

2024 CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT OF THE 44TH AND 45TH ASEAN SUMMITS

Adopted in Vientiane, Lao PDR, on 9 October 2024

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2024 CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT OF THE 44TH AND 45TH ASEAN SUMMITS

Adopted in Vientiane, Lao PDR, on 9 October 2024

1. We, the Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), gathered in Vientiane, Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR), on 9 October 2024, for the 44th and 45th ASEAN Summits under the Chairmanship of the Lao PDR. The Summits were chaired by H.E. Mr. Sonexay Siphandone, Prime Minister of the Lao PDR, and convened in accordance with the ASEAN Charter.
2. We reaffirmed our support for Lao PDR's ASEAN Chairmanship under the theme ASEAN: Enhancing Connectivity and Resilience, which focuses on enhancing connectivity through integrating economies, forging an inclusive and sustainable future, and transforming for the digital era, and strengthening resilience by supporting the development of the ASEAN Community Vision 2045 and its Strategic Plans, strengthening ASEAN Centrality, promoting environmental cooperation, addressing issues related to women and children, and bolstering health systems. We emphasised the importance of these efforts in building a more connected and resilient ASEAN Community that is prepared to seize future opportunities and to overcome challenges. We underscored the significance of maintaining and promoting cooperation and collaboration within ASEAN and with external partners to achieve these objectives.

ASEAN COMMUNITY-BUILDING

3. We reaffirmed our commitment to strengthening the ASEAN Community through the full and effective implementation of the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and enhancing ASEAN unity and Centrality in ASEAN's external relations. We reiterated the importance of maintaining an ASEAN-centred, open, inclusive, transparent, resilient and rules-based regional architecture that upholds international law and the importance of strengthening our engagement and cooperation with ASEAN's external partners, including through existing ASEAN-led mechanisms, in promoting peace, stability, security, and sustainable development to enhance our regional connectivity and resilience to respond to common and emerging challenges in the evolving regional architecture.
4. We reaffirmed our commitment to strengthening the ASEAN Community and our shared commitment to maintaining and promoting peace, security, and stability in the region, as well as to the peaceful resolution of disputes. This includes full respect for legal and diplomatic processes, without resorting to the threat or use of force, in accordance with the universally recognised principles of international law, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).
5. We reaffirmed our strong commitment to upholding regionalism and multilateralism and emphasised the importance of adhering to key principles, shared values, and norms enshrined in the United Nations (UN) Charter, the ASEAN Charter, the Declaration on Zone of Peace, Freedom, and Neutrality (ZOPFAN), the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC), the 1982 UNCLOS, the Treaty on the Southeast Asian Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ), the 2011 Declaration of the East Asia Summit on the Principles for Mutually Beneficial Relations and the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP).

6. We were pleased with the sustained implementation of the ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC) Blueprint 2025 and commended the APSC Sectoral Bodies and other stakeholders within the APSC Community pillar in taking further efforts to implement the remaining action line, bringing the implementation rate to 99.6 per cent as we move closer to the end of term of our current Blueprint. The successful implementation of the current Blueprint would lay the foundation for the ASEAN Community Vision 2045 and its Strategic Plans.
7. We took note of the ongoing transfer of the Joint Consultative Meeting (JCM)'s mandate on coordinating cross-pillar issues to the Committee of Permanent Representatives to ASEAN (CPR). We encouraged the CPR to undertake its important role in cross-pillar coordination in an efficient and robust manner, to ensure that all ASEAN Community pillars work harmoniously together to achieve our shared objectives and address regional challenges effectively.
8. We acknowledged that the End-of-Term Review of the APSC Blueprint 2025 is to commence by this year. Cognisant of the need to ensure a comprehensive approach in conducting the end-of-term review, we encouraged the End-of-Term Review of the APSC Blueprint to be conducted alongside the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) and the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) pillars, as well as the ASEAN Connectivity, for a more holistic outcome.
9. We were encouraged by the good progress in the implementation of the AEC Blueprint 2025 with 96 per cent of its measures/activities completed or ongoing. We commended ASEAN Member States for their active role and all Sectoral Bodies for their strong commitment and hard work. We looked forward to the completion of all on-going and remaining initiatives by the end of 2025.
10. We welcomed the commencement of the overall review of the AEC Blueprint 2025 which includes the end-term review, and outcomes and impact evaluation. We looked forward to the completion of this exercise with its candid and evidence-based assessment of performance, including achievements, outcomes and challenges, and the valuable insights and learning to guide the region's future work as well as planning, monitoring and implementation of AEC strategic measures and action lines.
11. We noted with satisfaction the progress of the implementation of the ASCC Blueprint 2025 with 99 per cent of its Strategic Measures completed or ongoing. We commended the progress of the ASCC in implementing the recommendations from the Mid-Term Review of the ASCC Blueprint 2025 and looked forward to utilising the recently launched ASCC Database for Monitoring and Evaluation (ADME) System to inform evidence-based and data-driven decision and policy-making and monitor initiatives and programmes.
12. We also noted the ongoing progress of the End-Term Review of the ASCC Blueprint 2025, which will evaluate its vision to forge an inclusive, sustainable, dynamic and resilient ASEAN by 2025; to showcase milestones and accomplishments by ASCC sectors; to put forth findings and recommendations; and to draw from lessons learned and good practices that could shape the Post-2025 ASCC agenda.
13. We welcomed the ASEAN Leaders' Interface with the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA), the ASEAN Business Advisory Council (ASEAN-BAC), and the representatives of ASEAN youth on the occasion of the 44th and 45th ASEAN Summits, expanding further our engagement with other relevant stakeholders to continue contributing to the ASEAN Community-building process.

14. We acknowledged the importance of the ASEAN Junior Fellowship Programme with the ASEAN Secretariat (AJFP) in enhancing the expertise of junior officials from ASEAN Member States and Timor-Leste in their regional cooperation endeavours through direct engagement with the ASEAN Secretariat. We were pleased to note the successful convening of the third iteration of the AJFP this year with the generous support of Brunei Darussalam and Japan. We looked forward to the programme's continued contribution to our ASEAN Community-building efforts.

KEY DELIVERABLES

INTEGRATING AND CONNECTING ECONOMIES

15. We adopted the ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on Enhancing Supply Chain Connectivity which will enhance efforts to strengthen supply chain efficiency and resilience in the region, bringing together relevant frameworks and initiatives on trade, transport, logistics and supply chains, towards creating a region with seamless, competitive and resilient supply chains
16. We commended the timely completion of the Review of the ASEAN Framework Agreement on Intellectual Property Cooperation (AFAIPC). Reaffirming our commitment to advancing ASEAN's intellectual property (IP) ecosystem on the global stage, we welcomed the in-principle adoption by the ASEAN Economic Ministers (AEM) of the recommendation to upgrade the AFAIPC. This upgrading of the AFAIPC will be the cornerstone for enhancing regional IP capacity, positioning ASEAN as a more innovative, competitive, sustainable and resilient economy, as well as broadening and deepening regional integration to ensure our region thrives in the evolving global landscape. Additionally, we reaffirmed our commitment to work with the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) to implement the relevant actions of the AEC Strategic Plan in principle.
17. We welcomed the substantial conclusion of the ASEAN-China Free Trade Area (ACFTA) 3.0 Upgrade Negotiations. The ACFTA 3.0 will deepen commitments in existing areas, such as Customs Procedures and Trade Facilitation, Standard, Technical Regulations, and Conformity Assessment Procedures, Sanitary and Phytosanitary, and Economic and Technical Cooperation. In addition, it will introduce commitments and deepen cooperation in new areas, including the Digital Economy, Green Economy, Supply Chain Connectivity, Competition and Consumer Protection, and MSMEs. The ACFTA 3.0 aims to strengthen supply chains, keep markets open and promote longer-term growth by leveraging digital trade and sustainable development. We looked forward to the completion of the negotiation and the signing of the upgraded agreement.
18. We were pleased with the completion of the signing of the Second Protocol to Amend the Agreement Establishing the ASEAN-Australia-New Zealand Free Trade Area (AANZFTA) by all Parties and welcomed the forthcoming entry into force of the Protocol by the end of 2024. We remained steadfast in our commitment to ensuring that the AANZFTA Agreement continues to be a benchmark for high standards and facilitating the continued flow of essential goods in various ways, which will support businesses to continue trading in times of crises, epidemics, and pandemic situations. We looked forward to the effective implementation of the Second Protocol which will contribute to regional economic recovery and bring benefits to businesses, especially micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs).

FORGING AN INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

19. We noted the efforts and significant progress made to promote sustainable agriculture in the ASEAN region and looked forward to the implementation of the Action Plan on Sustainable Agriculture, which is a Priority Economic Deliverable (PED) for 2024. To further enhance cooperation in the agricultural sector, we issued the ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on Promoting Sustainable Agriculture, encouraging ASEAN Member States to align their agricultural policies, strategies, and investments with the principles and actions outlined in this Declaration. This includes integrating sustainable agriculture into their respective national development plans and allocating adequate resources for its implementation.
20. We commended the ASEAN Ministers on Agriculture and Forestry (AMAF) for their Statement addressing crop burning and promoting sustainable agricultural practices through the implementation of the ASEAN Guidelines on the Reduction of Crop Burning, which includes organic farming and precision agriculture. Relevant stakeholders are expected to collaborate closely with the ASEAN Secretariat to identify and implement regional and national programmes that support these priorities.
21. We acknowledged the need to make significant progress in advancing regional interconnectivity through the ASEAN Power Grid (APG) enhanced Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and encouraged the ASEAN Ministers on Energy Meeting (AMEM) platform to continue to prioritise the initiative. In this context, we welcomed initiatives by multilateral financing institutions and partners in developing financing facilities to support the building of APG's cross-border interconnection infrastructure, in collaboration with ASEAN Member States. In that regard, we looked forward to the launch of the International Energy Agency (IEA) Regional Cooperation Centre at the Singapore International Energy Week 2024, and the Centre's role in advancing regional energy cooperation, including the APG. We looked forward to further progress in advancing the AEC agenda of energy security and connectivity by expanding regional power trade, enhancing grid resilience and modernisation, and promoting efficient energy use and renewable energy through the APG.
22. We welcomed the endorsement of the ASEAN Ecotourism Standards for Activities, Facilities, and Services and looked forward to the implementation of the Standards which will enhance ASEAN's commitment to sustainable tourism development practices by balancing economic progress, environmental conservation, and social development.
23. We welcomed the successful completion of Lao PDR's PED on "Enhancing Policy Dialogue to Address Financing Gaps and Strengthen Financial Inclusion among MSMEs." Underscoring the contribution of MSMEs to economic growth, we looked forward to exploring ways to enhance financing access for MSMEs such as through leveraging digital infrastructure, improving financial literacy, providing incentives to financial service providers (FSPs), and strengthening credit bureaus.

TRANSFORMING FOR THE DIGITAL FUTURE

24. We commended the significant progress achieved in the Study on the New Generation of the ASEAN Single Window. This study will deliver critical recommendations on policy, technical, and legal frameworks to enable the interoperability of the ASEAN Single Window with the platforms of ASEAN Dialogue Partners, driving the future of cross-border paperless trade, and paving the way for a more integrated and efficient trade environment across the region.

25. We welcomed the progress on the development of the Roadmap on Digital Trade Standards in ASEAN as it contributes to ASEAN's digital transformation agenda noting the critical role that digital trade standards play in facilitating and accelerating digital trade and enhancing greater interconnectivity and integration, and its support to the elements of the ASEAN Digital Economy Framework Agreement (DEFA). We welcomed the strategic framework on the roadmap on digital trade standards that will provide a comprehensive approach to developing a cohesive and efficient digital trade environment across ASEAN.
26. We noted with satisfaction the implementation of the ASEAN Online Education Platform for Industry 4.0, a cutting-edge online platform offering access to hundreds of specialised upskilling and reskilling courses developed by leading universities in the United States (U.S.). These courses are strategically aligned with the priority areas of the ASEAN Plan of Action on Science, Technology, and Innovation (APASTI) 2016-2025, and are poised to equip the ASEAN workforce with critical Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) skills, driving a transformative shift across the region's industries. We commended the U.S. Department of State and Arizona State University, U.S. for their critical role in developing the ASEAN Online Education Platform for Industry 4.0, which will transition to the National University of Laos by the end of 2024. This accomplishment represents a major advancement in our collective mission.
27. We welcomed the progress of the Implementation Roadmap to Establish Regionally Comparable and Recognised Unique Business Identification Numbers (UBIN) in ASEAN which aim to be completed within this year 2024. We looked forward to the full implementation of the ASEAN UBIN, which will enable the recognition of a single digital business identity across the region, ensuring system interoperability, enhancing connectivity, and boosting intra-ASEAN trade through encourage close engagement among ASEAN Sectoral Bodies on the implementation of the project which will benefit economic development in the region, particularly for MSMEs.
28. We recognised the importance of the role of cultural enterprises in promoting the Green Economy through the adoption of the Vang Vieng Declaration on Promoting Small and Medium-sized Cultural Enterprises aligned with Green Growth for Sustainable Development. We noted the significant efforts to protect, preserve and promote our rich cultural heritage through deepening cooperation with partners in the areas of research, capacity-building and digital culture, and the development of the feasibility study on the envisaged ASEAN Cultural Heritage List (ACHL). We further commended the efforts by the Culture Sector to promote the development of the ASEAN Creative Economy which holds great potential for the region, and we called for strengthening cooperation with relevant ASEAN Sectoral Bodies and partners.

