

# 2022 ASEAN LEADERS' STATEMENT ON THE YEAR OF ASEAN YOUTH TO STRENGTHEN THE ROLE OF YOUTH IN ASEAN COMMUNITY-BUILDING

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

**WE**, the Heads of States/Governments of the Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (hereinafter referred to as "ASEAN") namely, Brunei Darussalam, the Kingdom of Cambodia, the Republic of Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR), 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, met at the 40th and 41st ASEAN Summits in Phnom Penh, Cambodia on 11 November 2022;

**RECALLING** the resolution of ASEAN Community Vision 2025 to consolidate our Community, building upon and deepening the integration process to realise a rules-based, people-oriented, and people-centred ASEAN Community, where our people enjoy human rights and fundamental freedoms, higher quality of life and the benefits of community building, and reinforce our sense of togetherness and common identity, guided by the purpose and principles of the ASEAN Charter;

**RECALLING** the mission of the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Blueprint 2025 on youth development for an inclusive community that promotes high quality of life, equitable access to opportunities for all and promotes and protects human rights of women, children, youth, the elderly/older persons, persons with disabilities, migrant workers, and vulnerable and marginalised groups;

**RECALLING** the Joint Statement of ASEAN Youth Ministers on Enhancing Youth Cooperation for a Cohesive and Responsive ASEAN Community, noted at the 37th ASEAN Summit, under which ASEAN Youth Ministers committed to enhance ASEAN Youth cooperation and to foster a future-ready ASEAN youth;

**RECOGNISING** the variety of youth-focused initiatives to embrace opportunities for and overcome challenges confronting the young people, building on our commitment in the 2017 ASEAN Declaration on the Adoption of the ASEAN Youth Development Index (YDI) to pursue and provide all necessary support and assistance to realise the goals and objectives of the ASEAN YDI consistent with ASEAN Member States' respective national interests;

**REALISING** that the region's youth, accounting for 34% of the total ASEAN's 654 million population, are our current and future leaders, workforce, and catalysts for regional socio-economic and environmental development, including human resource development, peace, digitalisation, and entrepreneurship through conservation and promotion of local culture and identity, and are important actors in realising the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and achieving the United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Goals;

**COGNISANT** of the cross-cutting nature of youth development efforts in the ASEAN Work Plan on Youth 2021-2025, there is the need to pay greater attention and further investment on youth, and their engagement in preparing the region for the ever-changing world;

**COMMENDING** the convening of youth initiatives across different sectors to ensure that the youth have opportunities to meaningfully contribute to the betterment of ASEAN on various fronts;

**REAFFIRMING** that ASEAN, through the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Youth (AMMY), shall continue to support and promote the use of ASEAN YDI as the basis for the development of policies and programmes that seek to address various issues and concerns affecting the youth as well as to continuously expand opportunities for the youth, at least in five areas: (1) Education; (2) Health and Well-being; (3) Employment and Opportunity; (4) Participation and Engagement; and (5) ASEAN Awareness, Values and Identity;

**RECOGNISING** the important role of youth in the Plan of Action on Culture of Prevention (PoA on CoP), particularly in leading community outreach efforts to promote intercultural understanding; good governance to safeguard youth from violence and illicit drug use; healthy lifestyle and disaster risk reduction; as well as to foster digital literacy and well-being in the communities;

**ACKNOWLEDGING** the indispensable role of the youth in ASEAN Community-building, especially in the face of COVID-19 pandemic, its recovery efforts and other megatrends;

**DO HEREBY:**

1. Proclaim 2022 as the Year of ASEAN Youth to create a momentum to strengthen efforts in building an inclusive, resilient, dynamic and harmonious ASEAN with the youth;
2. Promote and prioritise youth participation and engagement in the work of ASEAN for youth's active and important role in socioeconomic development and ASEAN Community-building;
3. Commit to the strengthening of capacity and role of ASEAN youth in addressing contemporary and emerging challenges in the years to come, including the COVID-19 pandemic, by providing more opportunities for ASEAN youth through various approaches and platforms;
4. Coordinate and strengthen the existing initiatives and mechanisms, including age and sex-disaggregation of data, towards a strategic, holistic and responsive youth actions to promote ASEAN centrality, as well as ASEAN awareness, values, and identity;
5. Intensify interactions among ASEAN youth within and beyond the region through exchange, scholarship, internship, and fellowship programmes;
6. Promote the role of ASEAN youth in regional and global security, political stability, peace, creative industries and entrepreneurship, respect for cultural diversity, and sustainable socio-economic development;
7. Encourage dialogue partners, sectoral dialogue partners of ASEAN, the private sector and relevant external stakeholders to support the continuation of activities conducted throughout the 2022 Year of ASEAN Youth; and

**TASK** the AMMY, with the support of the ASEAN Senior Officials' Meeting on Youth (SOMY), and other relevant ASEAN Sectoral Ministerial Bodies to provide all the necessary support and stewardship for the implementation of this statement.

**ADOPTED** in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, on this Eleventh Day of November in the Year Two Thousand and Twenty-two in a single original copy, in the English language.