

2019 JOINT DECLARATION OF THE ASEAN DEFENCE MINISTERS ON SUSTAINABLE SECURITY

Adopted in Bangkok, Thailand on 11 July 2019

WE, the Defence Ministers of Brunei Darussalam, the 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 here in Thailand on 11 July 2019 for the Thirteenth ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (hereinafter referred to as "ADMM");

RECOGNISING the effects of rapid changes in the regional security environment and the implications of increasing regional integration and connectivity as well as technological advancement, which cause an impact on non-traditional security threats that are complex, unpredictable, trans-boundary and increasing in frequency and severity;

INSPIRED by relentless efforts of ASEAN in advancing partnership for sustainability, in which ASEAN Member States move forward together to strengthen a people-centred and people-oriented Community that leaves no one behind, and looks forward to the future;

RECALLING the spirit in which the ASEAN Founding Fathers gathered in Bangkok in 1967 to create an organisation that would help bring about a Southeast Asian region of peace, freedom and prosperity for our peoples;

REAFFIRMING ASEAN's principles and purposes as enshrined in the ASEAN Charter and the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia in maintaining ASEAN Centrality and unity, and upholding a rules-based regional order with respect for international norms and laws for the benefit of the people;

REAFFIRMING the commitment of ASEAN Member States to strengthening cooperation to collectively and effectively respond to all forms of threats, transnational crimes and trans-boundary challenges;

EMPHASISING the commitment of all parties to work together 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) and the early conclusion of an effective Code of Conduct in the South China Sea (COC) on a mutually-agreed timeline;

REAFFIRMING the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 that envisages a peaceful, stable and resilient Community with enhanced capacity to respond effectively to challenges and ASEAN as an outward-looking region within a global community of nations, while maintaining ASEAN Centrality;

ENSURING the implementation of the ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC) Blueprint 2025 through a bold and forward-looking approach that is responsive to the challenges of the times and strengthening cross-sectoral coordination within the APSC as well as cross-pillar issues among the three pillars;

EMPHASISING the ADMM and the ADMM-Plus as important platforms for strategic dialogue on defence and security cooperation and delivering concrete outcomes for this region;

COMMENDING the progress of ADMM 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, Logistics Support Framework, ASEAN Direct Communications Infrastructure (ADI) in the ADMM Process, ASEAN Militaries Ready Group on HADR, ASEAN Center of Military Medicine (ACMM), ADMM-wide Education and Training Exchanges (AETE), the Military Representative to the AHA Centre, Enhancing the Linkages between the ADMM and the Network of ASEAN Defence and Security Institutions, Guidelines for Maritime Interaction, Virtual Network of ASEAN Chemical, Biological and Radiological Defence Experts, ASEAN Our Eyes (AOE), and Guidelines for Air Military Encounters (GAME);

FURTHER COMMENDING the progress of practical cooperation under the ADMM-Plus Experts' Working Groups (EWGs), namely HADR, Maritime Security, Military Medicine, Counter-Terrorism, Peacekeeping Operations, Humanitarian Mine Action, and Cyber Security;

EXPRESSING our satisfaction on the progress of the ASEAN Member States' militaries in forging practical cooperation, namely through the ASEAN Chiefs of Defence Forces Meeting, 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 (ANCM), ASEAN Air Chiefs Conference and ASEAN Chiefs of Military Medicine Conference;

COMMENDING the successful conduct of the ASEAN-China Maritime Exercise in 2018 which enhances mutual trust and confidence among ASEAN Member States' Navies and the People's Liberation Army Navy;

WELCOMING the ASEAN-United States Maritime Exercise in 2019 which reflects practical cooperation on strengthening ASEAN Centrality in the regional security architecture, while enhancing mutual trust and confidence amongst ASEAN and the United States.

