

# **2017 ASEAN STATEMENT COMMEMORATING THE 20<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE ORGANISATION FOR THE PROHIBITION OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS**

*Issued in the Hague, Netherlands on 26 April 2017*

On behalf of the Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Philippines wishes to extend its warmest congratulations on the occasion of the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW).

These past 20 years have shown the unwavering commitment of the OPCW towards demilitarization and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. It also remains at the forefront of promoting chemistry as a peaceful tool for national development and prosperity, as well as in educating, training and providing opportunities for strengthening the capacities of Member States in their own implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention.

ASEAN, too, is celebrating an auspicious occasion in 2017. We are 50 years this year, and as we celebrate this golden event, our priorities have become ever clearer: to place our peoples at the core of ASEAN, work for regional peace and led growth, strengthen ASEAN resiliency, and promote ASEAN as a model for regionalism and as a global player. ASEAN at 50 strives to be people-oriented and people-centered.

Indeed, ASEAN and the OPCW have much in common, in particular their desire to ensure regional and global security and safety, not only for this generation but for generations to come. ASEAN and the OPCW share keen interest in prohibiting the use of chemical weapons and toxic chemicals as a weapon anywhere by anyone and under any circumstance.

ASEAN calls upon all States that have yet to sign or ratify the Convention to do so without further delay, as universal accession to the Convention is crucial to its success.

ASEAN looks forward to deeper and more meaningful cooperation and collaboration with the OPCW.