ASEAN COMMUNITY VISION 2045

29. We adopted the ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on the Development of Strategic Plans to Implement the ASEAN Community Vision 2045, which among others affirmed our commitment to develop the Strategic Plans of the ASEAN Community pillars and ASEAN Connectivity based on the draft ASEAN Community Vision 2045: Resilient, Innovative, Dynamic and People-Centred ASEAN for adoption in 2025. We reiterated the importance of ensuring that the development of all the Strategic Plans is inclusive, participatory, and holistic to ensure that the Strategic Plans to implement the ASEAN Community Vision 2045 are relevant and meet the expectation of the peoples of ASEAN.
30. We commended the High-Level Task Force on ASEAN Community's Post-2025 Vision (HLTF-ACV), the High-Level Task Force on ASEAN Economic Integration (HLTF-EI), the Ad Hoc Working Group on Development of ASCC Post-2025 Strategic Plan (AHWG ASCC), and the ASEAN Connectivity Coordinating Committee (ACCC) for their efforts in developing the Strategic Plans to implement the ASEAN Community Vision 2045.

31. We acknowledged the sustained momentum and steady progress in the development of the APSC Strategic Plan of the ASEAN Community Vision 2045 by the HLTF-ACV. We also commended the HLTF-ACV's continued efforts in engaging relevant stakeholders, including with the HLTF-EI, ASCC Ad Hoc Working Group and ACCC in the development of the Strategic Plans to implement the ASEAN Community Vision 2045 that is inclusive and coordinated with the other ASEAN Community pillars and ASEAN Connectivity Coordinating Committee to address the growing cross-cutting issues in ASEAN.
32. We welcomed the successful convening of the ASEAN Future Forum 2024 hosted by Viet Nam under the theme "Towards Fast and Sustainable Growth of a People-Centered ASEAN Community", which complements the exercise of developing the Strategic Plans of the ASEAN Community Vision 2045. We noted that this Forum contributed to ASEAN efforts in strengthening the regional cooperation and integration. We further welcomed Viet Nam's plan to convene the ASEAN Future Forum in the years to come.
33. We were pleased with the significant progress in the development of the next AEC Strategic Plan 2026-2030, which will succeed the current AEC Blueprint 2025. We commended the robust process that informed the development of the AEC Strategic Plan 2026-2030 that included extensive engagements with key stakeholders, robust consultation with AEC Sectoral Bodies and comprehensive assessment of the global and regional landscape through the AEC Post-2025 Study. We therefore looked forward to the finalisation of the AEC Strategic Plan 2026-2030 and its concurrent adoption with the ASEAN Community Vision 2045 by ASEAN Leaders in 2025.
34. We commended the good progress on the drafting of the ASCC Post-2025 Strategic Plan by the Ad Hoc Working Group to Develop the ASCC Post-2025 Strategic Plan (AHWG ASCC) and looked forward to its finalisation which will enable ASEAN to be inclusive, resilient, sustainable, caring, healthy, adaptive, and enjoy shared prosperity. We also commended the ASCC for its engagements with stakeholders and the wider public through consultations and surveys.
35. We were also pleased with the steady progress in the development of the ASEAN Connectivity Strategic Plan, which will succeed the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity (MPAC) 2025. We commended the extensive consultations and engagements that have informed the ASEAN Connectivity Strategic Plan development process, which included an online survey, focus group discussion, national consultations, and regional workshop. We looked forward to the finalization and adoption of the ASEAN Connectivity Strategic Plan in 2025.

PROMOTING ENVIRONMENTAL COOPERATION

36. We adopted the ASEAN Joint Statement on Climate Change to the 29th Session of Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC COP 29), reaffirming ASEAN's unwavering commitment to addressing climate change and collaborating with global partners. We recognised the importance of climate finance and efforts to accelerate it, including through innovative financing mechanisms and increased public and private sector investment, and noted the ongoing ASEAN Capacity Building Programme for Accessing Green Finance.
37. We expressed concern over the detrimental impacts of marine plastic debris and plastic pollution on the environmental, social, and economic dimensions of sustainable development and the increased urgency to address the issue. We adopted the ASEAN Declaration on Plastic Circularity to guide ASEAN's continued commitment to addressing plastic pollution in the region.

38. We adopted the ASEAN Joint Statement on Biodiversity to the 16th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP 16) that reaffirmed our commitment for concerted actions to contribute towards the achievement of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

WOMEN AND CHILDREN

39. We commended the convening of the 3rd ASEAN Women Leaders' Summit: Strengthening Care Economy and Resilience towards ASEAN Community Post-2025 and the Pre-Summit events including the 2024 ASEAN Care Economy Recognition Awards Ceremony hosted by Lao PDR on 21-23 August 2024 in Vientiane, Lao PDR. We were encouraged by the meaningful participation of women leaders and support of various ASEAN Sectoral Bodies and partners in addressing unpaid care and domestic work and promoting care economy in ASEAN.
40. We adopted the ASEAN Declaration on Strengthening the Care Economy and Fostering Resilience Towards Post-2025 ASEAN Community, which underscores the need for continuing efforts to recognise, reduce and redistribute unpaid care and domestic work through policies and programmes on care-related social protection, care services, care infrastructure, and employment related care policies, among others. We looked forward to the further development and finalisation of the Guidance Note on Strengthening the Care Economy and Fostering Resilience towards the post-2025 ASEAN Community being developed by the ASEAN Committee on Women (ACW) through the leadership of Lao PDR.
41. We commended the convening of the 8th ASEAN Children's Forum held on 19-21 August 2024 in Vientiane, Lao PDR, guided by the theme "Children-led Climate Change Actions Towards a Resilient ASEAN Community." We remained committed to ASEAN's climate agenda to secure a sustainable and resilient future for all children in the region.

HEALTH

42. We adopted the ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on Strengthening Regional Biosafety and Biosecurity, reaffirming our commitment to enhancing health security and resilience in the region by recognising the growing vulnerability to emerging and re-emerging infectious disease threats. Through the Mitigation of Biological Threats Programme, we underscored the need to intensify biosafety and biosecurity initiatives in response to evolving global health challenges and potential accidental or deliberate release of high-risk pathogens.
43. We commended the ASEAN Health Sector for translating commitments into action to end AIDS in ASEAN, as articulated by the ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on Ending Inequalities and Getting on Track to End AIDS by 2030. This includes prioritising HIV prevention, emphasising testing and treatment, supporting community-led activities, and addressing inequalities by removing political barriers, and enhancing financing, through the adoption and implementation of an updated ASEAN Health Sector Work Plan on HIV and AIDS 2021-2025 supported by the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA).

ASEAN OUTLOOK ON THE INDO-PACIFIC (AOIP)

44. We expressed our concern on the intensifying geopolitical tensions in the region and underscored the value and relevance of the AOIP to ASEAN's peace, security, stability and prosperity. We reaffirmed ASEAN's commitment to promote an enabling environment for peace, stability and prosperity in the region by leading the evolving regional architecture including through ASEAN-led mechanisms and managing the impact of geopolitical and geostrategic shifts on our region to ensure regional peace and security are not disrupted.

45. We adopted the ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific for the Future-Ready ASEAN and ASEAN-Centred Regional Architecture, which among others highlights the importance of inclusive and comprehensive cooperation in ASEAN and ASEAN-led mechanisms to bolster regional resilience and facilitate constructive dialogue and concrete cooperation; and ASEAN's commitment to promote strategic discussions to build strategic trust, confidence and mutually beneficial cooperation through ASEAN-led mechanisms, and to continue to promote, implement and mainstream the AOIP in the relevant ASEAN-led mechanisms to support the ASEAN Community Vision 2045 and all its Strategic Plans through workstreams, concrete projects, and activities.
46. We continued to encourage all our partners to support the AOIP to promote and mainstream the implementation of concrete AOIP projects and activities, including through workstreams under the AOIP's four priority areas, the issuance of joint statements, as well as undertaking AOIP-related initiatives and activities that align with the objectives and principles contained in the AOIP. We welcomed the convening of the ASEAN-Indo-Pacific Workshop on the Use of Technology for Sustainable Aquaculture on 21-22 May 2024, in Bali, Indonesia; the AOIP Forum: Towards UN SDGs 2030 on 30 August 2024 in Vientiane, Lao PDR; as well as the ASEAN-Indo-Pacific Forum 2024 at the sidelines of the ASEAN Business and Investment Summit (ABIS) in October 2024, in Vientiane Lao, PDR.
47. We are committed to enhancing our engagement in the wider Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean regions. We looked forward to the implementation of memoranda of understanding between ASEAN and the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), and between ASEAN and the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF). We took note of the successful convening of ASEAN-IORA and ASEAN-PIF Dialogue: "Implementing Collective Commitment to Establish Cooperation", held at the ASEAN Headquarters on 19 September 2024.

ADVANCING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN ASEAN

48. We reaffirmed our commitment to enhancing sustainable development cooperation in the region including through promoting the Complementarities Initiative between the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development. We welcomed the work of the ASEAN Centre for Sustainable Development Studies and Dialogue (ACSDSD) and commended the strong leadership of Thailand as the ASEAN Coordinator for Sustainable Development Cooperation. We also looked forward to the convening of the 2024 ASEAN Forum on SDGs with National Development Planning Agencies to be held on 31 October-1 November 2024, in Bangkok, Thailand, back-to-back with the 8th High-Level Brainstorming Dialogue on Enhancing Complementarities between the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (HLBD).

INITIATIVE FOR ASEAN INTEGRATION (IAI)

49. We reaffirmed our commitment to narrow the development gap (NDG) within and among ASEAN Member States and enhance ASEAN's competitiveness as a region. We commended the work of the IAI Task Force and relevant ASEAN Sectoral Bodies for the steady progress of the implementation of the IAI Work Plan IV (2021-2025). We looked forward to the development of the subsequent IAI Work Plan V which will guide and strengthen ASEAN's collective efforts to further bring equitable economic development to the region. We also commended the finalisation of the Reframed Strategies for Narrowing Development Gaps and Promoting Sustainable and Inclusive Economic Growth in the ASEAN Region as a forward-looking approach which will leverage ASEAN's efforts in promoting sustainable and inclusive growth to foster greater regional

cooperation, as well as a good reference for developing successor IAI work plans and promoting cooperation on NDG in ASEAN in the new era.

SUB-REGIONAL COOPERATION

50. We underscored the importance of ASEAN unity and Centrality in promoting ASEAN's sub-regional development. We recognised the relevance and complementarity of sub-regional development to ASEAN's regional integration and Community-building process, especially in narrowing the development gap, and encouraged closer coordination and collaboration between ASEAN Sectoral Bodies and ASEAN-approved sub-regional cooperation frameworks to facilitate the realisation of this endeavour.
51. We reiterated the commitment to further promote equitable, inclusive and sustainable development across the ASEAN Community by aligning sub-regional growth, including in the Mekong area such as the Ayeyawady-Chao Phraya-Mekong Economic Cooperation Strategy (ACMECS), as well as the Brunei Darussalam-Indonesia-Malaysia-Philippines East ASEAN Growth Area (BIMPEAGA), the Indonesia-Malaysia-Thailand Growth Triangle (IMT-GT), and the Singapore-Johor-Riau (SIJORI) Growth Triangle, with the comprehensive development of ASEAN. We welcomed the continued support and assistance of external partners in the relevant processes.

ASEAN CONNECTIVITY

52. We commended the ASEAN Connectivity Coordinating Committee (ACCC), Lead Implementing Bodies, ASEAN Sectoral Bodies, National Coordinators, and national agencies for their efforts to accelerate the implementation of MPAC 2025. We emphasised the importance of enhancing regional connectivity under Lao PDR's ASEAN Chairmanship as an integral component of ASEAN's community-building efforts. We welcomed the finalisation of the Implementation Plan of the Framework on ASEAN Supply Chain Efficiency and Resilience, which aims to enhance supply chain connectivity, strengthen ASEAN's competitiveness, accelerate recovery during emergencies, and ensure sustainable economic growth. We expressed our appreciation to ASEAN's external partners for their steadfast support to the implementation of the MPAC 2025.

