

2024 CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT OF THE 4TH ASEAN-AUSTRALIA SUMMIT

Issued in Vientiane, Lao PDR on 10 October 2024

1. The 4th ASEAN-Australia Summit was held on 10 October 2024 in Vientiane, Lao PDR. The Summit was chaired by H.E. Mr. Sonexay Siphandone, Prime Minister of the Lao People's Democratic Republic. The Summit was attended by ASEAN Member States, the Honourable Anthony Albanese MP, Prime Minister of Australia, as well as the Prime Minister of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste as Observer. The Secretary-General of ASEAN was also in attendance.
2. We reiterated our support for Lao PDR's priorities for its ASEAN Chairmanship 2024 under the theme "ASEAN: Enhancing Connectivity and Resilience", which reaffirmed ASEAN's commitment to strengthening the ASEAN Community through intensifying ASEAN cooperation under the three community pillars, promoting infrastructure connectivity, narrowing the development gaps, enhancing economic integration and people-to-people exchanges, and further strengthening ASEAN's relations with external partners, while maintaining ASEAN's relevance and ASEAN Centrality in the evolving regional architecture. We applauded Lao PDR for successfully convening the 57th ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting (AMM) and Related Meetings in July 2024 in Vientiane, Lao PDR.
3. We recalled the successful convening of the Special Summit to Commemorate the 50th Anniversary of ASEAN-Australia Dialogue Relations in Melbourne, Australia, on 5-6 March 2024, and the adoption of the "ASEAN-Australia Leaders' Vision Statement – Partners for Peace and Prosperity" and the "Melbourne Declaration – A Partnership for the Future", which map out the future direction for the ASEAN-Australia partnership and commit ASEAN and Australia to work together to contribute to the maintenance of peace, stability and prosperity in the region. We welcomed the package of new and expanded initiatives announced at the ASEAN-Australia Special Summit in March 2024 and were pleased with implementation efforts.
4. We welcomed Australia's unwavering support for ASEAN Centrality. We reiterated our commitment to supporting an open, inclusive, transparent, resilient and rules-based regional architecture with ASEAN at its center that upholds international law, which is built upon ASEAN-led mechanisms, including the East Asia Summit (EAS), ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), and ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM-Plus). We reaffirmed our mutual respect for the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity, equality, non-interference and political independence of all nations as espoused in the Charter of the United Nations, the ASEAN Charter, the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC), the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), the Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ) and the Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality (ZOPFAN), as well as the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP).

5. We reiterated our support for the AOIP and reaffirmed our commitment to enhancing concrete cooperation and implement concrete projects in the four priority areas of the AOIP, in line with the ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on Mainstreaming Four Priority Areas of the AOIP within ASEAN-led mechanisms and the Joint Statement of the 2nd ASEAN-Australia Summit on Cooperation on the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific adopted in 2022. To this end, we acknowledged Australia's initiatives and activities to support and undertake substantive, practical and tangible cooperation with ASEAN in the four priority areas through concrete projects, activities and workstreams, including the convening of the first AOIP Seminar in November 2023 with EAS Participating Countries under the Project on "Strengthening Dialogue on Maritime Cooperation under the Framework of the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific", which was funded by the AUS4ASEAN Futures Initiative in November 2023. We looked forward to the next AOIP Seminar under the same Project. We also welcomed Australia's support for the implementation of the MoU between ASEAN-Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) and between ASEAN-Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), namely through the convening of the ASEAN-Australia Indo-Pacific Workshop on the Use of Technology for Sustainable Aquaculture in May 2024 in Bali, Indonesia, which incorporated participation by ASEAN Member States, Australia, PIF Member Countries, and the IORA Secretariat. We welcomed Australia's support for Lao PDR's hosting of the Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum.
6. We reaffirmed ASEAN's and Australia's commitment to continue strengthening the ASEAN-Australia Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (CSP), which importantly contributes to maintaining peace, security, stability, and prosperity in the region. We looked forward to continued cooperation under the CSP that is meaningful, substantive, and mutually beneficial, including through the AUD 204 million Australia4ASEAN Futures Initiative, Aus4ASEAN Scholarship program and the Aus4ASEAN Digital Transformation and Future Skills Initiative in addition to initiatives announced at the 2024 ASEAN-Australia Special Summit. We welcomed the expansion of the Aus4ASEAN Futures Initiative to cover all three ASEAN Community Pillars, and looked forward to ongoing collaboration and cooperation under the Aus4ASEAN Futures Initiative.
7. We noted with satisfaction the full implementation of the Plan of Action to Implement the ASEAN-Australia Strategic Partnership (2020-2024) and its Annex. We welcomed the adoption of the new Plan of Action to Implement the ASEAN-Australia Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (2025-2029) at the ASEAN Post Ministerial Conference (PMC)+1 Session with Australia on 26 July 2024 and looked forward to its effective implementation.
8. We welcomed the establishment of the ASEAN-Australia Centre (AAC) will support the implementation of the CSP by deepening business, education, cultural and community connections between ASEAN, Australia and Timor-Leste. We welcomed the AAC's commencement of operations on 01 July 2024 and will contribute to regional prosperity and enhanced trade and investment by supporting the implementation of Invested: Australia's Southeast Asia Economic Strategy to 2040.
9. We reaffirmed our steadfast commitment to expand, deepen and diversify trade and investment links between ASEAN and Australia. We welcomed Australia's focus on increasing two-way trade and investment with Southeast Asia through implementation of Invested: Australia's Southeast Asia Economic Strategy to 2040. We welcomed progress in implementing new initiatives under Invested, including establishment of the AUD 2 billion Southeast Asia Investment Financing Facility and Deal Teams to support Australian investment in Southeast Asia, appointment of 10 senior private sector Business Champions to facilitate greater commercial links, a targeted program of trade and investment missions to connect Australian exporters and businesses with customers in the region, the launch of new regional Landing Pads in Jakarta and Ho Chi Minh City to boost Southeast Asia's digital transformation, and enhanced visa access to facilitate easier travel to and from Australia.

