

## 2021 CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT OF THE 9<sup>TH</sup> ASEAN-UNITED STATES SUMMIT

*Adopted on 26 October 2021*

1. The 9<sup>th</sup> ASEAN-United States (U.S.) Summit was held via videoconference on 26 October 2021. The Summit was chaired by His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah, Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam.
2. ASEAN welcomed the participation of the Honourable Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the United States of America at his first ASEAN-U.S. Summit, and looked forward to deepening relations between ASEAN and the U.S. We also looked forward to commemorating the 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of ASEAN-U.S. dialogue relations in 2022 and further advancing our partnership with more concrete cooperation for mutual benefits. We acknowledged several high-level exchanges between ASEAN and the U.S. this year and shared the view that the future of the ASEAN-U.S. Strategic Partnership remains optimistic, building on the sustained commitment, mutual interests and values and the enduring goodwill of all sides. We welcome the U.S.' continued commitment to ASEAN Centrality, identity and unity.
3. 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 its people can seize new opportunities, as well as overcoming existing and future challenges; and creating opportunities for people to benefit through initiatives that enhance the sustainable prosperity of the region. We highlighted the importance of maintaining momentum in cooperating within and beyond ASEAN for the pursuit of these long-term goals.
4. We reaffirmed our shared commitment to continue strengthening the ASEAN-U.S. Strategic Partnership, which plays a significant role in maintaining peace, security, stability and prosperity in the region. We welcomed with satisfaction the good progress made in implementing the Plan of Action to Implement the ASEAN-U.S. Strategic Partnership (2021-2025). We looked forward to closer collaboration to address all action lines by 2025, including through the U.S.' proposals for expanded engagement with ASEAN in the areas of public health, transportation, gender equality and women's empowerment, energy, and environment and climate change. We welcome the United States' intention to commit USD 102 million for new and existing programs to deepen the ASEAN-U.S. Strategic Partnership, to support the region's recovery from COVID-19, address the climate crisis, promote economic growth and develop human capital. We also noted the U.S.' proposal to pursue ministerial level meetings in all other sectors in 2022.
5. We reiterated our shared commitment to uphold ASEAN Centrality and unity through the existing ASEAN-led mechanisms, as well as to foster mutual trust and confidence in the evolving regional architecture that is open, transparent, inclusive and rules-based. In this regard, ASEAN reiterated the importance of the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP), which is based on the principles of, among others, 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, and serves as guide for ASEAN's engagement in the wider Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean regions. We emphasised the importance of adhering to key principles enshrined in the ASEAN Charter, Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC), as well as relevant international law, such as the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), the Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ) and the Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality (ZOPFAN) Declaration. In the same vein, we expressed appreciation to the U.S. for supporting ASEAN centrality and encouraged the U.S. to continue working with ASEAN to undertake

practical cooperation on the ASEAN priority areas identified in the AOIP to enhance mutual trust, mutual respect and mutual benefit through ASEAN-led mechanisms.

6. We remain fully committed to preserve Southeast Asia as a region free from nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, while supporting to global efforts on disarmament, non-proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy, in line with the ZOPFAN Declaration and Treaty on the SEANWFZ.
7. We committed to working together to overcome the COVID-19 pandemic and advance health security to prepare for future public health emergencies. We recognised that the COVID-19 pandemic continues to have a devastating impact on the region and reaffirmed the importance of enhanced international and multilateral cooperation to overcome its challenges, as well as to strengthen joint efforts for a lasting recovery. We underscored the importance of continued ASEAN-U.S. cooperation in this regard, and welcomed the convening and outcomes of various engagements between ASEAN and the U.S. related to public health cooperation and COVID-19 response. We welcomed the U.S. for its support to ASEAN's pandemic recovery efforts, including through its contributions of over USD 194 million in COVID-19 related assistance to the region, pledge of USD 500,000 to the COVID-19 ASEAN Response Fund, the launch of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Southeast Asia Regional Office in Ha Noi, Viet Nam, as well as the establishment of the U.S.-ASEAN Health Futures Initiative, and multi-year support to the development of the framework and structure of the ASEAN Public Health Emergency Coordination System (APHECS). We underscored the need for the U.S.' global leadership in addressing the gaps in vaccine distribution and encouraged greater collaboration to ensure fair, equitable and affordable access of vaccines including through expanding vaccine production in the ASEAN region. We welcomed the U.S.' donation of over 31 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines to ASEAN Member States and noted that its total donation of 1.1 billion doses for low- and middle-income countries would further support the global recovery. We also welcomed President Biden's initiative in organising the virtual Global COVID-19 Summit on 22 September 2021, during which, the U.S. pledged an additional 500 million doses of Pfizer vaccines through the COVAX Facility for a total of 1.1 billion doses for low- and middle-income countries to further support the global recovery.
8. We welcomed the U.S.' continued support for and active participation in various ASEAN-led mechanisms, such as the East Asia Summit (EAS), ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM) Plus, and Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum (EAMF) as well as the ASEAN Plus United States of America Senior Officials' Meeting on Transnational Crime (SOMTC + U.S.) Consultation and other meetings. We looked forward to the adoption of the EAS Leaders' Statement on Sustainable Recovery at the 16<sup>th</sup> EAS for which the U.S. was one of the proponents. Additionally, we welcomed the U.S.' co-sponsorship of the EAS Leaders' Statement on Mental Health Cooperation, for which Brunei Darussalam is the main proponent. We took note of the informal meeting between ASEAN-U.S. Defence Ministers, which was held on the side-lines of the 7<sup>th</sup> ADMM Plus in December 2020, and looked forward to the U.S.' participation in the 9<sup>th</sup> EAMF in November 2021.
9. We welcomed the U.S.' continued support for the mandate and efforts of the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) in strengthening ASEAN's commitment to the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms of its people, including youth.
10. We were committed to continue our close cooperation to counter a variety of shared challenges including terrorism illegal wildlife trade and illicit drug trafficking. We noted the ongoing efforts to strengthen border security in order to counter foreign terrorist fighter travel and other transnational threats.
11. We reiterated our commitment to a fair, open, transparent, and rules-based multilateral trading system, centred on the World Trade Organisation (WTO), while also recognising the clear need to reform the WTO to improve its functioning. We underlined the need to accelerate inclusive and sustainable economic recovery by keeping markets open for trade and investment, and strengthening cooperation on digital trade and sustainable development.