ASEAN SMART CITIES NETWORK

53. We were encouraged with the continuous efforts by the ASEAN Smart Cities Network (ASCN) to further advance the smart and sustainable urban development at both city and regional levels, as well as to integrate these efforts into the finalisation of the ASEAN Community Vision 20245 and the ASEAN Connectivity Strategic Plan, and welcomed the further expansion of ASCN member cities. We commended Lao PDR for successfully convening the ASCN Conference on Smart Solutions for Solving Urban Issues in Luang Prabang, Lao PDR, on 31 July 2024. We also welcomed the commencement of the Phase II project on Accelerating the Implementation of the ASEAN Sustainable Urbanisation Strategy. We expressed our appreciation to external partners that have contributed to the undertaking of projects and activities of ASCN.

ASEAN VILLAGES NETWORK

54. We commended the ongoing operationalisation of the ASEAN Villages Network through the strong leadership of Indonesia. We are encouraged by the outcomes of the 2nd ASEAN Village Network Meeting held on 28 August-1 September 2024, in Malang, Indonesia, back-to-back with the ASEAN Knowledge Sharing on Village Tourism Development and the Workshop on Optimising Digital/Smart Village in Revitalising Village Economy. We looked forward to working together with external partners and further strengthening the ASEAN Villages Network as a concrete ASEAN initiative that intensifies the cooperation and capacities of grassroots communities at the village level.

ASEAN PRIZE

55. We recognised the role of the ASEAN Prize, ASEAN's regional premier award, in promoting regional integration and enhancing ASEAN identity and awareness among its peoples. We congratulated the ASEAN Youth Organisation, a regional youth organisation headquartered in Indonesia, for being awarded as the ASEAN Prize Recipient for the year of 2024, in acknowledgement of their contributions to fostering cross-cultural collaborations among ASEAN youths, and furthering regional community engagement towards the advancement of an inclusive, rule-based, people-oriented and people-centred ASEAN Community.

TIMOR LESTE'S FULL MEMBERSHIP IN ASEAN

56. We continued to support and stressed the need for Timor-Leste to implement the objective and criteria-based Roadmap for Timor-Leste's Full Membership in ASEAN as adopted by the Leaders and looked forward to the full and effective fulfilment of all the Roadmap criteria towards its full membership of ASEAN. We noted the adoption of the First Progress Report of 2024 on the Implementation of the Roadmap for Timor-Leste's Full Membership in ASEAN by the 35th ASEAN Coordinating Council (ACC) Meeting, which highlighted Timor-Leste's continued commitment to the Roadmap. We welcomed the appointment of Ambassador of Timor-Leste to ASEAN on 12 October 2023, which also marked the official establishment of the Mission of Timor-Leste to ASEAN in Jakarta, Indonesia. We further welcomed Timor-Leste's steadfast commitment and efforts towards its full membership in ASEAN, including through voluntary contributions to the ASEAN Disaster Management and Emergency Relief (ADMER) Fund in March 2024 and to the establishment of a Timor-Leste Unit at the ASEAN Secretariat in August 2024.
57. We noted the discussion on the Concept Note for the establishment of a dedicated Timor-Leste Unit at the ASEAN Secretariat, aimed at robustly monitoring Timor-Leste's progress in implementing the Roadmap and providing capacity-building assistance. We welcomed the inclusion of Timor-Leste as a beneficiary of the IAI in May 2024, which will provide another key platform for ASEAN and our external partners to channel assistance to Timor-Leste in supporting the fulfilment of all the Roadmap criteria and requirements. We reiterated our commitment, and call on our external partners, to continue providing capacity building assistance to Timor-Leste.
58. We commended Timor-Leste for its high level of participation in ASEAN meetings in 2024 and we welcomed the adoption of the Revised Guidelines for the Implementation of the Observer Status Granted to Timor-Leste in ASEAN by the 35th ACC Meeting, to further enhance Timor-Leste's participation in ASEAN meetings. We were pleased to note the successful completion of the first phase of the ASEAN Travelling Resource Persons Programme (ATRPP), supported by the Government of Australia through the Australia for ASEAN (Aus4ASEAN) Futures Initiative. The Programme enhanced Timor-Leste's preparedness for its full ASEAN membership through direct learning from resource persons across all the three ASEAN Community pillars. We welcomed the positive feedback from Timor-Leste on the programme's contribution to its increased in-depth knowledge and the strengthened network ties within Timor-Leste's government agencies.
59. We underscored the importance of Timor-Leste's accession to the ASEAN agreements as part of its accession to ASEAN, as stipulated in the Roadmap, and noted the ongoing process of Timor-Leste accession to the SEANWFZ Treaty and ASEAN Trade in Goods Agreement (ATIGA). We welcomed Timor-Leste's readiness to accede to all ASEAN agreements under the APSC and ASCC pillars and tasked the ACC to monitor the progress of the accession processes. We further encourage Timor-Leste to accede to all ASEAN legal instruments under the AEC pillar.

ASEAN POLITICAL-SECURITY COMMUNITY

60. We reaffirmed the importance of the TAC as the key code of conduct in governing inter-state relations in the region and as a foundation for maintaining regional peace and stability. We remained committed to further promoting the principles embodied in the TAC. We emphasised the importance of all High Contracting Parties (HCPs) in fulfilling their obligations under the Treaty. We welcomed the growing interest of non-regional countries to accede to the TAC, on the basis of respect for and in conformity with the purposes and principles of the TAC. We welcomed the accession to the TAC by the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, and looked forward to the accession of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, the Republic of Finland, the Kingdom of Spain, the United Mexican States and Hungary to the TAC.
61. We welcomed the successful convening of the Conference of the HCPs to the TAC: Reflections and Future Direction on 26 June 2024 at the ASEAN Headquarters/ASEAN Secretariat, bringing together 47 out of 54 HCPs to the TAC for the first time at the ambassadorial level. The Conference was timely to reaffirm the commitment of the HCPs to the principles and values of the TAC. It also served as an avenue for dialogue among the HCPs to discuss the implementation of the TAC and future strategies to enhance the relevance and visibility of the Treaty in the region and beyond, and explore cooperation between ASEAN and other HCPs under the TAC, towards the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the signing of the TAC in 2026.
62. We expressed concern over the declining commitment and cooperation in global disarmament, non-proliferation, and arms control, and called on countries, especially the Nuclear Weapon States (NWS), to maintain and fully implement their commitments under these mechanisms, including in the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). We called on the NWS to fulfil their obligations in advancing nuclear disarmament in accordance with the Article VI of the NPT and to recognise the need to completely eliminate nuclear weapons, which remains the only way to guarantee that nuclear weapons are never used again under any circumstances.
63. We reiterated our commitment to preserve the Southeast Asian region as a nuclear weapon-free zone and free of all other weapons of mass destruction as enshrined in the SEANWFZ Treaty and the ASEAN Charter. We stressed the importance of the full and effective implementation of the SEANWFZ Treaty, including through the Plan of Action to Strengthen the Implementation of the SEANWFZ Treaty (2023-2027).
64. We noted that the Executive Committee of the SEANWFZ Commission is continuing to explore the possibility of allowing individual NWS which are willing to sign and ratify the Protocol to the SEANWFZ Treaty without reservations and provide prior formal assurance of this commitment in writing to go ahead with the signing. We welcomed any NWS that are ready to do so. We reaffirmed our commitment to continuously engage all the NWS, including those with reservations, and intensify efforts of all parties to resolve all outstanding issues in accordance with the objectives and principles of the SEANWFZ Treaty. We encouraged our ASEAN experts to explore ways to bridge the differences, including the possibility of engaging with the NWS experts.
65. We reaffirmed our commitment to enhancing the profile of the SEANWFZ Treaty globally, including through engaging other nuclear weapon-free zones (NWFZs). In this connection, we welcomed the adoption of the ASEAN-sponsored biennial resolution on the SEANWFZ Treaty by the 78th Session of the UN General Assembly on 4 December 2023, which reiterates the importance of the Treaty in contributing to international peace and security. We welcomed the convening of the Virtual Workshop on Sharing Experiences between Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL) and ASEAN on the Signing and Ratification of NWS to the Protocols of the Treaty of Tlatelolco and the Treaty of Bangkok on 3 May 2024.

66. We welcomed the renewal of the Practical Arrangements between ASEAN and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) on Cooperation in the Areas of Nuclear Science and Technology and Applications, Nuclear Safety, Security, and Safeguards (PA) for another five-year period between 2024-2029 and commended the work of ASEANTOM as the lead Sectoral Body for nuclear safety, security and safeguards in our region. We further welcomed the ongoing work to facilitate Timor-Leste's request to accede to the SEANWFZ Treaty.
67. We reiterated the importance of strengthening efforts to address common regional challenges in a strategic and holistic manner in the areas of non-proliferation and disarmament. We reaffirmed our full support to the Organisation for the Prohibition of the Chemical Weapons (OPCW) to carry out its mandated work as the implementing body of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) in a comprehensive, objective, and impartial manner, in complementarity with the work of the UN. We also reaffirmed our commitment to the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BWC) and, recognising the necessity of multilateral negotiations and noting the lack of a verification measure, the latter of which poses a challenge to the effectiveness of the BWC. We also placed great importance on enhancing international cooperation, assistance, and exchanges in toxins, biological agents, equipment, and technology for peaceful purposes.
68. We reiterated that access to outer space is an inalienable right of all States and that the use of outer space should exclusively be for peaceful purposes only, and for the collective benefit of humanity. All activities in outer space must be conducted in accordance with international law and the principle of non-appropriation of outer space.
69. We recognised the emerging challenges and threats of transnational crime in the region and welcomed the successful convening of the 18th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime (AMMTC) and Its Related Meetings in Vientiane, Lao PDR, on 27-29 August 2024. Noting the expiry of the ASEAN Plan of Action (POA) in Combating Transnational Crime (2016-2025) which has served as a guiding document for ASEAN cooperation against transnational crime, we welcomed the ongoing review of the current priority areas under the AMMTC undertaken by the ASEAN Senior Officials' Meeting on Transnational Crime (SOMTC) and looked forward to the renewal of the POA in 2025.
70. We recalled the ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on Combating Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Caused by the Abuse of Technology adopted by the 42nd ASEAN Summit and commended the adoption of the Vientiane Declaration on Enhancing Law Enforcement Cooperation against Online Job Scams by the 18th AMMTC, which reaffirmed the shared commitment of the law enforcement sector in tackling online job scams and the associated crimes, particularly money laundering, cybercrime, trafficking in persons, and people smuggling through concerted and sustained efforts.
71. We commended the commitment of the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Drug Matters (AMMD) to address and counter illicit drugs in the region to realise a drug-free ASEAN. We also remained steadfast in implementing a zero-tolerance approach towards illicit drugs amidst growing challenges of handling drug problems. We recognised the efforts of the ASEAN Narcotics Cooperation Centre (ASEAN NARCO) to publish the ASEAN Drug Monitoring (ADM) Report 2023, as a flagship initiative of ASEAN's cooperation in combating illicit drugs.
72. Recognising the alarming scale of the illicit global trade, production and manufacture of narcotic drugs, we adopted the ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on Enhanced Cooperation to Against Illicit Drug Trafficking and Precursor Chemicals as a testament to our resolve to effectively prevent and counter illicit drug production, processing, trafficking and abuse in ASEAN.

