

# 2021 BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN DECLARATION IN COMMEMORATION OF THE 15<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE ADMM TOWARDS A FUTURE-READY, PEACEFUL AND PROSPEROUS ASEAN

*Issued on 15 June 2021*

1. The Fifteenth ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (hereinafter referred to as "ADMM") was convened on 15 June 2021, via video teleconference.
2. **RECOGNISING** the dynamic strategic landscape and unprecedented security challenges faced by our region and the world, as well as the implications of current and emerging traditional, non-traditional and transboundary threats within our region, including terrorism, violent extremism, piracy, natural disasters, water security and environment protection for sustainable development;
3. **INSPIRED** by the call for ASEAN Member States to rise above the challenges and remain united by a common desire and collective will to live in a region of lasting peace, security and stability and prosperity by caring for the security and well-being of its people and by strengthening their capacity, defence cooperation and unity to be more prepared for future uncertainties towards fulfilling a Caring, Future-Ready and Prosperous ASEAN;
4. **REAFFIRMING** our adherence to the fundamental principles and purposes enshrined in the ASEAN Charter and Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia in strengthening ASEAN Centrality and unity and upholding a rules-based regional order anchored in international law for the benefit of the people; where one of the purposes of ASEAN is to maintain the centrality and proactive role of ASEAN as the primary driving force in its relations and cooperation with its external partners in a regional architecture that is open, transparent and inclusive;
5. **REAFFIRMING** our commitment towards the full and effective implementation of the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 to realise a rules-based, people-oriented and people-centred ASEAN of One Vision, One Identity, One Community with enhanced capacity to address challenges and ASEAN as an outward-looking region within a global community of nations, while maintaining ASEAN Centrality;
6. **RECOGNISING** the expansive and long-term impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the region and ASEAN's efforts and responses to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 through the implementation of the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework (ACRF) as well as strategic, holistic, coordinated and cross-pillar response in mitigating impacts of regional emergencies and disaster through the Strategic and Holistic Initiative to Link ASEAN Responses to Emergencies and Disasters (ASEAN SHIELD);
7. **REAFFIRMING** the Joint Statement by the ASEAN Defence Ministers on Defence Cooperation Against Disease Outbreaks on the important role defence establishments play in combating the COVID-19 pandemic;
8. **EXPRESSING** satisfaction on the encouraging progress made in the implementation of the ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC) Blueprint 2025 and strengthened cross-sectoral coordination within the APSC, as well as cross-pillar issues among the three ASEAN Community Pillars;

9. **UNDERSCORING** the importance of the ADMM and ADMM-Plus as the region's key security architecture, which provide important platforms for strategic dialogue and practical cooperation for the defence sector with ASEAN at the centre;
10. **EMPHASISING** the commitment of all parties to cooperate in a constructive and peaceful manner for the South China Sea to become a sea of peace, stability, and prosperity through the full and effective implementation of the 2002 Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) in its entirety and the early conclusion of an effective and substantive Code of Conduct in the South China Sea (COC) consistent with international law, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), within a mutually-agreed timeline. In addition, the parties are committed in promoting maritime security, safety and freedom of navigation and overflight and creating a conducive environment for the peaceful settlement of disputes in the South China Sea;
11. **COMMENDING** the continued progress of ASEAN defence cooperation and initiatives, comprising the ASEAN Defence Establishments and Civil Society Organisations Cooperation on Non-Traditional Security, the Use of ASEAN Military Assets and Capacities in Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR), ASEAN Defence Industry Collaboration, ASEAN Peacekeeping Centres Network, ASEAN Defence Interaction Programmes (ADIP), Logistics Support Framework, ASEAN Direct Communications Infrastructure in the ADMM Process and ADMM-Plus Process (ADI), ASEAN Militaries Ready Group on HADR, ASEAN Center of Military Medicine (ACMM), ADMM-wide Education and Training Exchanges, Enhancing the Linkages between the ADMM and the Network of ASEAN Defence and Security Institutions, Guidelines for Maritime Interaction, Network of ASEAN Chemical, Biological and Radiological (CBR) Defence Experts, ASEAN Our Eyes, Guidelines for Air Military Encounters (GAME), ASEAN Military Medicine Conference, the Role of ASEAN Defence Establishments in Supporting Border Management, the Display of the ASEAN Flag next to the National Flag at the Compound of ASEAN Member State's Military Units Participating in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations, Developing the Linkage between the ADMM and the ASEAN Chiefs of Defence Forces Meeting (ACDFM), and Enhancing the Defence Attaché Posts Among ASEAN Member States;
12. **COMMENDING** the progress of the ADMM-Plus Experts' Working Groups (EWGs), namely on HADR, Maritime Security, Military Medicine, Counter-Terrorism, Peacekeeping Operations, Humanitarian Mine Action and Cyber Security;
13. **ACKNOWLEDGING** the contribution and progress of the ASEAN Member States' militaries in advancing practical cooperation, namely through the ACDFM, ASEAN Military Operations Meeting, ASEAN Military Intelligence Meeting, and its related cooperative platforms, the ASEAN Chiefs of Army Multilateral Meeting, the ASEAN Navy Chiefs' Meeting, ASEAN Air Chiefs Conference and ASEAN Chiefs of Military Medicine Conference;