DO HEREBY DECLARE TO:

INTENSIFY our efforts to promote sustainable security cooperation through strengthening capacities and cooperation amongst ASEAN Member States as well as with the Plus Countries in response to non-traditional and transnational security threats in the region in order to bring sustainable peace, stability and security to ASEAN;

REAFFIRM our intention in strengthening, consolidating and optimising defence cooperation amongst ASEAN Member States as well as with the Plus Countries to develop a bold and forward-looking approach capable of responding effectively to the current and future non-traditional security challenges that leaves no one behind, while upholding ASEAN Centrality;

REAFFIRM the importance of maintaining and promoting peace, security, stability, safety and freedom of navigation in and overflight above the South China Sea as well as the need to enhance mutual trust and confidence, exercise self-restraint in the conduct of activities and avoid actions that could further complicate the situation, and pursue peaceful resolution of disputes, in accordance with international laws, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea;

REAFFIRM our commitment to the Code for Unplanned Encounters at Sea (CUES), GAME and relevant international laws and regulations in order to enhance operational safety;

RECOGNISE the importance of maintaining open communication to reduce vulnerability to miscalculation and avoid misunderstanding and undesirable incidents in the air and at sea in accordance with CUES, GAME and the Concept Paper on Guidelines for Maritime Interaction;

UNDERScore the importance of the full and effective implementation of the DOC in its entirety and look forward to the completion of the first reading of the Single Draft COC Negotiating Text by 2019, which will pave the way for the early conclusion of an effective and substantive COC;

EMPHASISE the support of cross-pillar and cross-sectoral activities to advance cooperation amongst the three pillars of the ASEAN Community by focusing on creating a conducive security environment for developing regional connectivity and promoting development that improves people's well-being, which will lead to prosperity and sustainability;

ADOPT the Concept Paper on the Guidelines for the Assessment of the ADMM Initiatives which will ensure that the existing and future ADMM initiatives are appropriate for the current security environment and have well-defined objectives as well as practical implementation plans;

ADOPT the Concept Paper on the Role of ASEAN Defence Establishments in Supporting Border Management to raise awareness of the importance of ASEAN Member States defence establishments' role in border management by enhancing dialogue to exchange experiences, ideas and best practices, supporting border management cooperation and promoting interaction among existing ASEAN mechanisms;

ADOPT the Concept Paper on the Establishment of ASEAN Military Medicine Conference to promote and enhance the cooperation in the area of military medicine research and innovation through sharing experiences with best practices, exchange expertise and scholars and other capacities in related entities;

ADOPT the ADMM Guidelines for Maritime Interaction to reduce vulnerability to miscalculations and avoid misunderstanding and undesirable incidents at sea, in which the ANCM shall be the lead body for formulating and developing the technical and operational parameters of the Guidelines, with the goal of operationalising the Guidelines amongst ASEAN defence establishments before extending to other ASEAN sectoral bodies;

ADOPT the Concept Paper on Expansion of the ADI in the ADMM Process to the Plus Countries which will strengthen strategic cooperation as well as providing a platform for engagement in dialogue and enhancing regional confidence and security building measures;

ADOPT the Terms of Reference (TOR) of the AOE to describe the provisions and platform governing the AOE strategic information exchange system;

WELCOME the adoption of the Template TOR for Hosting Activities under the Framework of the AETE and encourage multilateral education and training exchanges amongst ASEAN defence establishments;

PROMOTE the ADMM's awareness on Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing that has security implications to ASEAN Member States and further explore possible approaches of defence establishments and armed forces' role in combating IUU Fishing underlined in the Discussion Paper;

COMMEND the inclusion of the ACMM as a subsidiary body under the ADMM in Annex I of the ASEAN Charter;

SUPPORT the new Co-Chairs of the ADMM-Plus EWGs for the 2020-2023 cycle, starting at the ASEAN Defence Senior Officials' Meeting Plus in 2020 in Viet Nam;

WELCOME the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam's ASEAN Chairmanship and its hosting of the 14th ADMM and the 7th ADMM-Plus in 2020.

Done at Bangkok, Kingdom of Thailand, this Eleventh Day of July in the Year Two Thousand and Nineteen, in a single original copy in the English language.