

2022 JOINT STATEMENT OF THE TWENTY-EIGHTH ASEAN SOCIO-CULTURAL COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Adopted in Phnom Penh, Cambodia on 13 October 2022

1. The 28th ASCC Council Meeting was held on 13 October 2022 in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, under the ASEAN Chairmanship of Cambodia. The Meeting expressed pleasure that the convening of the 28th ASCC Council Meeting in the capital city marks the first time in over 2 years that the ASCC Council is meeting in person and signals the readiness of ASEAN to revitalise people-to-people ties.
2. The Meeting commended ASEAN's accelerated efforts in realising the ASCC priorities under Cambodia's ASEAN Chairmanship guided by the theme "ASEAN A.C.T.: Addressing Challenges Together" namely: (i) Enhance ASEAN values, awareness and identity; (ii) Promote human resource development and women empowerment; (iii) Enhance health, well-being, and social protection for the peoples of ASEAN; and (iv) Strengthen ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community's institutional capacity and effectiveness.
3. The Meeting expressed satisfaction with the final term implementation of the ASCC Blueprint 2025, including increased numbers of activities in the Sectoral Work Plans and follow-up actions under the ASEAN declarations and statements. The Meeting commended the ASCC's commitment towards a strong post-pandemic recovery through aligning the Blueprint's implementation with the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework (ACRF) and its Implementation Plan, and took note that building resilient regional health system resilience, as agreed by the 15th ASEAN Health Ministers Meeting (AHMM), shall be promoted through cross-sectoral and cross-pillar approaches. The Meeting also noted the Report of the 18th Coordinating Conference on the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (SOC-COM); the Consolidated Strategy on the Fourth Industrial Revolution; the ASEAN Enabling Masterplan 2025: Mainstreaming the Rights of Persons with Disabilities; the ASCC Research and Development Platforms; and the Development of Feasibility Study on the Proposed ASEAN Institute for Policy Studies.
4. The Meeting commended the catalytic role of the ASEAN Sectoral Bodies of ASCC in spearheading and integrating ASEAN commitments to the United Nations 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development in their respective sectoral work plans. The Meeting encouraged Sectoral Bodies to further enhance efforts in supporting the complementarities between the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to ensure no one is left behind in the regional agenda of ASEAN beyond 2025.
5. The Meeting endorsed and looked forward to the adoption of the ASEAN Leaders' Statement on the Year of ASEAN Youth 2022 and highlighted the important active role of youth in community development and in addressing existing and future challenges faced by the region. The Meeting likewise noted the recommendations from the First ASEAN Youth Dialogue held on 25-26 July 2022 in Siem Reap, Cambodia and encouraged relevant ASEAN sectoral bodies across the three community pillars to consider and act on the recommendation to regularly convene dialogues between youth and government by establishing a network of "ASEAN Youth Representatives", for youth and by youth who may devise policies, proposals, raise concerns or recommendations to the ASEAN Member States to involve youth in decision-making processes.

6. The Meeting endorsed and looked forward to the adoption of the Declaration on Digital Transformation of Education System throughout ASEAN, which seeks to integrate technology in education to improve the resilience of ASEAN education systems and develop both digital and transferable skills among students. The Meeting commended the development of the Reopen, Recover, and Resilience in Education: Guidelines for ASEAN and the ASEAN Work Plan on Youth 2021-2025 that seek to ensure an equitable and inclusive education and empower ASEAN youth to respond to the needs for community building.
7. The Meeting acknowledged women's indispensable roles in driving inclusive economic growth and achieving lasting peace and security while recognising the engendered and disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on women and girls, including loss of livelihoods and access to quality healthcare. In this regard, the Meeting looked forward to the adoption of the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on Women, Peace, and Security; and the ASEAN Declaration on Building a More Sustainable, Inclusive and Resilient Future: Unlocking Women's Entrepreneurship in ASEAN. The Meeting looked forward to the rollout of the ASEAN Committee on Women Work Plan 2021-2025; the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children Work Plan 2021-2025, and the ASEAN Gender Mainstreaming Strategic Framework that will promote gender equality and empowerment of women and girls throughout ASEAN's recovery, rehabilitation and resilience building efforts.
8. The Meeting reaffirmed the commitment to enhance health, well-being, and social protection for the peoples of ASEAN and looked forward to the adoption of the ASEAN Declaration on Portability of Social Security Benefits for Migrant Workers in ASEAN; and ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on Ending Inequalities and Getting on Track to End AIDS by 2030. The Meeting also looked forward to the rollout of the Regional Guidance on Strengthening the Role of Social Workers and the Wider Social Service Workforce in Social Protection; the Guideline and Minimum Standards for the protection, promotion, and support of breastfeeding and complementary feeding including the implementation of the International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes; the ASEAN Guideline on HIV counselling and Testing in the Workplace; the ASEAN Migration Outlook; the Senior Officials Meeting on Social Welfare and Development (SOMSWD) Work Plan 2021-2025; the ASEAN Labour Inspection Committee (ALICOM) Work Plan 2021-2025; as well as the wider dissemination of the ASEAN Food and Nutrition Security Report 2021 (Volume 1 and Volume 2).
9. The Meeting looked forward to the adoption of the ASEAN Master Plan on Rural Development and the implementation of the ASEAN Framework Action Plan on Rural Development and Poverty Eradication 2021-2025. The Plans would contribute to ASEAN's ongoing efforts in alleviating poverty and strengthening the resilience of vulnerable populations to achieve inclusive and sustainable development, in line with the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
10. Acknowledging the potential of the cultural and creative economy in contributing to the region's post-pandemic recovery and in providing new opportunities for inclusive and sustainable development, the Meeting noted that the Siem Reap Declaration on Promoting a Creative and Adaptive ASEAN Community to Support the Cultural and Creative Economy has been adopted by the ASEAN Ministers Responsible for Culture and Arts (AMCA). Further to this development, the Meeting commended the Senior Officials Meeting for Culture and Arts (SOMCA) Cambodia for its ongoing consultations on the proposed ASEAN Centre for Cultural and Creative Industries (ACCCI).

