

**2020 CHAIRMAN'S PRESS STATEMENT OF ASEAN WOMEN  
LEADERS' SUMMIT:  
“WOMEN'S ROLE IN BUILDING A COHESIVE, DYNAMIC,  
SUSTAINABLE AND INCLUSIVE ASEAN COMMUNITY IN A POST  
COVID-19 WORLD”**

*Adopted on 12 November 2020*

1. The ASEAN Women Leaders' Summit was held on 12 November 2020 via videoconferencing. The Summit was chaired by H.E. Nguyen Xuan Phuc Prime Minister of Viet Nam, in his capacity as the Chairman of ASEAN 2020 and was attended by Leaders of ASEAN Member States and their representatives. Her Majesty Queen Máxima of the Netherlands, UN Secretary-General's Special Advocate for Inclusive Finance for Development; World Bank Vice President for East Asia and Pacific Victoria Kwakwa; and H.E. Dato Lim Jock Hoi, ASEAN Secretary-General were keynote speakers at the Summit.
2. The Summit was attended by ASEAN Women Leaders representatives, namely: H.E. Mme. Pany Yathotou, President of the National Assembly of Lao PDR; H.E. Mme. Nguyen Thi Kim Ngan, Chairwoman of the National Assembly of Viet Nam, Chair of the 41<sup>st</sup> General Assembly of the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA41); Hon. MP. Daw Su Su Lwin, Former First Lady of Myanmar, Leader of the Advisory Team to Promote legislative Capacity-Building of the Pyithu Hluttaw; H.E. Mme. Retno Marsudi, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Indonesia; H.E. Dr. ING Kantha Phavi, Minister of Women Affairs of Cambodia; H.E. Mme. Sandra Montano, Chairperson of the Philippine Commission on Women; H.E. Dr. Jemilah Mahmood, Special Advisor to the Prime Minister of Malaysia on Public Health; Mme. Laura Hwang, Chair of the ASEAN Commission of the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC) and Singapore's Representative for Women's Rights to the ACWC; Mme. Hajah Normah Suria Hayati Pehin Dr. Haji Mohd Jamil Al-Sufri, Commissioner as Representative of Brunei Darussalam for ACWC for Women's Rights; and Mme. Khunying Natthika Wattanavekin Angubolkul, Chairperson of the ASEAN Women Entrepreneurs Network.
3. The Leaders acknowledged women's indispensable role and contributions to the socio-economic development and maintenance of peace and security throughout the world and in the ASEAN region. Their crucial role is vividly demonstrated in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic as women form the majority of front-line responders, social workers, health professionals and community volunteers, as well as caregivers at home and in communities.
4. The Leaders recognized the disproportionate impacts of COVID-19 on women and girls, most notably heightened risk of infection, loss of employment and economic livelihoods, decreased availability of quality healthcare and essential services, and increase in incidence of gender-based violence. They also acknowledged that the pandemic threatens to reverse the hard-fought gains achieved in gender equality and empowerment of women and girls. In this regard, the Leaders welcomed valuable opinions shared by participants on ways to mitigate the adverse impacts of COVID-19 on women and girls, including enhancing women's participation in planning and decision making and mainstreaming their economic and health needs in the national and regional COVID-19 response and recovery efforts; preventing and combating violence against women and children especially in times of crisis; support for women front-line essential workers, women labor force and women enterprises; among others.

5. Moving forward with ASEAN's comprehensive and sustainable recovery, the Leaders committed to place women's leadership and contributions at the heart of the recovery efforts, particularly in the implementation of the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework and its Implementation Plan. This includes enhancing women's participation in decision making processes with a multi-stakeholders and cross-pillars approach; designing gender-responsive policies to ensure that women are the architects as well as the beneficiaries of efforts to build back stronger and better; building resilience by strengthening women's economic empowerment through digital and financial inclusion, recognizing and redistributing unpaid care and domestic work; developing inclusive and accessible social protection programs; investment in gender responsive public and social infrastructure; enhancing welfare and development of all women and girls and improving their access to opportunities and responding to emerging challenges; among others.
6. The Leaders highlighted women's significant role in building a more cohesive, dynamic, sustainable and inclusive ASEAN Community in the post pandemic period. In this regard, the Leaders reaffirmed ASEAN's steadfast commitment and staunch efforts to promote gender equality and empowerment of women and girls in all aspects, towards realizing an inclusive, people-oriented, people-centered ASEAN Community, as reflected in the ASEAN Charter, the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and the ASEAN Community Blueprints 2025. To prepare for the long-term future, the Leaders called for the mainstreaming of gender equality and women's empowerment into the development process of the ASEAN Community's Post-2025 Vision.
7. The Leaders also committed to further and support initiatives and works of the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Women (AMMW), the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC), ASEAN Committee on Women (ACW), the ASEAN Women Entrepreneurs Network (AWEN) including its cooperation with other existing bodies such as the ASEAN Business Advisory Council, and ASEAN Women for Peace Registry (AWPR). At the same time, the Leaders reaffirmed the need for greater cross-sectoral collaboration and support, and to leverage ASEAN-led mechanisms and cooperation with development partners to support the implementation of regional commitments in advancing gender equality, women's empowerment, and the women, peace and security agenda.
8. In commemoration of the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, the Leaders emphasized ASEAN's continued efforts to implement these important documents and commitments. They highlighted that these landmark instruments contribute not only to gender equality and empowerment of women and girls, but to the development of the region as a whole.
9. To ensure the effective realization of the Sustainable Development Goals 2030, the Leaders reaffirmed their commitment to the ASEAN Declaration on the Gender Responsive Implementation of the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and Sustainable Development Goals for realizing sustainable development, and to ensure women and girls are equally able to reach the fullest of their potentials, and enjoy equal access to quality education and health care, economic resources and political participation as well as equal opportunities with men and boys for employment, leadership and decision-making at all levels.
10. The Leaders expressed their appreciation to the special guests for their valued contribution to the Summit, and stated ASEAN's commitment and readiness to further strengthen collaboration with the United Nations, the World Bank, ASEAN's external partners, regional and international organizations in realizing the full potential of women and girls, safeguarding their health and wellbeing, and advancing their roles and contribution to peace, security, stability and prosperity of the region.