73. We commended the contribution of the Defence Sector to our ongoing Community-building efforts, both through its expanding engagement and growing practical cooperation. In this regard, we noted the adoption of the Joint Statement by the ASEAN Defence Ministers on the ADMM's Accomplishments in the Implementation of the ASEAN Political-Security Community Blueprint 2025, during the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM) Retreat in March 2024. We also welcomed the timely implementation of the AOIP in the Defence Sector and looked forward to its inaugural activity by the end of the year. We welcomed the Defence Sector's development of the Strategy Paper on A Future-Ready ADMM and ADMM-Plus, which will guide the ADMM and ADMM-Plus' defence engagement in support of the ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on Development of Strategic Plans to implement ASEAN Community Vision 2045. We noted with appreciation the successful pilot implementation of the observership programme in the ADMM-Plus Experts' Working Groups (EWGs), which reflects the Defence Sector's commitment to an open and inclusive regional security architecture that is anchored in the centrality of ASEAN. We noted, too, that ASEAN Member States are currently assessing the observership applications for the 2024-2027 cycle and finalising a new protocol to better govern the technicalities of hosting observers.
74. We applauded the various practical initiatives under the ADMM and ADMM-Plus, which demonstrate that the defence sector strives to be adaptive and responsive. We welcomed the conduct of the 2nd ASEAN Peacekeeping Staff Exercise in July 2024, during which ASEAN Member States discussed the concept of regional partnership in peacekeeping. We also noted progress in the work of the ADMM in other areas, notably cyber security, defence education, and border management. Likewise, we commended the conclusion of the 2021-2023 cycle of the ADMM-Plus EWGs, which was marked with the first-ever community-based medical deployment as well as a series of table-top and field training exercises and trainings. We welcomed the adoption of the EWG Work Plans for the 2024-2027 cycle, which reflect the promotion of the Women, Peace and Security agenda, greater collaboration between the ADMM and ADMM-Plus, and capacity-building support for Timor-Leste.
75. We were pleased with the work of the ASEAN Law Ministers' Meeting (ALAWMM) and the ASEAN Senior Law Officials' Meeting (ASLOM), and were encouraged with the outcomes of the 12th ALAWMM held on 25 January 2024 via videoconference, in the area of law and legal matters to support the ASEAN Community-building processes, and to enhance ASEAN as a rules-based organisation. We looked forward to the conclusion of the ASEAN Extradition Treaty as one of the key ASEAN legal instruments which will complement the Treaty on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters (MLAT) as well as to further enhance ASEAN capacity in the field of crime prevention, criminal justice system, and combating transnational crimes.
76. We were encouraged with the engagement of ALAWMM and Dialogue Partners and other external partners in promoting the rule of law and enhancing the justice system. In this context, we expressed satisfaction with the collaborative achievements between ASEAN and Japan in the field of law and justice towards the promotion of the rule of law and respect for human rights, and we noted with satisfaction the progress of the concrete implementation programme between ASEAN and Japan, especially in carrying out the ASEAN-Japan Work Plan on Law and Justice.
77. We welcomed the work progress of the ASEAN Ministers/Attorneys General Meeting of the Central Authorities on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters (AMAG-MLAT) in particular, the adoption of the Guidelines for Accession to the Treaty on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters (ASEAN MLAT) by non-ASEAN Member States and the Instrument of Accession to the ASEAN MLAT by the Senior Officials' Meeting of the Central Authorities on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters (SOM-MLAT).

78. We looked forward to the completion of the work of AMAG-MLAT and its SOM-MLAT in formulating the model templates for Mutual Legal Assistance (MLA) requests under the ASEAN MLAT, and we looked forward to its adoption in ensuring effective and efficient implementation of the ASEAN MLAT to strengthen ASEAN's capacity and resilience to combat transnational crimes.
79. We noted the ongoing efforts of the possible establishment of an ASEAN Prosecutors/Attorney General Meeting/Body/Entity which is proposed among others, to support and expedite international legal cooperation focusing in the area of prosecution and capacity building within their mandates, and to coordinate with and support other ASEAN Sectoral Ministerial Bodies in carrying out their mandates through prosecution of issues relating to transnational crimes.
80. We congratulated the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) on its 15th Anniversary of establishment as the overarching human rights institution in ASEAN that works towards the promotion and protection of human rights. We noted with appreciation the milestones that AICHR has achieved in realising the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration (AHRD) adopted in 2012 and mainstreaming human rights across all pillars of the ASEAN Community. We also congratulated AICHR on the progress made in the implementation of the AICHR's Five-Year Work Plan (FYWP) 2021-2025, and its annual Priority Programmes/Activities 2024. We commended the continuous efforts of the AICHR to work with ASEAN Organs, Sectoral Bodies, entities, and other relevant stakeholders, as well as with Dialogue Partners in promoting and protecting human rights in the region.
81. We underscored the importance of fostering a culture of dialogue in advancing the promotion and protection of human rights. In this regard, we recognised the pivotal role of AICHR through its meetings and activities, including the successful convening of the 5th ASEAN Human Rights Dialogue held in November 2023 in Jakarta, Indonesia. We noted the plan for Lao PDR and Indonesia to co-convene the 6th ASEAN Human Rights Dialogue at the ASEAN Headquarters/ASEAN Secretariat in November this year. We noted that the AICHR is considering to convene a dialogue on human rights with other ASEAN Dialogue Partners. We encouraged AICHR to continue its efforts to fully and effectively discharge its mandates and functions, particularly in promoting and protecting human rights of the peoples of ASEAN. In this regard, we took note of the AICHR-UN Dialogue on Human Rights held in Geneva last year as part of ASEAN's contribution to the global efforts in promoting and protecting human rights. We also renewed our commitment to strengthen human rights cooperation in the region.
82. We noted the activities implemented by the ASEAN Institute for Peace and Reconciliation (ASEAN-IPR) with relevant ASEAN bodies and external partners to promote the culture of peace and moderation in ASEAN. We encouraged all ASEAN Member States to continue supporting the operations of the Institute, as reflected in the Terms of Reference (TOR) of the ASEAN-IPR. We also noted ASEAN-IPR's continued support for the ASEAN Women for Peace Registry (AWPR) to implement the ASEAN Leaders' Joint Statement on Promoting Women, Peace and Security (WPS) in ASEAN and the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on WPS. We encouraged the ASEAN-IPR to engage with other relevant stakeholders, including the AWPR and the Southeast Asian Network of Women Peace Negotiators and Mediators (SEANWPM), to further implement the Joint Statement. We further encouraged the implementation of the WPS, the Youth, Peace, and Security (YPS), and the Climate, Peace, and Security (CPS) agenda in ASEAN and ASEAN-led mechanisms.
83. We noted the UN General Assembly Resolution A/RES/78/69 emphasising in the Preamble, the universal and unified character of the 1982 UNCLOS, and reaffirming that the Convention sets out the legal framework within which all activities in the oceans and seas must be carried out and is of strategic importance as the basis for national, regional and global action and cooperation in the marine sector, and that its integrity needs to be maintained.

84. We reaffirmed the role of the ASEAN Maritime Forum (AMF) and Expanded AMF (EAMF) as Track 1.5 platforms in promoting maritime cooperation in the region through dialogue and consultations. We looked forward to the convening of the 14th ASEAN Maritime Forum (AMF) and 12th Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum (EAMF) on 12 -13 November 2024, in Lao PDR, as a platform to enhance dialogue and cooperation on maritime issues. We noted various initiatives to strengthen the EAMF while ensuring ASEAN Centrality.
85. We commended the role of the ASEAN Regional Mine Action Centre (ARMAC) as a centre of excellence in promoting ASEAN's efforts to address the issue of explosive remnants of war (ERW) for interested ASEAN Member States and raise awareness of the danger of ERW among affected communities. We reiterated the importance of mine action in national rehabilitation and sustainable development and welcomed efforts to promote mine action at the regional and global level, including at the UN. We expressed appreciation to ASEAN Member States, Dialogue Partners, external partners and international organisations that have contributed to the undertaking of projects and operations of the ARMAC, including the recent contribution from Cambodia and Thailand.

ASEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY

86. We were encouraged by the sustained growth momentum across the region, which has shown remarkable resilience over the past two years despite the broader challenges facing the global economy. This resilience has been tested by significant interest rate hikes by central banks, aimed at re-establishing price stability. ASEAN continues to shine as a beacon of economic strength in 2024, with prospects that outpace the global outlook. The ASEAN economy is projected to sustain positive momentum, with growth rates of 4.5 per cent in 2024 and 4.7 per cent in 2025.¹ The 2023 total merchandise trade and investments reach USD 3.5 trillion and USD 229.8 billion, respectively, while total trade volume has seen a slight contraction of 8.3 per cent, and direct investment inflows have shown resilience with a modest growth of 0.3 per cent². Despite a slight decrease in ASEAN's share in global trade and foreign direct investment (FDI), which now stand at 9.0 per cent and 17.3 per cent,³ respectively, we remain committed to enhancing collaboration among ASEAN Member States and with external partners. We stressed our focus on promoting transformative sectors, such as the digital and green economy, to reinforce ASEAN's position as the epicentre of growth.
87. We noted the progress of the ASEAN Trade in Goods Agreement (ATIGA) Upgrade negotiations. We encouraged all ASEAN Member States to intensify the negotiation for the signing the Agreement by September 2025. We reiterated the commitment of ASEAN to ensure that the upgraded ATIGA will be comprehensive and will cover not only traditional trade-in-goods elements but also emerging issues such as Trade in Humanitarian Crisis Situation, Trade and Environment, Circular Economy, Supply Chain Connectivity, Facilitation of MSMEs and others that will make the upgraded ATIGA modern, forward-looking and relevant to the businesses.
88. We recalled the signing of the ASEAN Authorised Economic Operator (AEO) Mutual Recognition Arrangement (AAMRA) by all ten ASEAN Member States in September 2023, to provide a predictable and transparent trading environment within the ASEAN region. We were pleased to note that the first AAMRA Pilot Pathfinder was successfully completed and we encouraged the full implementation of the AAMRA among the six ASEAN Member States in 2024. We also looked forward to the commencement of the second AAMRA Pilot Pathfinder for the remaining four ASEAN Member States to enable the full implementation of the AAMRA across the ten ASEAN Member States in 2025.

¹ ADB - World Economic Outlook, April 2024.

² ASEAN Secretariat, June 2024.

³ UNCTAD - World Investment Report 2023; UN Comtrade, 8 August 2024.

89. We were pleased with the significant growth of the ASEAN Customs Transit System (ACTS) since its launch in November 2020, across the six Participating Member States (Cambodia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, and Viet Nam), with Myanmar joining in March 2024. We noted that there are 273 ACTS movements from January to September 2024, an increase of 841.38 per cent compared to the same period of 2023 and looked forward to further increase in ACTS movements in 2025 and beyond. We encouraged ASEAN Member States to intensify the outreach programme to enhance the private sector's understanding and utilisation of the ACTS, while also providing timely support to resolve implementation issues. We also encouraged ASEAN Member States to accelerate the discussion on incorporating the railway mode into the ACTS, which would open more opportunities for traders to further benefit from the ACTS.
90. We noted the progress of the development of the Guidelines for the Exchange of Information on E-Commerce Data between Customs Administrations and E-Commerce Operators. We recognised the importance of the guidelines to simplify customs procedures to support a faster clearance of the growing volume of e-commerce shipments in the ASEAN region. We looked forward to the finalisation of the Guidelines in 2025.
91. We noted the efforts on the development of the Strategic Plan on Customs Development (SPCD) for the period of 2026-2030. We encouraged ASEAN Member States to consider recent customs developments from the World Customs Organization (WCO) and relevant international organisations, alongside relevant initiatives in the ASEAN region and the private sector's recommendations, to incorporate the new elements such as digitalisation, customs automation, circular economy, carbon neutrality, and sustainability, in the new SPCD.
92. We commended the adoption of the ASEAN Services Facilitation Framework (ASFF) on 9 March 2024 during the 30th AEM Retreat and tasked the relevant officials to translate the Framework into actions for effective implementation. The ASFF is expected to improve policy and regulatory environments, creating a more favourable and predictable business setting for trade and investment in the region's services sectors.
93. We welcomed the commencement of signing of the Fifth Protocol to Amend the ASEAN Comprehensive Investment Agreement (ACIA) that will operationalise the transition of the current single-annex reservation list under the ACIA to a more modern two-annex negative list, which will include the reservations against the obligation on Prohibition of Performance Requirement (PPR) mandated under the Fourth Protocol to Amend the ACIA; the expansion of the scope of ACIA beyond manufacturing, agriculture, fishery, forestry, mining and quarrying sectors along with their incidental services; and the application of the ratchet mechanism to some ASEAN Member States. This Fifth Protocol will therefore provide even greater certainty and transparency to investors on the investment regime in ASEAN and maintain the relevance of ASEAN Investment Integration. We looked forward to the completion of the signing process and the corresponding Reservation Lists in 2025.
94. We commended the progress of the development of the ASEAN Sustainable Investment Guidelines (ASIG) which will guide ASEAN's investment policy measures in contributing towards the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We looked forward to the finalisation and adoption of the ASIG next year. We also welcomed the launch of ASEAN Regional Investment Promotion Plan Phase 1 (2025-2026), as a collaborative effort between ASEAN and United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), and which will serve as a dynamic and comprehensive workplan for Member States to promote investment across the ASEAN region and across the value chain of activities. We looked forward to its successful implementation in promoting industrial linkages in the region.