12. We welcomed the positive development of economic relations between ASEAN and the U.S. despite the disruptions of the COVID-19 pandemic. The U.S. remains an important trading partner for ASEAN with the total two-way trade in 2020 reaching USD 308.3 billion, making it the second largest trading partner of ASEAN. The U.S. continues to be ASEAN's largest source of FDI, amounting to USD 34.7 billion in 2020.
13. We reaffirmed our commitment to deepening ASEAN-U.S. economic ties, including through the implementation of the ASEAN-U.S. Trade and Investment Framework Arrangement (TIFA) and the Expanded Economic Engagement (E3) Initiatives Work Plans. We encouraged our officials to effectively conduct cooperation activities as agreed under the 2021-2022 TIFA and E3 Work Plan, including dialogues on labour and environment and to explore the exchange of electronic customs information between the ASEAN Single Window (ASW) and the United States Customs and Border Protection's Automated Commercial Environment (ACE) to further facilitate two-way trade between ASEAN and the U.S.
14. We expressed appreciation for the opportunities offered by the U.S.-ASEAN Connect for ASEAN's economies to learn from the expertise of the U.S. government and private sector, including the U.S.-ASEAN Connect Digital Economy Series, and U.S.-ASEAN Connect Green Economy Series and welcomed the U.S.' expansion of the ASEAN SME Academy, which will focus on digital economy support to micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in ASEAN.
15. We welcomed the U.S. continued support for enhanced regional connectivity as well as ASEAN's overall digital transformation and digital economy through the implementation of the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity (MPAC) 2025. In this regard, we looked forward to exploring synergies between the MPAC 2025 and U.S. initiatives supporting connectivity in line with the "Connecting the Connectivities" approach.
16. We welcomed the U.S.' participation at the 1st ASEAN Digital Ministers' Meeting held on 22 January 2021 via videoconference and encouraged the continuing cooperation between ASEAN and the U.S. in supporting ASEAN Digital Masterplan 2025, including through implementation of the 2021 ASEAN-U.S. ICT Workplan. We also welcomed initiatives on the Digital Connectivity and Cybersecurity Partnership and the U.S.-ASEAN Connect Digital Economy Series, as well as the U.S.' support for the ASEAN-Singapore Cybersecurity Centre of Excellence. We also noted the virtual convening of the 2nd ASEAN-U.S. Cyber Policy Dialogue on 8 October 2021, which discussed ways to strengthen cyber cooperation in the region, including through supporting ASEAN's cyberspace capacity building and discussion of cyber norms and principles. We also expressed appreciation for the U.S.' continued engagement in the ASEAN Smart Cities Network through activities under the U.S.-ASEAN Smart Cities Partnership (USASCP) initiative, including the recently launched Integrated Urban Services Project. We welcomed the adoption of the ASEAN-U.S. Leaders' Statement on Digital Development, which will strengthen ASEAN's preparedness for the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR). ASEAN Member States conveyed our willingness to explore the possibility of cooperation through an ASEAN-U.S. digital economy framework.
17. We welcomed the U.S.' renewed commitment to the climate change agenda and its return to the Paris Agreement, and looked forward to deepening cooperation to address the climate change crisis and strengthen collaboration on biodiversity conservation, environment and energy, as well as promote sustainable development and green growth in the region, including through the ASEAN Centre for Sustainable Development Studies and Dialogue (ACSDDSD) and ASEAN-U.S. dialogues on environment and climate change. The Meeting also welcomed the new ASEAN-U.S. Energy Cooperation Work Plan (2021-2025), which was adopted in January 2021, wherein its key priority areas include energy security and resilience, and market integration, as well as the U.S.' proposal to establish an annual ASEAN-U.S. Ministerial-level Dialogue on energy at the sidelines of the annual EAS Energy Ministers Meeting. In this connection, we welcomed the engagement between the ASEAN and U.S. Ministers on Energy at the side-lines of the 39<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Ministers on Energy Meeting in September 2021 via videoconference.
18. We appreciated the U.S.' continued support in building a more people-oriented, people-centred ASEAN Community through various capacity building and development programmes. We

