

# 2022 ASEAN LEADERS' STATEMENT ON THE 55TH ANNIVERSARY OF ASEAN

*Issued in Phnom Penh, Cambodia on 11 November 2022*

**WE**, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), namely Brunei Darussalam, Kingdom of Cambodia, the Republic of Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, the Republic of the Philippines, the Republic of Singapore, the Kingdom of Thailand, and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, gathered in Phnom Penh, Kingdom of Cambodia, on the occasion of the 55th Anniversary of ASEAN;

**RECALLING** the establishment of ASEAN by its five founding Member States in 1967, where the ASEAN Declaration (Bangkok Declaration) stressed aspiration of shared responsibility for promoting peace, prosperity and stability in the region through abiding respect for justice and the rule of law and adherence to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations (the UN Charter), the successful expansion to ten Member States in 1999, and the entry into force of the ASEAN Charter in December 2008;

**RECOGNISING** the significant achievements over the past 55 years in maintenance of peace, security and stability in the region as evidenced by the accession to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC) by 39 non-ASEAN Member States and growing interest from other external partners to engage in peaceful and constructive dialogue, and develop strong cooperation with ASEAN;

**REITERATING** our strong commitment to upholding regionalism and multilateralism; and **EMPHASISING** the importance of adhering to key principles, shared values and norms enshrined in the UN Charter, the ASEAN Charter, the Declaration on Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality (ZOPFAN), the TAC, the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), the Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ), the 2011 Declaration on the East Asia Summit on the Principles for Mutually Beneficial Relations and the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP);

**ACKNOWLEDGING** the substantive progress of ASEAN Community-building process and the narrowing of development gap within and among ASEAN Member States, including through the implementation of ASEAN Community Vision 2025, the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity (MPAC) 2025, the IAI Work Plans, and effective engagement between ASEAN and sub-regional cooperation frameworks in contributing to an ASEAN Community that is fully integrated, well-connected, highly competitive, people-oriented and people-centred;

**FURTHER RECOGNISING** the strong commitment and shared aspiration to speedily mitigate and overcome the impacts caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, through various initiatives such as the COVID-19 ASEAN Response Fund, the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework and its Implementation Plan, the ASEAN Regional Reserve of Medical Supplies for Public Health Emergencies (RRMS), the ASEAN Centre for Public Health Emergencies and Emerging Diseases (ACPHEED) and the ASEAN Travel Corridor Arrangement Framework (ATCAF);

**UNDERSCORING** the importance of the spirit of "ASEAN A.C.T.: Addressing Challenges Together", which aims to further inspire ASEAN Member States to uphold the spirit of collective endeavour and togetherness in line with the ASEAN's purposes and principles as enshrined in the ASEAN Charter, to address challenges with a view to further advancing the ASEAN Community where all people live in harmony, peace, stability and prosperity;

**DO HEREBY AGREE TO:**

## ASEAN COMMUNITY-BUILDING

1. **RESOLVE** to strengthen further the principles of ASEAN as enshrined in the ASEAN Charter to support ASEAN's continued development into a peaceful, stable resilient and economically competitive region.
2. **STRENGTHEN** ASEAN Centrality in the ASEAN-led mechanisms in promoting peace, security and prosperity, and shaping an open, transparent, inclusive and rules-based regional architecture.
3. **MAINTAIN** the momentum of ASEAN's progress and development; and **FURTHER ENHANCE** ASEAN's collective efforts to strengthen the ASEAN Community, including through the development of the ASEAN Community's Post 2025 Vision.
4. **CONTINUE TO BUILD** a harmonious ASEAN Community that is peaceful, stable, and prosperous, underpinning ASEAN's engagement with the wider region and regional responses to the impacts and uncertainties posed by regional and global challenges.
5. **RESOLVE** to realise ASEAN Connectivity through the effective implementation of the MPAC 2025 and the promotion of greater synergies amongst various connectivity strategies, including through the Connecting the Connectivities Initiative.

## POLITICAL AND SECURITY COOPERATION

6. **WORK** to maintain peace, security and prosperity in the region in accordance with the ASEAN's objectives and principles, especially those outlined in the ASEAN Charter, the TAC, the Bali Principles, the AOIP and the Joint Statement on Promoting Women, Peace and Security (WPS) in ASEAN and the Joint Statement on Promoting Youth, Peace and Security Agenda at the ASEAN Regional Forum.
7. **STRIVE** to build a united, inclusive, resilient and rules-based ASEAN Political-Security Community where all our peoples live in a safe, harmonious and secure environment; embrace the values of tolerance and moderation; fully respect the differences of our peoples; and uphold ASEAN principles, shared values and norms in the spirit of unity in diversity.
8. **COMMIT** to the ASEAN Community which shall remain cohesive, responsive and relevant in addressing challenges to regional peace and security as well as playing a central role in shaping the evolving regional architecture that is built upon ASEAN-led mechanisms, while deepening our engagement with external partners and contributing collectively to global peace, security and stability.
9. **MAINTAIN** the region free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction and contribute to global efforts on disarmament, non-proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy; and **REAFFIRM** our commitment to continuously engage the Nuclear Weapon States (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.
10. **FURTHER STRENGTHEN** our efforts to address key regional and global challenges, including non-traditional security issues and transnational challenges, such as illicit drug trafficking, trafficking-in-persons, terrorism, and violent extremism; as well as other transboundary challenges such as maritime-related issues, in collaboration with the international community.

