

2021 CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT OF THE 22ND ASEAN-REPUBLIC OF KOREA SUMMIT

Adopted on 26 October 2021

1. The 22nd ASEAN-Republic of Korea (ROK) Summit was held on 26 October 2021 via videoconference. The Summit was chaired by His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah, Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam.
2. We reaffirmed our support for Brunei Darussalam's ASEAN Chairmanship under the theme "We Care, We Prepare, We Prosper", which focuses on harnessing the caring nature of ASEAN to build a harmonious and resilient Community with the people at its centre; preparing and adapting for the future to ensure that ASEAN remains relevant and for its people to seize new opportunities, as well as overcome existing and future challenges; and creating opportunities for its people to benefit through initiatives that enhance the sustainable prosperity of the region. We highlighted the importance of maintaining the momentum of cooperation within and beyond ASEAN for the pursuit of these long-term goals.
3. We noted with satisfaction the progress of ASEAN-ROK Dialogue Relations since last year and reaffirmed our commitment to further strengthen the ASEAN-ROK Strategic Partnership. In this regard, we welcomed the progress of the implementation of the Plan of Action to Implement the Joint Vision Statement on Peace, Prosperity and Partnership (2021-2025).
4. ASEAN appreciated the ROK's commitment to strengthening its Strategic Partnership with ASEAN through the New Southern Policy (NSP) Plus and its seven (7) key areas of cooperation. In this regard, we agreed to adopt the Joint Statement of the 22nd ASEAN-Republic of Korea Summit on Advancing ASEAN-Republic of Korea Cooperation for People-centered Community of Peace and Prosperity to reinforce our joint efforts in addressing common challenges such as the COVID-19 pandemic, and building a more resilient and sustainable future.
5. We highlighted the importance of working closely together to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and gradually advance the region's socio-economic recovery and growth. ASEAN commended the ROK's active role in supporting vaccine multilateralism as well as its commitment to be a global vaccine production hub. ASEAN appreciated the ROK's support in addressing the COVID-19 pandemic, including its additional contribution of five (5) million USD to the COVID-19 ASEAN Response Fund and through the project on 'Enhancing the Detection Capacity for COVID-19 in ASEAN Member States', as well as its efforts to promote cooperation on the development, production and distribution of medicines and vaccines for COVID-19 and other diseases in future public health emergencies, in line with the focus of the first phase of the urgent implementation of the Regional Strategic and Action Plan on ASEAN Vaccine Security and Self-Reliance (AVSSR) 2021-2025. ASEAN looked forward to the ROK's continued support to ASEAN's Community building efforts and initiatives to address the pandemic, including the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework (ACRF) and its Implementation Plan and the ASEAN Regional Reserve of Medical Supplies for Public Health Emergencies. We also looked forward to further enhancing health cooperation aligned with the ASEAN Post-2015 Health Development Agenda (2021-2025), particularly on strengthening health system for sustainable universal health coverage, and health security for resilient health system, which will be further operationalised through the inaugural meetings of the ASEAN-ROK Senior Officials Meeting on Health Development (SOMHD) and ASEAN-ROK Health Ministers in October and November 2021 respectively.

