

2021 STATEMENT OF ASEAN AND THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION ON COOPERATION AGAINST ILLICIT DRUGS TRAFFICKING

Adopted on 28 October 2021

We, the Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the Russian Federation, convened the 4th ASEAN-Russia Summit on 28 October 2021 via videoconference;

Recognising the world drug problem continues to pose a serious threat to global and regional security and stability, and presents challenges to the health and wellbeing of humanity and undermines sustainable economic development of States;

Underscoring that the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961 as amended by the 1972 Protocol, the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971 and the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988 constitute the cornerstone of the international drug control system, commemorating the 60th Anniversary of the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961 and the 50th Anniversary of the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971 and acknowledging their continued relevance and importance;

Reaffirming our commitment to the goals and objectives of the three international drug control conventions, including concerns for the health and welfare of humankind as well as individual and public health-related, social and safety problems resulting from drug-related crimes, the abuse of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, in particular among children and the youth;

Expressing determination to prevent and treat the abuse of drugs and combat their illicit cultivation, production, manufacturing and trafficking, as well as to realise the shared objectives based on the zero-tolerance approach, guided by the rule of law and with strict observance of human rights, by actively promoting a drug-free society in order to ensure that all people can live in health, dignity and peace, with security and prosperity;

Emphasising that the world drug problem remains a common and shared responsibility that should be addressed in a multilateral setting through effective and increased international cooperation, including between the ASEAN and the Russian Federation, and it demands an integrated, multidisciplinary, mutually reinforcing, balanced, scientific evidence-based and comprehensive approach;

Reaffirming the principal role of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs as the policymaking body of the United Nations with the prime responsibility for drug control matters and our support to the efforts of the United Nations, in particular those of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, and further reaffirming the treaty-mandated role of the International Narcotics Control Board;

Resolving to accelerate the implementation of joint policy commitments to address and counter the world drug problem, contained in the 2009 Political Declaration and Plan of Action on the International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem, the Joint Ministerial Statement of the 2014 High-Level Review by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs of the Implementation by Member States of the Political Declaration and Plan of Action and the outcome document of the Special Session of the General Assembly on the world drug problem held in 2016, as reaffirmed in the 2019 Ministerial Declaration on Strengthening Actions at the national, regional and international levels to accelerate the implementation of joint commitments to address and counter the world drug problem;

Mindful that 2021 marks 30 years of ASEAN-Russia relations and 25 years of Dialogue Relations;

Recalling the relevant paragraphs in the Joint Statement of the 3rd ASEAN-Russia Summit on Strategic Partnership of 2018 and the Sochi Declaration of the ASEAN-Russia Commemorative Summit to Mark the 20th Anniversary of the ASEAN-Russia Dialogue Partnership “Moving Towards a Strategic Partnership for Mutual Benefit” of 2016;

Recalling also Joint Declaration for a Drug-Free ASEAN at the 20th ASEAN Summit in 2012, the ASEAN Political-Security Community Blueprint 2025, and the ASEAN Work Plan “Securing Communities Against Illicit Drugs 2016- 2025” and the East Asia Summit Leaders’ Statement on Combating the Spread of Illicit Drugs;

Commending the achievements of the ASEAN-Russia Dialogue Relations and cooperation in addressing and countering the world drug problem;

Cognisant of the serious challenges posed by the nexus of drug trafficking, financing of terrorism, and other forms of transnational organised crime, including trafficking in persons, trafficking in firearms, and money laundering;

Deeply concerned about the rapid emergence and spread of a variety of new psychoactive substances (NPS);

Taking note that the new challenges resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic which make the situation on drug abuse and crimes related to the illicit drug trafficking more complicated and greatly affecting the efforts to prevent and combat illicit drug trafficking as well as drug control in our countries and in the region;

Recognising that the misuse of the Internet and the tools of modern commerce such as online markets and digital currencies for drug-related criminal activities which reached unprecedented levels during the COVID-19 pandemic and pose a growing challenge for law enforcement authorities;

Do hereby:

1. *Reaffirm* the shared commitment to address and counter the world drug problem through effective and sustained actions at the national and international levels, in full conformity with the three international drug control conventions;
2. *Maintain* the integrity of the existing international drug control system to take joint actions against the legalisation of drugs for non-medical and non-scientific purposes or to weaken international control over any type of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances without relevant, verifiable and reliable scientific evidence;
3. *Continue* to support the policymaking role of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, including through considering and promoting joint ASEAN-Russia initiatives in the Commission based on shared values, as well as to support the treaty-mandated functions of the International Narcotics Control Board in monitoring implementation of the three international drug control conventions;
4. *Consolidate* joint efforts to move towards drug-free societies through promoting healthy lifestyles and appropriate initiatives and measures aimed at minimising the adverse effects on public health and social consequences of drug abuse while placing the safety, health and wellbeing of all members of society, in particular children and the youth, at the centre of these efforts;

5. *Strengthen* cooperation between ASEAN and the Russian Federation in the health, education, justice and law enforcement sectors, taking into account their respective areas of competence under national legislation, and ensure regular exchanges of national best practices related to different aspects of drug demand and supply reduction;
6. *Encourage* and support the development, promotion, and sharing of scientific evidence-based drug abuse prevention programmes that cater to various ages.
7. *Continue* effective measures to prevent, significantly reduce or eliminate illicit crop cultivation and production of narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and precursors and NPS, as well as their trafficking to Southeast Asia, the Russian Federation and other regions;
8. *Strengthen* bilateral and regional cooperation and information sharing, in particular among judicial and law enforcement authorities, to respond to the serious challenges posed by the increasing links between drug trafficking, corruption and other forms of transnational organised crime, including trafficking in persons, trafficking in firearms, money laundering, and financing of terrorism;
9. *Increase* national, regional capacity and capability to respond to challenges posed by the misuse of the Internet and other modern technologies such as DarkWeb and digital currencies for criminal drug-related purposes;
10. *Continue* to promote dialogue under the ASEAN Senior Officials on Drug Matters (ASOD) Plus Russia Consultation and the Senior Officials Meeting on Transnational Crime (SOMTC) Plus Russia Consultation to share information and best practices to address illicit drugs trafficking and its nexus with other forms of transnational organised crime;
11. *Explore* possibilities to strengthen practical cooperation on drug-related matters between ASEAN and the Russian Federation under the framework of ASOD Plus Russia Consultation, including through the development of an ASOD Plus Russia work plan to operationalise this Statement;
12. *Enhance* the training of law enforcement authorities on current challenges and threats related to illicit drug trafficking in the framework of existing national and regional programmes;
13. *Continue* to coordinate positions in the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and other relevant UN bodies and entities on drug-related matters; and
14. *Encourage* regular engagement between the Secretariats of ASEAN and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization to consolidate their drug-related efforts.

Adopted on the Twenty Eighth of October in the Year Two Thousand and Twenty-One on the occasion of the 4th ASEAN-Russia Summit.