**DO HEREBY DECLARE TO:**

1. **INTENSIFY** efforts to promote a caring, future-ready and prosperous ASEAN through the pursuit of practical cooperation that contributes to ASEAN's capacity and unity to effectively prepare for current and future security challenges while also promoting the well-being and prosperity of the ASEAN Community through strengthening defence cooperation among ASEAN Member States, as well as with the Plus Countries while upholding the principles of ASEAN Centrality;

2. **REAFFIRM** the ADMM's commitment as the highest defence consultative and cooperative mechanism in ASEAN to continue to implement the ADMM Three-Year Work Programme 2020-2022 to outline the future direction of ASEAN defence cooperation and advance the cause of peace and stability in the region while building on the previous ADMM Work Programmes, particularly the ADMM Three-Year Work Programme 2017-2019;
3. **COMMEND** the ADMM on its milestone 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary in Brunei Darussalam and recognise its positive contributions to the APSC and look forward to greater future cooperation including in the promotion of gender equality, women's participation and inclusion of women, peace and security;
4. **ACKNOWLEDGE** the important role of the ADMM-Plus as the main ministerial defence and security consultative mechanism for the ASEAN Member States and Plus Countries and the progress it has made in promoting practical cooperation mechanism through its EWGs and the interest of ASEAN's friends and Dialogue Partners to contribute to regional security and stability;
5. **ACKNOWLEDGE** the outcomes of the 18<sup>th</sup> ACDFM including the progress of discussions on the Concept Papers on ASEAN Military Exercise (AMX), ASEAN Military Intelligence Community (AMIC) and ASEAN Junior Intelligence Interaction Programme (AJIIP) as well as welcome the formal reporting path between the ADMM and ACDFM which is in line with the Concept Paper on Developing the Linkage between the ADMM and the ACDFM;
6. **DEEPEN** the pandemic response cooperation, as guided by the ACRF and its Implementation Plan and the Joint Statement by the ASEAN Defence Ministers on Defence Cooperation Against Disease Outbreaks among ASEAN defence establishments and external partners including through the ACMM and the Network of ASEAN CBR Defence Experts in the form of dialogue, sharing of best practices and lesson learned and exploring new forms of collaboration including cross-pillar and cross-sectoral cooperation, to support ASEAN's capacity and preparedness to overcome public health emergencies particularly the COVID-19 pandemic;
7. **CONTRIBUTE** to the realisation of the ASEAN SHIELD, through relevant initiatives of the defence sector, with a view to better shield the society, economy and the broader developmental agenda, as well as to enable a strategic, holistic, coordinated and cross-pillar response in mitigating impacts of regional emergencies and disaster;
8. **COMMIT** to the maintenance and promotion of peace, security, stability, safety and freedom of navigation in and overflight above the South China Sea; pursuing peaceful resolution of disputes in accordance with the universally recognised principles of international law, including the 1982 UNCLOS; exercising self-restraint in the conduct of activities and avoid actions that could complicate or escalate the situation; reaffirming the importance of upholding international law, including 1982 UNCLOS, while enhancing mutual trust and confidence;
9. **EMPHASISE** the need to maintain and promote an environment conducive to the early conclusion of an effective and substantive COC in accordance with international law, including the 1982 UNCLOS, while underlining the full and effective implementation of the DOC in its entirety, thus welcoming, confidence building measures such as Code for Unplanned Encounters at Sea (CUES), GAME, Guidelines for Maritime Interaction, and ADI and other activities under the DOC framework to promote communication, mutual trust and confidence so as to reduce tensions and the risk of accidents, misunderstandings and miscalculation in the air and at sea;

