2022 ASEAN FOREIGN MINISTERS' STATEMENT ON DISARMAMENT AND NON-PROLIFERATION

Issued in Phnom Penh, Cambodia on 17 February 2022

- ASEAN Member States welcome the 'Joint Statement of the Leaders of the Five Nuclear-Weapon States on Preventing Nuclear War and Avoiding Arms Races' on 3 January 2022 in which the five Nuclear-Weapon States (NWS) emphasized the importance of preserving and complying with bilateral and multilateral non-proliferation, disarmament, and arms control agreements and commitments.

- We welcome the intention expressed by the five NWS in the above-mentioned statement to avoid military confrontations, to strengthen stability and predictability, and to increase mutual understanding and confidence, to ensure that the world remains peaceful, stable and secure. We, however, remain concerned over the existential threat facing humanity posed by the existence and modernisation of nuclear weapons. We firmly believe that the total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only way to guarantee against their use and threat of use.

- We call on the NWS to fulfill their obligations in advancing nuclear disarmament in accordance with the Article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and to recognise the need to completely eliminate nuclear weapons, which remains the only way to guarantee that nuclear weapons are never used again under any circumstances.

- We reiterate our commitment to preserve the Southeast Asian region as a Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone and free of all other weapons of mass destruction, as enshrined in the Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ Treaty) and the ASEAN Charter, and to strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation regime in achieving general and complete nuclear disarmament, as stipulated in Article VI of the Treaty on the NPT.

- We reaffirm our commitment to continuously engage the 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.