11. The Meeting reaffirmed the important role of sports in strengthening ASEAN values, awareness, and identity and its significant contribution to community-building efforts. In this regard, the Meeting looked forward to the adoption of the ASEAN Declaration on Leveraging the Role of Sports in ASEAN Community-Building and Achieving the SDGs; and the ASEAN Declaration on Fostering ASEAN Identity through the Safeguarding of Traditional Sports and Games in the Modern World. The Meeting also noted the ASEAN Work Plan on Sports 2021-2025, the ASEAN-FIFA Collaboration Plan 2021-2022, and the Joint Statement of ASEAN Sports Ministers on Cementing the Foundation of ASEAN Athletes at the Southeast Asia Games.
12. The Meeting noted with satisfaction the ongoing efforts in strengthening ASEAN's commitment to address climate change and looked forward to the adoption of the ASEAN Joint Statement on Climate Change to UNFCCC COP-27. The Meeting remained committed to advance climate change cooperation in the region through the establishment of ASEAN Centre for Climate Change in Brunei Darussalam. The Meeting also expressed support to the upcoming rollout of the 6th ASEAN State of Environment Report; the Roadmap on ASEAN Cooperation towards Transboundary Haze Pollution Control with Means of Implementation 2022-2030; and the ASEAN Peatland Management Strategy 2022-2030. The Meeting reiterated the urgency to further intensify efforts towards the finalisation of the Establishment Agreement and Host Country Agreement of the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Transboundary Haze Pollution Control (ACC THPC) in Indonesia to facilitate for faster and effective implementation of all aspects of the Haze Agreement. In addition, the Meeting welcomed the efforts on disaster management that will better prepare ASEAN to respond to regional emergencies and disasters and looked forward to the launch of the ASEAN Framework for Anticipatory Action in Disaster Management 2021-2025 and the implementation of the Guideline for Operationalising the ASEAN Regional Framework on Protection, Gender, and Inclusion in Disaster Management.
13. The Meeting welcomed the efforts on disaster management that will better prepare ASEAN for regional emergency disaster responses that are integrated, comprehensive and holistic. The meeting noted the launch of the ASEAN Framework for Anticipatory Action in Disaster Management 2021 and the implementation of the Guideline for Operationalising the ASEAN Regional Framework on Protection, Gender, and Inclusion in Disaster Management. The meeting further noted the ongoing review of the Terms of Reference (TOR) of the role of the Secretary General of ASEAN as the ASEAN Humanitarian Assistance Coordinator (SG-AHAC) and the review of the financial rules of the ADMER Fund to contribute to the implementation of the Bandar Seri Begawan Declaration on the ASEAN SHIELD.
14. The Meeting commended the enhanced efforts towards effective cross-sectoral and inter-pillar coordination and collaboration leading to the completion of various initiatives and outcome documents of the ASCC pillar with wider stakeholder consultation and engagement. The Meeting looked forward to sustained support and cooperation of diverse partners in the rollout and implementation of these outcome documents.
15. The Meeting congratulated the SOCA for the successful organisation of the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Fact-Finding Mission in Timor-Leste held on 6-8 July 2022 and expressed appreciation to the ASEAN delegation for their support and inputs in the assessment report of the ASCC pillar on Timor-Leste's membership application. In addition, the Meeting also noted the progress of the ongoing discussions to envisage the establishment of ASEAN Aid including the development of the expert assessment papers and the planned high-level Meeting to be held in November 2022. The Meeting also expressed appreciation for the work of ASCC Secondment Officers at the Permanent Missions to ASEAN.

16. The Meeting expressed deep appreciation to the Secretary-General of ASEAN for his distinguished service as he completes his five-year term of office on 31 December 2022. The Meeting commended the thoroughness, distinction and quiet dignity of the Secretary-General in the discharge of his duties. The Meeting also noted that in a period of unprecedented global and regional challenges, the Secretary-General has drawn on his commitment to the ASEAN Charter by mobilising resources and actions to respond to COVID-19 and preparing for post-pandemic recovery, preparing ASEAN people for the future of work, championing youth development and empowerment, advancing gender equality, strengthening education and health cooperation, addressing climate challenges, responding to disasters and humanitarian assistance in his capacity as the ASEAN Humanitarian Assistance Coordinator, and enhancing the capacity and effectiveness of the ASCC and the ASEAN Secretariat to achieve a resilient, dynamic, sustainable, beneficial and inclusive ASEAN social-cultural future. The Meeting wished for his continued good health and happiness.

17. The Meeting commended the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA) for supporting the Cambodia ASEAN Chairmanship and delivering a number of side events under the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community.

18. The Meeting conveyed deep appreciation to Cambodia for the effective Chairmanship and excellent arrangements for the 28th ASCC Council Meeting and looked forward to the next ASCC Council Meeting in 2023 under the Indonesia's ASEAN Chairmanship.