11. **FURTHER ENHANCE** maritime security and promote maritime cooperation in ASEAN region and beyond, through the strengthening of ASEAN-led mechanisms and the adoption of internationally accepted maritime conventions and principles.

## ECONOMIC COOPERATION

12. **SEEK** to ensure equitable economic development to narrow development gaps in the region with a view to providing the peoples with inclusive growth and equal opportunities to benefit from economic development and integration.
13. **LEVERAGE** the implementation of initiatives and obligations under ASEAN economic agreements and arrangements to maximise ASEAN's collective efforts in realising the region's goal as a single market and production base, a highly competitive region, with equitable economic development, and fully integrated into the global economy; and **MAINTAIN** ASEAN Centrality in advancing the region's economic growth and effectively implementing ASEAN's Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) and comprehensive economic partnership agreements (CEPs) with external partners, such as the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Agreement.
14. **IMPROVE** the economic participation and contribution of women and vulnerable and marginalised groups.
15. **ENHANCE** regional cooperation in promoting the digital economy and preparing for the 4IR, particularly for MSMEs and start-up, through digital technology and e-commerce, sharing of experience and best practices and expertise in artificial intelligence and 5G technologies to transform the ASEAN region into a leading digital economy, narrowing the digital divide and strengthening regional digital integration and transformation through an ASEAN Digital Economy Framework Agreement.
16. **INTENSIFY** efforts to comprehensively address the socio-economic impacts of COVID-19 and to build back stronger from the crisis with a view to maintaining inclusive, resilient, competitive and sustainable growth, particularly through the implementation of the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework (ACRF), as well as to further leveraging the Global ASEAN Agenda through, among others, deepening regional market integration; promoting gender equality, circular economy, MSMEs, energy transition, regional interconnectivity, financial inclusion, digital transformation and cooperation on the blue economy; pursuing an ASEAN strategy for carbon neutrality; ensuring food and energy security; exploring a cross-border payment system; stimulating digitalisation and innovation; as well as further enhancing regional integration following the successful commencement of the Lao PDR-Thailand-Malaysia-Singapore Power Integration Project (LTMS)-PIP.

## SOCIO-CULTURAL COOPERATION

17. **PROMOTE** the "we feeling" and a sense of belonging to the ASEAN Community and pride among ASEAN peoples; and **ENCOURAGE** the continued promotion of ASEAN values, awareness and identity to heighten the ASEAN's visibility and relevance at the national, regional and international levels through the implementation of the Narrative of ASEAN Identity.
18. **UNDERTAKE** a whole-of-society approach in strengthening ASEAN values, awareness and identity among the peoples of ASEAN through education, youth engagement, women empowerment, sports and cultural exchanges.

19. **ENHANCE** health, well-being, and social protection for the peoples of ASEAN, and further strengthen their capacity and capability in realising an inclusive and resilient ASEAN Community to respond to challenges of common concern without leaving anyone behind.
20. **STRENGTHEN** the institutional capacity, effectiveness and human resources development of the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community through the adoption and use of digital technology and innovation.

## EXTERNAL RELATIONS

21. **UNDERScore** the importance of strengthening ASEAN Centrality and unity in our engagement with ASEAN's external partners, including through ASEAN-led mechanisms such as the ASEAN-Plus One, ASEAN Plus Three (APT), East Asia Summit (EAS), ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), and ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting Plus (ADMM-Plus), in order to build mutual trust and confidence as well as reinforce an open, transparent, inclusive, and rules-based regional architecture with ASEAN at the centre.
22. **PROMOTE** further the profile and active contributions of ASEAN to the global efforts to achieve peace, stability and sustainable development through a multilateral approach as reflected in the ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on Upholding Multilateralism, in line with the principles and objectives laid out in the UN Charter, the ASEAN Charter, the TAC, the Bali Principles, the AOIP and the Joint Statement on Promoting WPS in ASEAN.
23. **CONTINUE** to intensify our cooperation and partnerships with other regional and international organisations, including the UN and regional groupings, to address global concerns, enhance economic ties, and promote sustainable development for the benefit of all our peoples.
24. **MAINTAIN** ASEAN as an outward-looking region within a global community of nations, in the interest of developing friendly and mutually beneficial relations, that deepens cooperation with external parties; and **LOOK FORWARD** to engagement with new external parties based on shared interest, constructive engagement, mutual benefits and comprehensive approach for ASEAN in the conduct of its external relations in order to respond collectively and constructively to global development and issues of common concern.
25. **CALL** upon all external partners of ASEAN to demonstrate their cooperative efforts to achieve regional peace, security, stability and prosperity through the ASEAN-led mechanisms and frameworks.