95. We welcomed the completion of the signing of the Protocol to Amend the ASEAN Agreement on the Movement of Natural Persons (MNP). The Protocol puts into effect updated Schedules of Commitments based on a common format which would be easier for stakeholders to understand and use, reflecting ASEAN's commitment to ensure seamless temporary cross-border movement of natural persons involved in the provision of trade in goods, trade in services and investment, which contributes towards enhanced regional integration.
96. We commended the dedicated efforts to enhance the MSME development ecosystem through the endorsement and launch of the ASEAN SME Policy Index 2024, the third edition, examining the current MSME policy landscape across the ASEAN region, delivering updated assessment of progress and country-specific challenges, and providing strategic recommendations aimed at driving economic growth through robust MSME development. We were pleased with the progress made in implementing the Plan of Action for the Promotion of Inclusive Business in ASEAN (2023-2027), particularly through the endorsement of the Model Framework for an Inclusive Business Accreditation System in ASEAN, serving as a reference for ASEAN Member States in developing inclusive business accreditation systems, fostering greater social and economic inclusivity within our business ecosystem.
97. We commended the continued efforts to advance sustainable finance in the region with the publication of the Version 3 of the ASEAN Taxonomy for Sustainable Finance and continued development of the Version 1 of the ASEAN Transition Finance Guidance, underscoring the importance of ensuring a just, credible, and orderly transition for ASEAN and orienting capital towards a more sustainable and resilient ASEAN. We welcomed the establishment of the ASEAN Treasury Forum (ATF), a peer-learning platform for ASEAN Member States to discuss public financial management and treasury policies and practices towards improving the financial ecosystem and contributing to strengthen the ASEAN finance process.
98. We noted the steady progress of the implementation of the Bandar Seri Begawan Roadmap on ASEAN Digital Transformation (BSBR). We commended the key accomplishments under the BSBR including the development and adoption of common e-invoicing standards to facilitate business transactions, identification and establishment of interoperable standards that support trade facilitation and digitalisation, operationalisation of the ASEAN Regional CERT (Computer Emergency Response Team) with the endorsement of the financial framework, development of guidelines of smart port to promote digitalisation, completion of the review of DIFAP 2019-2025 and the endorsement of the second iteration of the ASEAN Digital Integration Index (ADII). We also noted the negotiations for the DEFA, which is the penultimate action item in the BSBR. We acknowledged the progress made by the ASEAN DEFA Negotiating Committee (NC) on the commencement of all substantive obligations and the effort in negotiating an ambitious, forward-looking and future proof DEFA that will value-add and build on existing agreements. We also noted that the DEFA negotiation will continue next year with the aim to conclude by the end of 2025.
99. We acknowledged the on-going implementation of the ASEAN Digital Masterplan 2025 (ADM 2025), with 78% of the Enabling Actions (EAs) have commenced (as of 6 August 2024). Among the 59 projects launched, 59% have been completed, while the remaining 41% are in-progress. All remaining EAs and on-going projects are expected to be finalised by the end of 2025, as projected. We welcomed key achievements under ADM2025 including the endorsement of the ASEAN Guide on Artificial Intelligence (AI) Governance and Ethics, which serves as a practical guide for organisations in the region that wish to design, develop, and deploy traditional AI technologies responsibly, and the endorsement of the Framework for Promoting the Growth of Digital Startups in ASEAN, in building a coherent policy and regulatory regime to develop the digital startups ecosystem throughout the region. We also commend the on-going implementation of the

ASEAN Digital Data Governance Framework, which outlines the strategic priorities and principles for guiding AMS in their digital data governance policies. Notable initiatives within this framework include the ASEAN Data Management Framework, the ASEAN Model Contractual Clauses, and the EU-ASEAN Joint Guide on Model Contractual Clauses. Furthermore, we emphasized the importance of the ADM 2025 Mid-Term Review, which provided critical insights and recommendations for advancing the Masterplan in its remaining stages.

100. We noted that, in view of accelerating the implementation of the ASEAN Cybersecurity Cooperation Strategy (2021-2025), the 4th ASEAN Digital Ministers Meeting (ADGMIN) endorsed the ASEAN Regional CERT Financial Model in February 2024, marking the commencement of the operationalisation phase of the ASEAN Regional CERT. We also commended the ongoing regional capacity-building work being undertaken by the ASEAN-Japan Cybersecurity Capacity Building Centre (AJCCBC), the ASEAN-Singapore Cybersecurity Centre of Excellence (ASCCE), the ASEAN Regional Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT), and the ASEAN Cyber Shield project in building regional cybersecurity resilience to address emerging threats. Furthermore, we acknowledged the progress made on the ASEAN Norms Implementation Checklist and Regional Action Plan Matrix on norms implementation to identify specific capacity-building activities and practical initiatives that would assist ASEAN Member States in implementing voluntary, non-binding norms of responsible State behaviour in cyberspace, in alignment with national priorities and needs.
101. We welcomed the conclusion of the ASEAN-New Zealand Air Services Agreement and Protocol 5 under the Multilateral Agreement on the Full Liberalisation of Passenger Air Services, which are essential for advancing air services liberalization across ASEAN, boosting connectivity, driving economic growth, and supporting regional integration goals. We looked forward to the signing of these agreements to solidify and operationalise these commitments for the benefit of all. We also looked forward to the adoption of the Guidelines on the Port Sector PPP and Guidelines on Port Digitalisation and Automation, as well as the ASEAN Guidelines on Light Electric Vehicles (LEV) and Urban Freight Transport (UFT), which together underscores our commitment to advancing sustainable transport and fostering a greener, more resilient regional transportation system.
102. We expressed optimism on the recovery of the tourism sector, particularly regarding international arrivals to the ASEAN region. In this regard, we encouraged all stakeholders to support ASEAN's advancement in the sustainable development of the tourism sector by effectively implementing the Action Roadmap for Sustainable Tourism Development in ASEAN, which was adopted in early 2024. Additionally, we encouraged ASEAN and ASEAN partners to closely collaborate with the ASEAN Secretariat in promoting tourism marketing and connectivity, as well as to propose innovative solutions and new products that will further enhance regional tourism competitiveness, showcase the region and promote the marketing tagline: for Southeast Asia "A Destination for Every Dream".
103. We recognised the urgency of working towards a concrete and definite timeline of 2045 to realise the ASEAN Power Grid and welcomed the 42nd ASEAN Ministers on Energy Meeting (AMEM) Joint Ministerial Statement which tasked the Senior Officials Meeting on Energy (SOME) and ASEAN Centre for Energy to develop a framework/ToR for subsea cables by end-2024. We also welcomed the establishment of the Working Groups between Lao PDR-Cambodia-Singapore, Vietnam-Singapore-United States, and the Study on Legal and Financing Frameworks for Regional Energy Connectivity in Southeast Asia to facilitate the transit of overland and subsea power cable interconnections. We acknowledged the success of the Lao PDR-Thailand-Malaysia-Singapore Power Integration Project (LTMS-PIP) as a key building block of the ASEAN Power Grid which demonstrates the feasibility and benefits of cross-border power trade and welcomed the power trade between Singapore and Malaysia under the LTMS-PIP. We looked forward to the continued

discussion on the Brunei Darussalam-Indonesia-Malaysia-the Philippines Power Integration Project (BIMP-PIP) to advance regional interconnectivity and the APG.

104. Recognising the growing energy demand across the region, we appreciated the insights from the 8th ASEAN Energy Outlook, especially in exploring advanced technologies such as the Small Modular Reactors (SMRs), variable Renewable Energy (vRE) with storage solutions, as well as geothermal and hydropower energy. These technologies offer alternatives to help ensure stable and reliable electricity supply in ASEAN, thereby also ensuring the energy security of the region. We also commended the decarbonisation and sustainability initiatives aimed at advancing the implementation of Carbon Capture and Storage/Carbon Capture, Utilisation, and Storage (CCS/CCUS) technologies within ASEAN. These efforts are critical for reducing carbon emissions across all related sectors and ensuring the adoption of best practices for CCS/CCUS in the region. Additionally, we recognised the importance of bioenergy utilisation in the industrial and transport sectors to reduce oil dependency and enhance economic circularity for bioenergy products. Furthermore, we supported the initiative to develop the Energy Performance Benchmarks and Guidelines for selected energy-intensive industries. This is a significant step towards implementing energy efficiency measures in the industrial sector, contributing to reduced energy consumption and enhancing overall sustainability across ASEAN.
105. We welcomed the adoption by the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Minerals (AMMin) of the Declaration on Promoting ASEAN as an Investment Destination for Sustainable Minerals Development and the ASEAN Principles of Sustainable Minerals Development, which affirmed ASEAN's shared commitment to develop its mineral resources and contribute to securing an adequate and steady supply of metals and minerals to meet rising minerals demand across ASEAN while encouraging responsible sourcing of mineral inputs and products to boost the region's competitiveness and continued access to global markets. Complementing the efforts, we also welcomed the launching of the ASEAN Minerals Exploration Strategy (AMEXS-1) that seeks to provide a coordinated set of strategies for improving geological prospectivity in ASEAN from the investor's perspective.
106. We reaffirmed our strong commitment to advancing cooperation in Science, Technology, and Innovation (STI) as a critical pillar in realising the ASEAN Community Blueprints 2025 and ASEAN Community Vision 2025. We also acknowledged the successful convening of the 20th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Science, Technology, and Innovation (AMMSTI-20) on 7 June 2024 in Siem Reap, Cambodia. We acknowledged the endorsement of the AMMSTI Statement on Artificial Intelligence (AI), recognising AI's transformative potential in driving technological advancement and underscored the imperative for unified action and collaboration to maximise AI's benefits while addressing its social, economic, and ethical challenges. We also commended the launch of the ASEAN COSTI Tracks on AI (ACT on AI) 2024-2025, a consolidation of AI-related initiatives that will further position ASEAN as a competitive force in the global AI landscape.
107. We welcomed the finalisation of the ASEAN Framework Agreement on Competition (AFAC), which manifests ASEAN's strong commitment to fostering a fair and competitive business environment and enhancing economic efficiency across ASEAN. We looked forward to the expeditious signing of the AFAC in 2025. We also welcomed the Joint Statement by ASEAN Heads of Competition Agencies to further strengthen regional cooperation in competition law and policy and welcomed the update of the 6th Edition of the Handbook on Competition Policy and Law for Businesses. These two important initiatives collectively reinforce ASEAN's commitment to a fair and transparent competition environment, enhancing regional cooperation, guiding businesses with the clarity needed to navigate ASEAN's competition landscape.

108. We welcomed the endorsement of the ASEAN Guidelines on Unfair Contract Terms, which ensure fairness, transparency, and good faith in business-to-consumer (B2C) transactions while fostering collaboration across consumer protection and related sectors. This initiative is crucial for empowering ASEAN consumers, enhancing their awareness, and ensuring they can effectively exercise their rights.
109. We welcomed the good progress made on the Project to Develop the National Policies and Laws relating to Genetic Resources Traditional Knowledge and Traditional Cultural Expression (GRTKTCE), which aims to develop national policies and laws relating to GRTKTCE. We recognised that this would help safeguard indigenous rights, promote innovation, prevent biopiracy, and preserve cultural heritage. We welcomed the timely progress of the Project and request for more ASEAN Member States to participate to ensure that the needs of the region are adequately addressed and that the voices of all relevant stakeholders are heard, and that greater participation from ASEAN Member States will foster a more comprehensive understanding of the diverse perspectives within the region and contribute to the development of inclusive and robust policies.
110. We commended the positive developments on the ASEAN Roadmap on IP Valuation, with the first draft of the IP Valuation Toolkit already circulated to ASEAN Member States in April 2024. We noted that this version of the toolkit will be used to conduct pilot training in Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Viet Nam in the third and fourth quarters of 2024, and that arrangements are ongoing for the conduct of these trainings to involve the participation of local practitioners and Valuation Associations and to be expanded to all other AMS in 2025.
111. We recognised that green transition represents an essential pathway for ASEAN to achieve sustainable economic growth and environmental preservation. ASEAN's three sustainable strategy and frameworks, namely the ASEAN Strategy for Carbon Neutrality, the Framework for Circular Economy for the AEC and the ASEAN Blue Economy Framework have made commendable progress up to date and to be expanded to all other AMS in 2025.
112. We welcomed the establishment of the ASEAN Coordinating Task Force on Blue Economy (ACTF-BE) that will oversee ASEAN's collaborative efforts on blue economy through an integrated approach, creating value-added and value-chain of resources from oceans, seas and in an inclusive and sustainable way as stipulated in the ASEAN Blue Economy Framework. We commended the convening of the 2nd ASEAN Blue Economy Forum and the inaugural meeting of the ACTF-BE in Vientiane, Lao PDR, held on 10-11 August 2024 respectively, we looked forward to the development of the ASEAN Blue Economy Implementation Plan (2026-2030), which aims to streamline cross-pillar and cross-sectoral cooperation on blue economy in agreed priority areas among ASEAN Member States and relevant stakeholders.
113. We took note of the on-going progress in the implementation of the Framework for Circular Economy for AEC. We further noted that circular economy elements are being incorporated into the ongoing negotiations for the ATIGA upgrade, which is targeted for conclusion by the end of 2025. We welcomed the establishment of the Focal Group on Circular Economy (FG-CE) to ensure the effective implementation of the Framework.
114. We noted the ongoing implementation of the ASEAN Strategy for Carbon Neutrality and the progress in further developing the ASEAN Plan of Action for Energy Cooperation (APAEC) 2026-2030 under the theme "Advancing Regional Cooperation in Ensuring Energy Security and Accelerating Decarbonisation for a Just and Inclusive Energy Transition".