6. We reiterated our shared commitment to uphold ASEAN Centrality, identity and unity in the evolving regional architecture that is open, transparent, inclusive and rules-based, built upon ASEAN-led mechanisms, including the ASEAN Plus One, ASEAN Plus Three (APT), East Asia Summit (EAS), ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM-Plus), and Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum (EAMF). We underscored the importance of multilateralism, regionalism, and international law in contributing to global and regional peace, stability, and prosperity. We further affirmed the principles stated in the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP), including strengthening ASEAN Centrality, openness, transparency, inclusivity, a rules-based framework, good governance, respect for sovereignty, non-interference, complementarity with existing cooperation frameworks, equality, mutual respect, mutual trust, mutual benefit, and respect for international law. We looked forward to advancing practical cooperation and synergies among the four (4) cooperation areas of the AOIP, the five (5) broad strategies of the ACRF, and the seven (7) initiatives of the NSP Plus, in order to build a People-centered Community of Peace and Prosperity.
7. We reiterated our commitment to further strengthening cooperation to address non-traditional security issues, including transnational crime, terrorism and violent extremism, cybersecurity, maritime security, climate change, food, water, and energy security. We agreed to continue implementing effectively the ASEAN Senior Officials' Meeting on Transnational Crime (SOMTC)-ROK Work Plan (2019-2023) for Cooperation to Prevent and Combat Transnational Crime. In this regard, we welcomed the convening of the 2nd ASEAN Plus ROK Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime Consultation on 30 September 2021. We also appreciated the ROK's active participation in the ADMM-Plus, including its co-chairmanship of the ADMM-Plus Experts' Working Group on Cybersecurity, and in the ARF including its co-chairmanship of the ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Security of and in the Use of ICTs (ARF ISM on ICTs Security). On promoting humanitarian assistance in mine action, we appreciated the ROK for supporting the ASEAN Regional Mine Action Centre (ARMAC) through its three-year project on Enhancing Victim Assistance Programme in the ASEAN Member States.
8. We noted with satisfaction that the ROK remains an important trade and investment partner for ASEAN, despite the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The ROK was ASEAN's fourth largest trading partner and ASEAN's fifth largest source of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) among ASEAN Dialogue Partners in 2020, with bilateral merchandise trade between both sides reaching USD 154.2 billion, and FDI inflows from the ROK to ASEAN amounting to USD 6.8 billion in the same year. We reaffirmed our commitment to an open, free, fair, inclusive, transparent, rules-based, and non-discriminatory multilateral trading system with the World Trade Organization (WTO) at its core. We also committed to maintain markets open for trade and investment. We welcomed the signing of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Agreement in November 2020, and reaffirmed our commitment to expedite our domestic procedures to have the RCEP Agreement enter into force in early January 2022, as targeted, to enhance market and employment opportunities for businesses and people in the region.
9. We reaffirmed our commitment to further strengthen economic cooperation by fully implementing the ASEAN-ROK Free Trade Agreement (AKFTA), and looked forward to the completion of negotiations on further liberalisation of the Sensitive Track (ST) products under the ASEAN-Korea Trade in Goods Agreement, as well as the full ratification and implementation of the Third Protocol to Amend the ASEAN-ROK Trade in Goods Agreement. We welcomed the decision to conduct a Joint Review Study of the AKFTA to advance the discussion of the further liberalisation of the sensitive track products and to identify areas in the AKFTA that could be improved or incorporated into the AKFTA for a possible FTA upgrade.

10. We reaffirmed the need to strengthen cooperation in areas such as the digital economy, innovation, creative economy, intellectual property, narrowing digital gaps, digital connectivity, agricultural technology, digital government, and preparing for the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR), particularly for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), through digital transformation, e-commerce, science and technology, capacity building, and human resource development. We looked forward to the establishment of the ASEAN-ROK Financial Cooperation Center, welcomed the substantial conclusion of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to establish the ASEAN-Korea Industrial Innovation Centre, and looked forward to the signing of the MOU as soon as possible. We also noted the progress of discussions on the ASEAN-Korea Standardization Joint Research Centre and the ASEAN-ROK Science and Technology Cooperation Centre.
11. We commended the progress of the ASEAN-ROK Start-ups Partnership initiative and looked forward to the finalisation of the ASEAN-ROK Policy Roadmap and the convening of the ASEAN-ROK Start-up Festival in December 2021 to be hosted by Brunei Darussalam. We welcomed the activities of the ASEAN-Korean Business Council (AKBC) and the ASEAN-Korea Centre (AKC) in supporting trade and investment flows, deepening business-to-business cooperation between ASEAN and the ROK, as well as contributing to comprehensive recovery in the region. We noted the progress of activities under the Technology Advice and Solutions from Korea (TASK programme), which contributed to the transfer of knowledge on advanced technologies to ASEAN Member States in the sectors of agricultural machinery, food processing, textile, and auto parts in 2021. We also welcomed the ROK's sharing of experience, best practices, and expertise in artificial intelligence, big data and 5G technologies to promote a sustainable, resilient, safe and inclusive digital ecosystem and to build a leading digital community in line with the ASEAN Digital Masterplan 2025.
12. We appreciated the ROK's continued support and cooperation in enhancing regional connectivity and narrowing the development gap within ASEAN, including through the implementation of the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity (MPAC) 2025 and the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) Work Plan III (2016-2020) and the IAI Work Plan IV (2021-2025), as well as the hosting of connectivity forums with ASEAN Member States. We looked forward to the conclusion of a more liberal and mutually beneficial ASEAN-ROK Air Services Agreement (AK-ASA) that would further enhance air transport connectivity between ASEAN and the ROK and facilitate tourism and support trade of goods and services in the effort to boost economic recovery.
13. ASEAN welcomed the ROK's continued support to further promote equitable and sustainable development across the ASEAN Community by aligning sub-regional growth with the comprehensive development of ASEAN, and also welcomed the ROK's support for the BIMP-EAGA and Mekong sub-regions. In this regard, we welcomed the establishment of the BIMP-EAGA-ROK Cooperation Fund (BKCF) to support sub-regional projects and developments.
14. ASEAN welcomed the ROK's support for the ASEAN Smart Cities Network (ASCN) in enhancing sustainable urban development and smart city infrastructure in ASEAN, including through the K-City Network Global Cooperation Program. We looked forward to the convening of the ASEAN-ROK Ministerial Meeting on Smart City and Infrastructure.