recalled the adoption of the ASEAN-U.S. Joint Statement on Human Capital Development at the 8<sup>th</sup> ASEAN-U.S. Summit and underscored the value of initiatives such as the Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative (YSEALI), ASEAN Youth Volunteer Programme, ASEAN Youth Social Journalism (AYSJ) Contest, ASEAN Youth Video Contest (AYVC), the U.S.- ASEAN Internship Programme, the ASEAN-U.S. Science Prize for Women, the Fulbright U.S.-ASEAN Visiting Scholar Program and the Billion Futures Program for human capital development in the region and for enhancing people-to-people ties. In this regard, we looked forward to the U.S. increasing the number of scholarships and other mid-level professional training opportunities to ASEAN Member States, as this will enhance the networking and leadership development among the ASEAN young leaders. We also supported the enhancement of people-to-people exchanges in creative economy and digital economy sectors, and encouraged the U.S. to partner with ASEAN in the ASEAN Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Council.

19. We recognised the valuable contributions of the U.S. in building ASEAN's institutional capacity to promote human rights and to provide opportunities for underserved populations, including youth, women, and ethnic, religious, and other minority groups, and in supporting institutional mechanisms to ensure their meaningful engagement in ASEAN processes and decision-making. Particularly, we welcomed U.S.' support to ASEAN in supporting the regional discourse on gender equality through the development of the gender mainstreaming strategic framework in advancing the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda with the launch of the ASEAN Regional Study on WPS in March 2021. We appreciated the U.S.' support in realising the rights of women and children in ASEAN as a key partner of the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC) and the ASEAN Committee on Women (ACW) in implementing its work plans. We looked forward to sustaining collaboration with the U.S. to escalate catalytic actions on gender equality and women empowerment together with relevant ASEAN Sectoral Bodies across the three ASEAN Community pillars.
20. We welcomed ASEAN-U.S. development cooperation and the U.S.' ongoing efforts to narrow the development gap in ASEAN to promote sustainable and equitable development across ASEAN through aligning sub-regional growth with the comprehensive development of ASEAN, especially through the Mekong-U.S. Partnership (MUSP), USAID's Inclusive Growth in ASEAN through Innovation, Trade and E-Commerce (IGNITE) project, the Partnership for Regional Optimization within the Political-Security and Socio-Cultural Communities (PROSPECT), the ASEAN Policy Implementation Project (API), and the Regional Development Cooperation Agreement (RDCA). We also encouraged the U.S.' continued support in narrowing the development gap within ASEAN through support in the implementation of the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) Work Plan IV (2021 – 2025). We also encouraged the U.S. to consider providing financial and technical support for ARMAC's operation and activities in order to help promote the awareness of the danger of mine and explosive remnants of war/ERW in the region and beyond.
21. We discussed international issues of common interest and concern. We reaffirmed our support for diplomacy and dialogue in achieving the complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearisation and establishment of permanent peace on the Korean Peninsula. We urged all parties concerned to continue working together constructively towards realising lasting peace and stability in the Korean Peninsula, including through the full and expeditious implementation of the 2018 Panmunjom Declaration and Pyongyang Joint Declaration between the Republic of Korea (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 reiterated our commitment to the full implementation of all relevant United Nations Security Council Resolutions. We 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.
22. We reaffirmed the importance of maintaining and promoting peace, security, stability, safety, and freedom of navigation in and overflight above the South China Sea and pursue 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. We discussed the situation in the South China Sea, during which concerns were expressed by some Leaders on the land reclamations, activities and serious incidents in the area, including and 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 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.

23. 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 their commitment to 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 U.S., for ASEAN's efforts in the swift and complete implementation of the Five-Point Consensus and in this regard ASEAN's efforts in providing humanitarian assistance to the people of Myanmar.