ASEAN SOCIO-CULTURAL COMMUNITY

115. We noted the ASEAN-SEAMEO Joint Declaration on the Common Space in Southeast Asian Higher Education, which envisions an inclusive Higher Education space aimed at fostering sustainable learning and living in Southeast Asia through the promotion of people-to-people connectivity, relevant skills, and regional knowledge production to support sustainable development within ASEAN and the broader Southeast Asian region.
116. We noted with appreciation the convening of the Southeast Asia Regional Forum on Ensuring Equal Access to Quality Early Childhood Development and Care as well as the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Early Childhood Care and Education: "Building Climate Resilience from The Start: Early Childhood Education for Sustainable Future" in Vientiane, Lao PDR, on 14-15 May 2024.
117. We noted the adoption of the Vientiane Statement on Equity, Access and Environment: Advancing Climate Resilience in Early Childhood Settings in ASEAN at the 13th ASEAN Education Ministers' Meeting on 25 August 2024. This statement emphasises climate action, climate literacy, and innovative financing in early childhood care and education. We welcomed the development of the Roadmap for the implementation of the ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on Early Childhood Care and Education in Southeast Asia to further realise the commitments in the declaration to complement the work plan of the ASEAN Education Sector and ASEAN Community Vision 2045.
118. We reiterated the importance of prioritising educational quality within ASEAN, and we looked forward to the outcomes of the regional Southeast Asia Primary Learning Metrics (SEA-PLM) main survey 2024. We noted the continuing implementation of the ASEAN Declaration on Human Resources Development (HRD) for the Changing World of Work including the completion of the scoping study which mapped out the key stakeholders and players in HRD in ASEAN and presented alternative models for a pool of HRD funds in the region.
119. We recognised the importance of the cross-cutting role of the Information Sector in contributing to the evolving information and media landscape through the adoption of the ASEAN Ministers Responsible for Information (AMRI) Vision Statement "ASEAN 2035: Toward a Transformative, Responsive, and Resilient Information and Media Sector". We commended the sustained efforts to mitigate the harmful effects of fake news through the adoption of the ASEAN Guideline on Management of Government Information in Combating Fake News and Disinformation in the Media, which provided a framework on how governments could effectively respond to disinformation. We further noted the adoption of the Da Nang Declaration on "Media: From Information to Knowledge for a Resilient and Responsive ASEAN" which emphasised the importance of media and other forms of literacy to create an informed and digitally savvy ASEAN citizenry.
120. We noted the publication Promoting and Safeguarding Traditional Sports and Games in ASEAN: Challenges, Opportunities, and Strategies and recognised its crucial role in advancing our collective efforts to preserve and enhance traditional sports and games across the region to strengthen and intensify our commitment to safeguarding these integral aspects of our cultural identity.
121. We reaffirmed our strong commitment in enhancing sports infrastructure and promoting inclusivity across ASEAN Member States through ASEAN Sports Zones Phase II. We appreciated the support from ASEAN Secretariat in realising the momentous ground breaking ceremony for the zones in Lao PDR.

122. We noted the continuous efforts of the ASEAN Labour Sector in realising decent work for the people of ASEAN. We adopted the Vientiane Declaration on Skills Mobility, Recognition, and Development of Migrant Workers and its Checklist which will support migrant workers' competencies and employability through a whole-of-society approach. We noted that the Checklist will be regularly completed by ASEAN Member States on a voluntary basis. We noted the continued implementation of the ASEAN Declaration on Promoting Green Jobs for Equity and Inclusive Growth through, among others, the successful conduct of the ASEAN Green Jobs Forum on 24-25 April 2024, in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, which provided a knowledge sharing platform for labour, environment, education, youth, and Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) sectors.
123. We congratulated the enterprises that won the 5th ASEAN Occupational Safety and Health Network (OSHNET) Awards on 11 September 2024 in Singapore for their achievements and good practices in raising safety and health standards in the workplaces. We also commended the enterprises that won the 5th ASEAN Red Ribbon for Outstanding Workplaces (ARROW) Award this year for their excellence in promoting non-discriminatory policies and supportive work environment for workers with HIV and AIDS. These initiatives are a concrete translation of ASEAN's commitment to promote public-private partnerships for inclusive employment.
124. We noted with satisfaction the progress of implementation of the ASEAN Roadmap on the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour by 2025 by the Senior Labour Officials' Meeting (SLOM) and relevant ASEAN Sectoral Bodies across the three pillars. We adopted the ASEAN Declaration on the Prevention and Elimination of Child Labour, Including Worst Forms of Child Labour and tasked the ALMM with the support of the SLOM in collaboration with the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC) and other relevant ASEAN Sectoral Bodies to review, coordinate and monitor the implementation of this Declaration, including through the implementation of ASEAN Roadmap on the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour by 2025 and its subsequent roadmap.
125. We applauded the ALMM for the steady progress of the implementation of the ASEAN Consensus on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers through various initiatives and self-assessments of the implementation of the ASEAN Consensus. We were pleased to note the adoption of the ASEAN Guidelines on Portability of Social Security for Migrant Workers in ASEAN and the ASEAN Guidelines on the Placement and Protection of Migrant Fishers by the ALMM. We encouraged close partnerships with relevant stakeholders in the implementation of these Guidelines at the national and regional levels. We also noted the completion of the second edition of the ASEAN Migration Outlook which provided useful insights on the nexus of climate change, human mobility, and labour migration in our region.
126. We welcomed the adoption of the ASEAN Statement on Strengthening Government Strategies on Mental Health and Well-Being towards Achieving Work-Life Balance in Public Sector by the Heads of Civil Service of the ASEAN Cooperation on Civil Service Matters (ACCSM), which would support the well-being and productivity civil servants and their resilience in responding to emerging challenges. We were encouraged by the updating of the ASEAN Gender Mainstreaming Human Resource Toolkit by the ACCSM, which would support gender mainstreaming in the civil service.
127. We welcomed the establishment of the ASEAN Biosafety and Biosecurity Network as the operational mechanism for the operationalisation of the ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on Strengthening Regional Biosafety and Biosecurity.

128. We commended the long-standing cooperation between the ASEAN Health Sector and Canada's Weapons Threat Reduction Program (WTRP) through the Mitigation of Biological Threats (MBT) Programme, which marked its 10th anniversary this 2024. We recognised the importance of partnership in building and enhancing capacities and abilities to adapt and respond to ongoing and future health security challenges.
129. We noted the successful conduct of the 16th ASEAN Health Ministers' Meeting (AHMM) and Related Meetings in August 2024, which reaffirmed the commitment to transforming ASEAN Health Sector in a new context. These strategic directions laid the groundwork for the ASEAN Health Sector's post-2025 priorities and strategy development, including focused initiatives to strengthen post-pandemic health system capacity, enhance regional resilience, and set future health priorities for ASEAN beyond 2025.
130. To institutionalise a whole-of-ASEAN-Community approach to preparedness and response to public health emergencies, we also adopted the ASEAN Public Health Emergency Coordination System (APHECS) Framework. We lauded the cooperation between the ASEAN Health Sector and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in the formulation of the Framework and looked forward to its operationalisation through the development of institutional mechanisms, standard operating procedures, and conduct of trainings, exercises and evaluations.
131. We commended the ASEAN Health Sector for its sustained efforts in reducing deaths and diseases caused by tobacco use, and in protecting the ASEAN people from exposure to tobacco smoke through, among others, the ASEAN Smoke-Free Award for Smoke-Free Cities in ASEAN Region which highlights the importance of effective smoke-free policies and their significant impact on public the health, environment and overall well-being. We congratulated the inaugural recipients, namely Bogor (Indonesia), Luang Prabang (Lao PDR), Bagan (Myanmar), Iloilo (Philippines), and Saensuk (Thailand).
132. We reaffirmed our commitment to strengthening the regional health architecture post-pandemic to enhance ASEAN's resilience, emphasizing the urgent need to finalize the Establishment Agreement and expedite the operationalization of ASEAN Centre for Public Health Emergencies and Emerging Diseases (ACPHEED). We were pleased to foster synergy between the health and finance sectors, recognizing the essential collaboration between Health and Finance Ministers to enhance financing for health emergencies. We welcomed the 2nd ASEAN Finance and Health Ministers Meeting (AFHMM) themed "ASEAN's Path to Health and Finance Collaboration for Sustainable Health System Resilience" on 8 August 2024 in Vientiane, which resulted in the adoption of the TOR for the Working Group on Finance and Health Collaboration, facilitating cross-sectoral coordination to strengthen regional health financial capacity for pandemic preparedness and response. Furthermore, we aimed to enhance ASEAN's health security by optimizing existing mechanisms such as the One Health Network, ABVC, ASEAN EOC Network, Risk Assessment and Communication Centre to improve preparedness, prevention, detection, and response to future health threats.
133. We welcomed the ASEAN Guideline for Developing National Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for a Coordinated Response to Violence Against Women and Girls which was developed by the ACWC in partnership with UN Women. We encourage all relevant agencies and frontline service providers in health, police and justice, and social services, among others, to utilise the SOPs towards enhancing national-level coordination to address violence against women and girls.

134. We were pleased to note the continuing implementation of the ASEAN Gender Mainstreaming Strategic Framework (AGMSF) and its implementation plan, and encouraged all ASEAN Sectoral Bodies to continue undertaking measures to introduce and integrate gender perspectives in their respective sectoral work plans including building and strengthening capacities.
135. We noted the development and launch of the Second Edition of the ASEAN Gender Outlook developed by the ASEAN Committee on Women through the leadership of Malaysia in partnership with UN Women. We underscored the importance of analysing the attainment of the SDGs through a gender lens to develop gender responsive policies and programmes in the region. In this regard, we commended the convening of the side event entitled “Learnings from ASEAN: Achieving the SDGs for All and Leaving No Woman or Girl Behind” co-organised by Thailand and UN Women during UNGA79 on 27 September 2024 at the UN Headquarters in New York, which highlighted the findings from the Second Edition of the ASEAN Gender Outlook and underscored the importance of evidence-based decision making in promoting gender equality and sustainable development.
136. We commended the convening of the 2024 ASEAN ICT Forum held on 25-27 September 2024, in Bali, Indonesia, organised by the ACWC in partnership with UNICEF. We were encouraged by the forum’s outcomes addressing the impact of emerging technologies on prevention and response approaches to online child protection, as well as promoting holistic approaches to online rights, wellbeing and protection.
137. We commended the continuing implementation of the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on Women, Peace and Security. We likewise commended the efforts of the ASEAN Advisory Group on Women, Peace and Security chaired by ACW Cambodia, that coordinates with various ASEAN Sectoral Bodies on implementing the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on Women, Peace, and Security.
138. We looked forward to the finalisation of the ASEAN Report on Women Political Participation and Leadership being developed by the ACW in partnership with the European Union (EU) through E-READI. We recognised the strategic importance of ensuring women’s meaningful and substantive participation in decision making processes in order to realise gender equality and an inclusive ASEAN Community.
139. We noted the Regional Guidance on Strengthening the Role of Social Workers and the wider Social Service Workforce in the Education Sector and the Regional Guidance in Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Resilience to implement the Roadmap to Implement Ha Noi Declaration on Strengthening Social Work Towards Cohesive and Responsive ASEAN Community. We commended the Senior Officials’ Meeting on Social Welfare and Development (SOMSWD) and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) for developing regional guidelines to support social workers and practitioners working in these domains.
140. We commended the ongoing mid-term review of the ASEAN Enabling Master Plan 2025: Mainstreaming the Rights of Persons with Disabilities being led by SOMSWD. We were encouraged by the strong participation of all relevant ASEAN Sectoral Bodies in the process as well as the national reports from all ASEAN Member States. We were likewise encouraged by the active participation of organisations of persons with disabilities at the regional and national levels, including through the efforts of the ASEAN Disability Forum.