15. We welcomed the ROK's continued support in promoting cultural cooperation and people-to-people exchanges, including through the expansion of scholarship programmes, the convening of ASEAN-ROK Youth Summits, and the activities of the ASEAN-Korea Centre (AKC) in Seoul, the Asia Culture Center in Gwangju, the ASEAN Culture House in Busan and the ASEAN Cultural Center in Bangkok. We also welcomed ongoing programmes such as the ASEAN-ROK Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) for ASEAN Mobility (TEAM) and the Higher Education for ASEAN Talents (HEAT), the 9th ASEAN-Korea Frontier Forum, which utilizes the ASEAN-ROK Cooperation Fund and looked forward to enhancing cooperation on digital education and human resource development.
16. We welcomed the 1st Meeting of the ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management (ACDM) Plus ROK which aims to further enhance ASEAN-ROK cooperation on disaster management. We looked forward to the 1st Meeting of the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Management (AMMDM) Plus ROK in 2022. We emphasised the importance of enhancing ASEAN's capacity to prepare for, respond to and recover from future emergencies and disasters. In this regard, we encouraged for both ASEAN and the ROK to share best practices and lessons learned, to improve the coordination of existing ASEAN processes and mechanisms, with a view to facilitate the implementation of the Strategic and Holistic Initiative to Link ASEAN Responses to Emergencies and Disasters (ASEAN SHIELD).
17. We commended the ROK's initiatives on environmental cooperation including the successful convening of the 'Partnering for Green Growth and the Global Goals 2030 (P4G) Seoul Summit' in May 2021 and looked forward to enhancing cooperation on environmental issues, including biodiversity conservation and climate change. We noted the importance of working closely together to explore alternative approaches towards a more resilient and sustainable recovery such as cooperation on the Bio-Circular-Green Economy Model, and other circular economy models, which is in line with the ROK's "Green New Deal". We welcomed the convening of the ASEAN-ROK Dialogue on Environment and Climate Change on 16 September 2021 hosted by Brunei Darussalam, and the ongoing development of a work plan for the ASEAN-ROK Carbon Dialogue. We looked forward to exploring the possibility to empower youth entrepreneurs in shaping the agricultural sector by using modern farming technologies and innovative solutions to enhance food security and build a resilient and future-ready society.
18. We reaffirmed the importance of maintaining and promoting peace, security, stability, prosperity, safety, and freedom of navigation in and overflight above the South China Sea, and pursuing peaceful resolution of disputes, without resorting to the threat or use of force, in accordance with universally recognised principles of international law, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). We underscored the importance of the full and effective implementation of the 2002 Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) in its entirety. We noted the positive progress in the ongoing negotiations on the Code of Conduct in the South China Sea (COC) and encouraged further progress towards the early conclusion of an effective and substantive COC that is in accordance with international law, including the 1982 UNCLOS. We emphasised the need to promote an environment conducive to the COC negotiations and thus, welcomed practical measures that could reduce tensions and the risk of accidents, misunderstandings, and miscalculation. We stressed the importance of undertaking confidence building and preventive measures to enhance, among others, trust and confidence amongst parties, and reaffirmed the importance of upholding international law, including the 1982 UNCLOS.