10. **WELCOME** the Stocktaking Paper of the ADMM and ADMM-Plus which serves as a significant review of the progress of both platforms particularly following the ADMM's 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and ADMM-Plus' 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and ensures both platforms continue to deliver sustainable contributions and impactful practical cooperation, as well as agree to work on Strategy Paper of Future ADMM to be adopted by 2022;
11. **ADOPT** the Concept Paper on ADMM's External Engagements, which reaffirms ASEAN Centrality in accordance with Article 41 of the ASEAN Charter and the Guidelines for ASEAN's External Relations;
12. **WELCOME** the recommendations of the Post-Implementation Review of the annualisation of the ADMM-Plus to hold the ADMM-Plus annually to enhance dialogue and cooperation between ASEAN and Plus Countries, strengthen ASEAN centrality and unity in the regional security architecture, and strengthen the Plus Countries' commitment to the region;
13. **WELCOME** the Discussion Paper on ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific from A Defence Perspective which serves as a guide for ASEAN to implement the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific in the area of defence cooperation, particularly the ADMM in its interaction with dialogue partners;
14. **ADOPT** the Concept Paper on Enhancing the Usage of ADI as a Defence Communications Architecture including through the pursuit of a multilateral communications and routine exchange of information in the Phase 2 of the ADI and for the Ad Hoc Working Group on ADI to further discuss with technical experts;
15. **ADOPT** the Concept Paper on the Establishment of ASEAN Cyber Defence Network (ACDN) which aims to link the cyber defence operation centres of ASEAN Member States to promote and enhance a secure and resilient cyber space through greater collaboration;
16. **ADOPT** the Concept Paper on ADMM Cybersecurity and Information Centre of Excellence which establishes a centre to promote cooperation on cybersecurity and information within the defence sectoral, enhance multilateral cooperation amongst ASEAN defence establishments against cyberattacks, disinformation and misinformation;
17. **APPROVE** the revised Concept Paper on the ASEAN Defence Interaction Programme and welcome the improvement of the ADIP into a sustainable, viable and significant undertaking within the ADMM;
18. **APPROVE** the proposed conduct of the Ad Hoc ADMM-Plus Conference on Chemical, Biological and Radiological Threats to develop a deeper understanding of the risk posed by CBR agents in terrorist acts in the region through the sharing of information and best practices, enhance cooperation and preparedness against CBR threats, and establish closer networks between regional and international CBR experts;
19. **WELCOME** the Bandar Seri Begawan Declaration by the ADMM-Plus in Commemoration of the 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the ADMM on Promoting a Future-Ready, Peaceful and Prosperous ASEAN to be issued by the 8<sup>th</sup> ADMM-Plus on 16 June 2021;
20. **WELCOME** the ASEAN Chairmanship of the Kingdom of Cambodia and hosting of the 16<sup>th</sup> ADMM and 9<sup>th</sup> ADMM-Plus in 2022.

**ADOPTED** in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam, on the Fifteenth Day of June in the Year Two Thousand and Twenty-One.