141. We noted the ongoing socialisation of the ASEAN Master Plan on Rural Development during the conduct of national consultations to promote agroecology in the context of the ASEAN Master Plan on Rural Development and the ASEAN Regional Guidelines on Sustainable Agriculture. We commended the partnership between the Senior Officials' Meeting on Rural Development and Poverty Eradication (SOMRDPE) and the Senior Officials' Meeting of the ASEAN Ministers on Agriculture and Forestry (SOM-AMAF) with the Asia Partnership for the Development of Human Resources in Rural Asia (AsiaDHRRA).
142. We committed to scaling up efforts to tackle environmental challenges, among others, through halting and reversing biodiversity loss, preventing loss and damage from climate change impacts, enhancing climate mitigation and adaptation efforts including for coastal and marine ecosystem, ensuring the sustainable use and management of water resources and promoting sustainable development.
143. We also commended the progress of the operationalisation of the ASEAN Centre for Climate Change hosted by Brunei Darussalam, and looked forward to the Centre's work to enhance climate change cooperation among ASEAN Member States to realise a climate-resilient and low-carbon ASEAN region. We encouraged the remaining ASEAN Member States to expedite the signing of the Establishment Agreement of the ASEAN Centre for Climate Change so that the Centre can begin the next stage of its work towards strengthening regional coordination in addressing climate change.
144. We welcomed the adoption of the ASEAN Biodiversity Plan to enhance coordination among the ASEAN Member States in conserving, sustainably managing, and using biodiversity, as well as equitably sharing the benefits from the utilisation of the region's rich biological resources, and to ensure synergy between the global biodiversity targets and the new ASEAN vision for a whole-of-society and a whole-of government-approach to sustainability.
145. We acknowledged that the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Environment (AMME) has approved the nominations of (i) Phou Xieng Thong National Protected Area in Lao PDR; (ii) Balinsasayao Twin Lakes Natural Park in Philippines; (iii) Turtle Islands Wildlife Sanctuary in Philippines; and (iv) Apo Reef Natural Park in Philippines as the 58th, 59th, 60th, and 61st ASEAN Heritage Parks (AHPs), as well as the Nam Poui National Protected Area in Lao PDR as the 62nd AHP, highlighting the importance of protected areas in biodiversity conservation at regional and global levels. We looked forward to the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity's (ACB) continued efforts to promote greater awareness, appreciation, and conservation of ASEAN's natural heritage.
146. We reaffirmed our commitment to the full and effective implementation of the ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution (AATHP). We encouraged the remaining ASEAN Member States to expedite the signing of the Establishment Agreement of the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Transboundary Haze Pollution Control (ACC THPC) to complete the full establishment and operationalisation of the Centre in Indonesia to facilitate faster and effective implementation of the AATHP to address transboundary haze pollution in the region.
147. We noted the updates on the implementation of the Second Roadmap on ASEAN Cooperation towards Transboundary Haze Pollution Control with Means of Implementation (Haze-Free Roadmap) 2023-2030 and the Second ASEAN Peatland Management Strategy (APMS) 2023-2030 to further strengthen, intensify and comprehensively address the root causes of transboundary haze pollution, including through collaboration with the ASEAN Specialised Meteorological Centre (ASMC). We encouraged continued partnerships and support for the ASEAN Investment Framework for Haze-free Sustainable Land Management, and welcomed the support from Dialogue

Partners, Sectoral Dialogue Partners, and Development Partners to develop new funding programmes towards a haze-free ASEAN.

148. We reiterated the importance of continuously strengthening resilience to disasters in the region through a holistic, cross-pillar and cross-sectoral approach, in line with the Bandar Seri Begawan Declaration on the Strategic and Holistic Initiative to Link ASEAN Responses to Emergencies and Disaster (ASEAN SHIELD) and the ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on Sustainable Resilience. We commended efforts made to further strengthen ASEAN's disaster management capacity through the ASEAN Capacity Building Roadmap 2025-2030 on Disaster Management and the successful conduct of the 1st ASEAN Standards and Certification for Experts in Disaster Management (ASCEND) Competency Assessment. We further welcomed the progress of the review of the Terms of Reference of the Secretary-General of ASEAN as the ASEAN Humanitarian Assistance Coordinator (SG-AHAC). We noted the initial progress in the development of the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) Work Programme 2026-2030 and looked forward to the operationalisation of the revised Financial Rules of ADMER Fund to enable contribution from both public and private sector.
149. As we commemorate the 20th anniversary of the Indian Ocean Tsunami this year, we welcomed a series of commemorative events organised by ASEAN, including the adoption of the ASEAN Ministerial Statement on the Commemoration of the 20th Anniversary of Indian Ocean Tsunami. We underscored the importance of this milestone as a momentum to strengthen the regional disaster management tools and mechanisms. We also welcomed the adoption of the ASEAN Ministerial Declaration on Building a Resilient ASEAN through Inclusive and Sustainable Disaster Recovery, to enhance the institutional capacity of ASEAN in disaster recovery and recovery financing, among others. We noted the adoption of the ASEAN Joint Statement for the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (APMCDRR) 2024 which reaffirmed ASEAN's commitment towards full and effective implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR) 2015-2030.
150. We remained committed to strengthening ASEAN's capacity for disaster response through the ASEAN Declaration on One ASEAN One Response: ASEAN Responding to Disasters as One in the Region and Outside the Region including through support for the AHA Centre. We commended the AHA Centre's continuous efforts in strengthening the ASEAN Disaster Information Network (ADINet), Disaster Monitoring and Response System (DMRS), the Disaster Emergency Logistics System for ASEAN (DELSA), and the ASEAN Emergency Response Assessment Team (ASEAN-ERAT).
151. We reaffirmed ASEAN's continued support for Myanmar's efforts to bring peace, stability, the rule of law, promote harmony and reconciliation among the various communities, as well as ensure sustainable and equitable development in Rakhine State. We emphasised the importance of and reiterated our continued support for Myanmar's commitment to ensuring safety and security for all communities in Rakhine State as effectively as possible and facilitating the voluntary return of displaced persons in a safe, secure, and dignified manner. We looked forward to ASEAN's continued facilitation of the repatriation process through the implementation of the projects as the follow-up to the recommendations of the Preliminary Needs Assessment (PNA). We also looked forward to the Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA) when conditions allow and encouraged the Secretary-General of ASEAN to continue identifying possible areas for ASEAN to effectively facilitate the repatriation process.

152. We commended ASEAN's collective response to the Tropical Cyclone MOCHA which made landfall in Rakhine State on 14 May 2023. We appreciated the ongoing efforts of the ASEAN Secretariat, under the guidance of the Secretary-General of ASEAN as ASEAN Humanitarian Assistance Coordinator, in assisting the post-tropical cyclone MOCHA recovery process, utilising the financial assistance recently contributed by the Philippines, by working closely with the Department of Disaster Management of the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement of Myanmar.
153. We further commended ASEAN's collective response and the swift action through the AHA Centre in providing assistance during Tropical Cyclone YAGI and the Southwest Monsoon in September 2024, which caused the loss of lives and extensive damage to properties in the Philippines, Viet Nam, Lao PDR, Thailand and Myanmar, among others. We also recognised the vital role of the AHA Centre in coordinating disaster relief operations among various stakeholders and ensuring timely assistance to the affected communities.
154. We commended the progress made by the ASCC Research and Development Platforms Programme in promoting evidence-based policymaking. The interim findings of the seven R&D Platforms on Climate Change, Disaster Management, Public Health Emergencies, Future of Work, Future of Education, Poverty Action, and Media, Culture and Arts, presented at the 5th Meeting of the AHWG ASCC offer valuable insights for shaping the future of the ASCC. We welcomed the commencement of the 8th Platform on Care Economy, recognising its potential to address critical social and economic implications of demographic shifts.
155. To enhance public understanding of ASEAN's work and increase ASEAN awareness, we commended the continued publication of The ASEAN Magazine and the successful launch of the KnowASCC portal.

ASEAN EXTERNAL RELATIONS

156. We underscored the importance of strengthening ASEAN unity and Centrality in our engagement with external partners, including through ASEAN-led mechanisms such as the ASEAN Plus One, ASEAN Plus Three (APT), East Asia Summit (EAS), ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), and ADMM-Plus, in order to build mutual trust and confidence as well as reinforce an open, transparent, resilient, inclusive, and rules-based regional architecture with ASEAN at the centre that upholds international law. We underscored the need to promote an enabling environment for peace, stability and prosperous development for all through ensuring a culture of dialogue and cooperation, instead of rivalry, enhancing mutual trust and confidence, and respect for international law. We reaffirmed that ASEAN shall act in accordance with ASEAN Centrality in external political, economic, and social and cultural relations while remaining actively engaged, outward-looking, inclusive and non-discriminatory, in line with the ASEAN Charter. We welcomed the support of our partners for the priorities of ASEAN in 2024 under the theme "ASEAN: Enhancing Connectivity and Resilience".
157. We noted with satisfaction the encouraging progress in ASEAN's relations with our Dialogue Partners, Sectoral Dialogue Partners, and Development Partners through the existing frameworks, POAs, Practical Cooperation Areas (PCAs) and development cooperation programmes based on mutual interest and benefit in contribution to ASEAN Community-building efforts and the continued endeavours towards the realisation of the ASEAN Community Vision 2025, as well as our proactive response to regional and global challenges and opportunities. Noting that several existing POAs and PCAs (2021-2025) will expire by the end of 2025, we looked forward to the development of the successor POAs (2026-2030), namely with Canada, China, India, New Zealand, the ROK, Russia, and the U.S., for their adoption next year.

158. We agreed to further strengthen partnerships and cooperation with our partners, including through sub-regional development cooperation and projects, thus contributing to the continued efforts towards the realisation of the ASEAN Community Vision 2025, as well as our proactive response to regional and global challenges and opportunities.
159. We are committed to fostering an outward-looking community that supports regional sustainable growth and resilience through inclusive cooperation and collaboration with external partners. We took note of the growing interest from countries and regional organisations outside of the region in developing stronger collaboration and substantial cooperation with ASEAN, including through applications for formal partnerships with ASEAN. We affirmed the importance of pursuing an outward-looking policy and agreed on the need to reach out to new potential external partners based on shared interest, constructive engagement and mutual benefit, which could contribute to ASEAN Community-building, regional integration and development cooperation efforts. We noted ASEAN's rising global relevance and unique convening power amidst the emerging multipolar global architecture.
160. We recalled our decision to commence a comprehensive review of the moratorium on new dialogue partnerships, in conjunction with the work of the ASEAN Community Vision Post-2025, with the objective to enhance the ASEAN Community and advance ASEAN's relations with external parties. In this regard, we noted the ongoing discussion of the ASEAN Senior Officials and looked forward to their recommendations for our consideration.
161. We welcomed the increased engagement between the CPR and ASEAN's partners, including through the 95 Non-ASEAN Ambassadors Accredited to ASEAN (NAAAs). We also welcomed the role of the 55 ASEAN Committees in Third Countries and International Organisations (ACTCs) in promoting ASEAN's interest and forging partnerships in the respective host countries and international organisations.

DIALOGUE PARTNERS

162. We looked forward to the 4th ASEAN-Australia Summit; the 27th ASEAN-China Summit; the 27th ASEAN-Japan Summit; the 25th ASEAN-ROK Summit to Commemorate the 35th Anniversary of Dialogue Relations; the 12th ASEAN-U.S. Summit; the 21st ASEAN-India Summit; and the ASEAN-Canada Special Summit on Enhancing ASEAN Connectivity and Resilience, to be held during the 44th and 45th ASEAN Summits and Related Summits in October 2024.
163. We underscored that the establishment of a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (CSP) with ASEAN should be meaningful, substantive and mutually beneficial. We welcomed the establishment of the ASEAN-Japan CSP at the 26th ASEAN-Japan Summit on 6 September 2023, in Jakarta, Indonesia, through the adoption of the Joint Statement on the Establishment of the ASEAN-Japan Comprehensive Strategic Partnership. We also welcomed the adoption of the Joint Leaders' Statement on ASEAN-Canada Strategic Partnership at the ASEAN-Canada Summit to Launch the ASEAN-Canada Strategic Partnership during the 43rd ASEAN Summit and Related Summits in Jakarta, Indonesia, on 6 September 2023. We looked forward to the establishment of the ASEAN-ROK CSP at the 25th ASEAN-ROK Summit to commemorate the 35th Anniversary of ASEAN-ROK Dialogue Relations. We also welcomed and looked forward to more details on New Zealand's intention to request for an ASEAN-New Zealand CSP.

164. We commended the successful convening of the Commemorative Summit for the 50th Year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation on 16-18 December 2023 in Tokyo, Japan; the ASEAN-Australia Special Summit to Commemorate the 50th Anniversary of ASEAN-Australia Dialogue Relations on 4-6 March 2024 in Melbourne, Australia; the 1st Summit of ASEAN and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) on 20 October 2023 in Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia; and the 24th ASEAN-EU Ministerial Meeting on 2 February 2024 in Brussels, Belgium. We welcomed and looked forward to the convening of the ASEAN-New Zealand Commemorative Summit in 2025, on the occasion of the 50th Anniversary of ASEAN-New Zealand Dialogue Relations.

ASEAN SECTORAL DIALOGUE PARTNERS AND ASEAN DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

165. We noted the progress made in ASEAN's Sectoral Dialogue Partnerships (SDPs) with Brazil, Morocco, Norway, Pakistan, South Africa, Switzerland, Türkiye and United Arab Emirates, as well as Development Partnerships with Chile, France, Germany, Italy, and the Netherlands. We welcomed Peru as a Development Partner of ASEAN.

REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

166. We reaffirmed the importance of multilateralism and international cooperation and underscored the importance of ASEAN's partnerships with other external partners such as regional and international organisations, including the UN, to address global concerns, pursue shared goals and complementary initiatives, and promote sustainable development for the benefit of our people. In this regard, we looked forward to the continued high-level interactions between ASEAN and the UN, including the 14th ASEAN-UN Summit to be held on 11 October 2024 in Vientiane, Lao PDR. We also looked forward to the development of the successor ASEAN-UN POA (2026-2030) for its adoption next year.
167. We reiterated our commitment to intensifying cooperation in the implementation of the Complementarities Roadmap, effectively realising the goals of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and continuing our close collaboration and cooperation at regional and international fora.
168. We looked forward to the convening of the 2nd ASEAN-Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Summit and the ASEAN-GCC+China Summit on the sidelines of the 46th ASEAN Summit scheduled for the first week of May 2025 in Malaysia.

ASEAN PLUS THREE (APT)

169. We reaffirmed the important role of the APT cooperation framework in promoting peace, stability and prosperity in the East Asian region with ASEAN as the driving force. We acknowledged the substantive progress of the implementation of the APT Cooperation Work Plan 2023-2027. We welcomed continued efforts to further strengthen APT mechanisms, including the Chiang Mai Initiative Multilateralisation (CMIM), the Asian Bond Markets Initiative (ABMI), the Disaster Risk Financing (DRF) and the ASEAN+3 Macroeconomic Research Office (AMRO), and the ASEAN Plus Three Emergency Rice Reserve (APTERR), as well as explore potential areas of cooperation which would contribute to greater regional resilience and preparedness against emerging challenges and future shocks as well as to promote recovery toward inclusive, resilient, equitable and sustainable growth. We also looked forward to the convening of the 22nd East Asia Forum.

EAST ASIA SUMMIT (EAS)

170. We reaffirmed our commitment to further strengthening the EAS as a premier Leaders-led forum for dialogue and cooperation on broad strategic, political, and economic issues of common interest and concern with the aim of promoting peace, stability, and economic prosperity in the region, with ASEAN as the driving force as envisioned in the Kuala Lumpur Declaration on the East Asia Summit 2005. We were committed to ensuring the effective follow-up on the Ha Noi Declaration on the 15th Anniversary of the EAS to further strengthen the EAS process, sustain its strategic value and relevance as well as enhance its responsiveness to fast-changing developments in the regional and global contexts.
171. We acknowledged the importance of increasing strategic coordination between the EAS and other ASEAN-led mechanisms such as the ARF and the ADMM-Plus, including through the submission of reports and information-sharing by the ASEAN Chair, where deemed necessary, for the EAS' information.
172. We looked forward to further promoting cooperation in EAS streams of work under the EAS Plan of Action 2024-2028 to enhance practical coordination, cooperation, and implementation of the EAS Leaders' statements, declarations, decisions and initiatives as well as the AOIP.
173. We welcomed the continued efforts to strengthen the EAS, including through, among others, the regular engagement between the CPR and the non-ASEAN Ambassador of EAS Participating Countries in Jakarta and encouraged their continuation as the Group of the East Asia Summit Participating Countries' Ambassadors to ASEAN in Jakarta to discuss the implementation of the EAS Leaders' decisions, and exchange information on regional development cooperation initiatives and security policies and initiatives, and discuss the evolving regional architecture with the support of the EAS Unit at the ASEAN Secretariat.
174. We expressed our willingness to work together to promote the common goals and interests of the EAS Participating Countries while reaffirming the importance of maintaining and promoting ASEAN unity and ASEAN Centrality.
175. We recognised the support and contribution of the ASEAN Member States, ASEAN Dialogue Partners, external partners and international organisations, including ERIA to the Lao PDR's ASEAN Chairmanship.

ASEAN REGIONAL FORUM

176. We reaffirmed the importance of the ARF as the leading regional security forum in the Asia-Pacific region for fostering constructive dialogue and cooperation among its Participants on political and security issues of common interest and concern, with ASEAN as the primary driving force. We noted the progress on the implementation of the ARF Ha Noi Plan of Action II (2020-2025) and welcomed the 31st ARF's adoption of the ARF Statement on Enhancing Regional Cooperation on Ferry Safety on 27 July 2024. In this respect, we underlined the need for the ARF to enhance cooperation to address emerging challenges and looked forward to the result of ASEAN's discussions on efforts to revitalise the ARF, including a review on the roles, achievements, and challenges of the ARF over the past 30 years, as well as the possibility of moving to the next stage of preventive diplomacy at a pace comfortable for ARF Participants and assessment on the low implementation rate of the ARF Ha Noi Plan of Action II, to ensure it continues to function as the leading regional security forum in the Asia-Pacific region.

MARITIME SITUATION IN THE REGION

177. We recalled the ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Statement on Maintaining and Promoting Stability in the Maritime Sphere in Southeast Asia issued on 30 December 2023, which, among other provisions, reaffirmed our unity, solidarity and shared commitment to maintaining and further strengthening stability in our maritime sphere to bring about overall peace, security, stability, and prosperity in our region.

REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ISSUES

SOUTH CHINA SEA

178. We discussed the situation in the South China Sea, during which concerns were expressed by some ASEAN Member States on the land reclamations and activities in the area, including actions that put the safety of all persons at risk, 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 the universally recognised principles of international law, including the 1982 UNCLOS. We emphasised the importance of self-restraint in the conduct of all activities by claimants and all other states, including those mentioned in the 2002 Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) that could further complicate the situation and escalate tensions in the South China Sea. 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 recognised the benefits of having the South China Sea as a sea of peace, stability, and prosperity. We underscored the importance of the full and effective implementation of the DOC in its entirety. We welcomed the progress achieved so far in the ongoing negotiations on the Code of Conduct in the South China Sea (COC), notably the third reading of the Single Draft COC Negotiating Text (SDNT) and encouraged continued positive momentum in this regard. We encouraged efforts to make full use of the Guidelines for Accelerating the Early Conclusion of an Effective and Substantive Code of Conduct in the South China Sea and looked forward to 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 maintain and 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 we reaffirmed the importance of upholding international law, including the 1982 UNCLOS.

DEVELOPMENTS IN THE KOREAN PENINSULA

179. We closely followed and expressed concern over the recent developments in the Korean Peninsula and stressed the importance of continued peaceful dialogue among all concerned parties in order to realise lasting peace and stability in a denuclearised Korean Peninsula. We expressed grave concern over the recent surge in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's (DPRK) missile testing and launches and the increased tension in the Korean Peninsula, which are a worrisome development that threatens peace and stability in the region. We called on the DPRK to comply fully with all relevant UNSC Resolutions, and called for peaceful dialogue among the concerned parties and continuing working towards the realisation of lasting peace, and stability in the Korean Peninsula. We also called for the full implementation of all relevant UNSC Resolutions and noted international efforts to bring about the denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula in a peaceful manner. Diplomatic efforts, including the creation of a conducive environment for peaceful dialogue among all concerned parties should remain a priority. We reiterated our readiness to play a

constructive role, including through utilising ASEAN-led platforms such as the ARF in promoting a conducive atmosphere for peaceful dialogue amongst the concerned parties.

DEVELOPMENTS IN MYANMAR

180. We discussed the developments in Myanmar and expressed our deep concern over the escalation of conflicts and humanitarian situation there. We denounced the continued acts of violence in Myanmar against civilians and public facilities and called for immediate cessation, and urged all parties involved to take concrete action to immediately halt indiscriminate violence, denounce any escalation, exercise utmost restraint, ensure the protection and safety of all civilians and create conducive environment for the delivery of humanitarian assistance and inclusive national dialogue. We reaffirmed our united position that the ASEAN Leaders' Five-Point Consensus (5PC) remains our main reference to address the political crisis in Myanmar. We reviewed the implementation of the 5 PC and adopted the ASEAN Leaders' Review and Decision on the Implementation of the Five-Point Consensus and reaffirmed the relevant decisions in the previous ASEAN Leaders' Review and Decision on the Implementation of the Five-Point Consensus. We commended the AHA Centre for the completion of the delivery of Humanitarian Assistance to Myanmar under Phase 1 (Life-Saving/COVID-19 response) as well as for its continuous efforts in delivering ASEAN Humanitarian Assistance, including under Phase 2 (Life-Sustaining) to implement Point 4 of the ASEAN Leaders' 5PC to Myanmar, and welcomed Thailand's humanitarian initiative, which are in line with the 5PC and coordinated with the ASEAN Chair through the Special Envoy of the ASEAN Chair on Myanmar. We appreciated the contributions by ASEAN Member States, external partners, and the private sector, and called for all relevant parties in Myanmar to ensure the safe and transparent delivery of humanitarian assistance, to the people in Myanmar without discrimination, towards the more effective implementation of Point 4 of the 5PC. Recognising the urgency of addressing the humanitarian emergency and the implementation of the recommendations of the Joint Needs Assessment (JNA) Report, we called for scaled-up additional financial support from the international community for humanitarian assistance, including to ensure the safety and livelihood of internally displaced persons (IDPs). We appreciated the ASEAN Chair's efforts and commended the Special Envoy of the ASEAN Chair on Myanmar, for his efforts to continue reaching out to parties concerned in a sustainable manner to help the people of Myanmar to achieve an inclusive and durable peaceful resolution that is Myanmar-owned and -led for peace, security and stability in the region. In this regard, we welcomed the convening of the informal consultation consisting of the current, previous, and incoming Chairs of ASEAN to promote concrete progress on the implementation of the 5PC during the 57th AMM/PMCs and Related Meetings and looked forward to the extended informal consultation with the possible participation of other interested ASEAN Member States to be hosted by Thailand later this year. We acknowledged the convening of the meeting of the Special Envoys on Myanmar in Jakarta, Indonesia, in October 2024. We reaffirmed our commitment to the continued and sustainable strategies and approaches to help the people of Myanmar find an inclusive and durable peaceful resolution that is Myanmar-owned and -led for peace, security and stability in the region.

SITUATION IN UKRAINE

181. With regard to Ukraine, as for all nations, we continued to reaffirm our respect for sovereignty, political independence, and territorial integrity. We reiterated our call for compliance with the UN Charter and international law. We underlined the importance of an immediate cessation of hostilities and the serious engagement in a genuine dialogue for the peaceful resolution of the conflict. We supported the efforts of the UN Secretary-General in the search for peaceful solution. We also called for the facilitation of rapid, safe and unhindered access to humanitarian assistance for those in need in Ukraine, and for the protection of civilians, humanitarian personnel, and persons in vulnerable situations.

SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

182. We expressed grave concern over the dire humanitarian situation in Gaza, which has been exacerbated following the 7 October attacks. We condemned all attacks against civilians and civilian infrastructure, which have resulted in the alarming number of casualties, particularly women and children, the restricted access to food, water, and other basic needs, leading to the further deterioration of the humanitarian crisis in Gaza. We urged all relevant parties to accept the ceasefire proposal as outlined in paragraph 2 of UN Security Council Resolution 2735. We called for the immediate and unconditional release of all hostages, especially 23 ASEAN nationals, women, children, the sick and the elderly. We underscored the importance of release from any arbitrary detention. We commended the efforts of various ASEAN Member States in providing humanitarian assistance to Gaza, and urged all ASEAN Member States and our external partners to continue providing and facilitating such assistance for Gaza. We supported the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) in the execution of its mandate and the UN Senior Humanitarian and Reconstruction Coordinator for Gaza to discharge her task effectively and efficiently, and to begin the work on post-conflict reconstruction. We called for rapid, safe, unimpeded and sustained humanitarian access to all those in need, including through increased capacity at border crossings, including by sea. We called on all parties to the conflict to protect civilians and to abide by international humanitarian law and international human rights law. We urged all parties concerned to work towards a peaceful resolution to the conflict with a view to realising the two-State solution in accordance with international law and the relevant UNSC and UNGA resolutions, including UNGA resolution A/RES/ES-10/23 on the Admission of New Members to the UN dated 10 May 2024 which we all voted in favour. We took note, and some of us underlined the importance of, the order on provisional measures issued by the International Court of Justice (ICJ) on 26 January 2024. We acknowledged the Advisory Opinion of the ICJ on 19 July 2024, which is of the opinion, among others, that the United Nations, and especially the General Assembly, which requested this opinion, and the Security Council, should consider the precise modalities and further action required to bring to an end as rapidly as possible the unlawful presence of the State of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. In this context, we reaffirmed the importance of upholding international law and also acknowledged the UNGA Resolution A/ES-10/24 on Advisory Opinion of the ICJ on Illegal Israeli actions in occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and from the illegality of Israel's continued presence in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. We expressed great concern over the escalation of tension in the Middle East and called on all parties concerned to exercise self-restraint, avoid acts that may aggravate the situation, and resolve differences through diplomacy and dialogue in the interest of maintaining peace and stability in the region.