19. We discussed the situation in the South China Sea, during which concerns were expressed by some countries on the land reclamations, activities, and serious incidents in the area, including damage to the marine environment, which have eroded trust and confidence, increased tensions and may undermine peace, security, and stability in the region. We reaffirmed the need to enhance mutual trust and confidence, exercise self-restraint in the conduct of activities that would complicate or escalate disputes and affect peace and stability and avoid actions that may further complicate the situation. We further reaffirmed the need to pursue peaceful resolution of disputes in accordance with universally recognised principles of international law, including the 1982 UNCLOS. We emphasised the importance of non-militarisation and self-restraint in the conduct of all activities by claimants and all other states, including those mentioned in the DOC that could further complicate the situation and escalate tensions in the South China Sea.

20. We reaffirmed our support for diplomacy and dialogue in achieving complete denuclearisation and establishment of permanent peace on the Korean Peninsula. We recognised the efforts made by all parties concerned to resume dialogue and advance the peace process on the Korean Peninsula over the past four years. We also welcomed the restoration of inter-Korean communication lines and acknowledged that it will contribute to further improving and developing inter-Korean relations. We urged all parties concerned to continue working together constructively towards the complete denuclearisation and permanent peace on the Korean Peninsula, including through the full and expeditious implementation of the 2018 Panmunjom Declaration and Pyongyang Joint Declaration between the ROK and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), and the Singapore Joint Statement by the U.S and the DPRK's Leaders. We underscored the significance of maintaining peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula and welcomed the ROK's efforts to advance inter-Korean dialogue, engagement, and cooperation to restore the virtuous cycle where inter-Korean relations and U.S.-DPRK relations advance in a mutually reinforcing manner. We also welcomed the ROK's proposal to declare an end to the Korean War. We reiterated our commitment to the full implementation of all relevant United Nations Security Council Resolutions. We further stressed the need to promote a conducive atmosphere to peaceful dialogue among the concerned parties, including through utilising ASEAN-led platforms, such as the ARF.

21. We discussed the recent developments in Myanmar and expressed concern over the situation in the country, including reports of fatalities and violence. We also heard calls for the release of political detainees including foreigners. We called on Myanmar to fulfil its commitment to the Five-Point Consensus of the ASEAN Leaders' Meeting on 24 April 2021 and acceptance for the timely and complete implementation of the Five-Point Consensus namely, the immediate cessation of violence in Myanmar and all parties to exercise utmost restraint; constructive dialogue among all parties concerned shall commence to seek a peaceful solution in the interests of the people; the Special Envoy of the ASEAN Chair to facilitate mediation of the dialogue process, with the assistance of the Secretary-General of ASEAN; ASEAN to provide humanitarian assistance through the AHA Centre; and the Special Envoy and delegation to visit Myanmar to meet with all parties concerned. We welcomed the efforts by the Special Envoy of the ASEAN Chair on Myanmar and called on parties concerned in Myanmar to swiftly and fully implement the Five-Point Consensus, including by facilitating the visit of the Special Envoy to Myanmar to build trust and confidence with full access to all parties concerned. We welcomed the provision of humanitarian assistance to the people of Myanmar, through the AHA Centre. We also welcomed the continued support from our external partners, including the ROK, for ASEAN's efforts in the swift and complete implementation of the Five-Point Consensus and in this regard, we highly appreciated ROK's contribution of USD 1 million to support ASEAN's efforts in providing humanitarian assistance to the people of Myanmar.