional and Sub-regional Organisations in Maintaining Peace and Security: The Role of ASEAN" on 30 January 2020 at the UN Headquarters in New York, which helped promote the ASEAN's prestige and image at this global platform and contribute to the strengthening of the ASEAN-UN relations.

ASEAN PLUS THREE

61. We reaffirmed the importance of the ASEAN Plus Three (APT) cooperation framework in promoting peace, stability and prosperity in the East Asian region. We underscored the need to further strengthen and deepen functional cooperation under the APT process, which plays a key role in regional community building in East Asia, with ASEAN as the driving force. We agreed to further enhance APT cooperation in wide-ranging areas through implementing the APT Cooperation Work Plan 2018-2022. We also looked forward to the continued implementation of the East Asian Vision Group (EAVG) II recommendations aimed at promoting East Asian cooperation. We further welcomed the strengthening of APT cooperation in response to emerging challenges, with the successful holding of the Special ASEAN Plus Three Summit on COVID-19 and the adoption of a Joint Statement that demonstrates the strong political commitment of the ASEAN Plus Three countries to effectively counter the threats of COVID-19 pandemic.

EAST ASIA SUMMIT

62. We reaffirmed the importance of the EAS as the premier Leaders-led forum to promote dialogue on broad strategic, political, and economic issues of common interest and concern in the region with an aim to promoting peace, stability and economic prosperity in the region, in line with the 2015 Kuala Lumpur Declaration on the 10th Anniversary of the EAS and on the basis of the established objectives, principles and modalities of the EAS. We welcomed the 15th anniversary of the East Asia Summit in 2020 and looked forward to the adoption of the proposed Ha Noi Declaration on the 15th anniversary of the EAS, with ASEAN as the driving force, which will strengthen the EAS, sustain its strategic value and relevance and enhance its responsiveness to fast-changing developments in the regional and global context. We welcomed the continued discussions and efforts to strengthen the EAS, and agreed to further enhance EAS practical cooperation under the areas of the Manila Plan of Action to Advance the Phnom Penh Declaration on the EAS Development Initiatives (2018-2022). We encouraged enhancing synergy between the EAS and other ASEAN-led mechanisms, and highlighted the need to strengthen EAS collaboration in response to emerging issues and challenges that affect peace, stability and prosperity in the region based on the principles of strengthening ASEAN centrality. We noted the role of the Ambassadors of EAS participating countries in Jakarta in discussing the implementation of Leaders' decisions and EAS cooperation as well as exchanging information on regional development cooperation initiatives and security policies and initiatives.

ASEAN REGIONAL FORUM

63. We reaffirmed the important role of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) as an inclusive platform in the Asia-Pacific region for fostering constructive dialogue and cooperation on political and security issues of common interest and concern. We were pleased to note that the ARF is progressing in the development of the Ha Noi Plan of Action II (2020-2025), which will reaffirm the continued commitment of the ARF in fostering dialogue and cooperation on political and security issues as well as promoting confidence-building measures and preventive diplomacy in the region. We also looked forward to the continued implementation of confidence building activities and welcomed the effort to strengthen the ARF, including through the development of the Guide to ARF Processes, Procedures, Practices and Protocol, which will help enhance the effectiveness, efficacy and responsiveness of the ARF process.

REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ISSUES AND DEVELOPMENTS

64. We reaffirmed the importance of maintaining and promoting peace, security, stability, safety and freedom of navigation in and over-flight 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 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. We welcomed the completion of the first reading of the Single Draft COC Negotiating Text. We emphasised 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 miscalculation. We stressed the importance of undertaking confidence building and preventive measures to enhance, among others, trust and confidence amongst parties; and we reaffirmed the importance of upholding international law, including the 1982 UNCLOS.

65. We discussed the situation in the South China Sea, during which concerns were expressed on the land reclamations, recent developments, activities and serious incidents, which have eroded trust and confidence, increased tensions and may undermine peace, security and stability in the region. We reaffirmed the need to enhance mutual trust and confidence, exercise self-restraint in the conduct of activities that would complicate or escalate disputes and affect peace and stability and avoid actions that may further complicate the situation, and pursue peaceful resolution of disputes in accordance with universally recognised principles of international law, including the 1982 UNCLOS. We reaffirmed that the 1982 UNCLOS is the basis for determining maritime entitlements, sovereign rights, jurisdiction and legitimate interests over maritime zones, and the 1982 UNCLOS sets out the legal framework within which all activities in the oceans and seas must be carried out. 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.
66. We stressed the importance of continued peaceful dialogues amongst all concerned parties in order to realise lasting peace and stability in a denuclearised Korean Peninsula. We urged all concerned parties to resume peaceful dialogue and continue working constructively towards the realisation of lasting peace and stability in the Korean Peninsula, including through the full and expeditious implementation of the Panmunjom Declaration, the Pyongyang Joint Declaration and the Joint Statement by the Leaders of the United States and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK). We reiterated our commitment to the full implementation of all relevant United Nations Security Council Resolutions and noted the international efforts to bring about the complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula. We reiterated our readiness to play a constructive role, including through utilising ASEAN-led platforms such as the ARF in promoting a conducive atmosphere to peaceful dialogue amongst the concerned parties.