10. We reiterated our shared commitment to further strengthening ASEAN-Australia economic partnership, including through upholding the multilateral trading system, enhancing regional economic integration, and underscoring the importance of multilateralism and free trade.
11. We welcomed Australia's continued support for ASEAN's integration and Community-building efforts. We welcomed Australia's participation in the inaugural ASEAN Future Forum in April 2024. We welcomed Australia's strong support for Timor Leste's ASEAN accession and the AUD 11.8 million package of support for its WTO and ASEAN accession preparation. This includes efforts to fulfil the Roadmap criteria for Timor-Leste's full Membership in ASEAN through support for capacity-building workshops in partnership with ASEAN Member States and the ASEAN Secretariat. We noted the successful conclusion of the first tranche of ASEAN Travelling Resource Persons Programme and looked forward to future instalments. We also looked forward to the commencement of English Language Training for ASEAN Accession Program.
12. We reaffirmed both sides' commitment to deepen political-security cooperation including on traditional and non-traditional security issues, through the implementation of the ASEAN-Australia Counter Trafficking Program (ASEAN ACT) and the ASEAN-Australia Political Security Partnership (APSP). This includes traditional and non-traditional security issues, such as combatting transnational crime, terrorism and violent extremism, trafficking in persons (TIP), people smuggling, illicit drugs, malicious cyber-incidents and cybercrime, money laundering, non-proliferation and disarmament, maritime security, as well as border management.
13. We welcomed stronger ASEAN-Australia cybersecurity cooperation, including the convening of the next ASEAN-Australia Cyber Policy Dialogue. Furthermore, we also welcomed Australia's chairing of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) Inter-Sessional Meeting on Non-Proliferation and Disarmament alongside the Philippines and New Zealand for the Inter-Sessional period 2024-2027.
14. We reaffirmed the commitment to forging closer cooperation between ASEAN and Australia in the law enforcement sector. We welcomed the convening of the 18th ASEAN Plus Australia Senior Officials Meeting on Transnational Crime (SOMTC + Australia) Consultation held in Vientiane, Lao PDR on 27 June 2024 and noted with satisfaction the progress of implementation of the SOMTC-Australia Work Plan on Cooperation to Combat Transnational Crime (2022-2025). This included the 3rd ASEAN-Australia Counter-Terrorism Dialogue, and on-going multi-year program on TIP and projects on the topic of terrorism, illicit drug trafficking and cybercrime. We welcomed the convening of the 19th ASEAN Directors-General of Immigration Departments and Heads of Consular Affairs Divisions of Ministries of Foreign Affairs Meeting Plus Australia (DGICM + Australia) Consultation in Nha Trang, Viet Nam on 15 August 2024. We commended the full and effective implementation of all initiatives under the 2023-2024 ASEAN-Australia Programme of Work, which included training programmes on border control and management, as well as the 6th ASEAN-Australia Immigration Training Committee (ITC) Meeting. We looked forward to the adoption of the renewed 2024-2025 ASEAN-Australia Programme of Work as a guiding document for ASEAN-Australia cooperation in immigration and border management under the DGICM + Australia Consultation framework. We also welcomed the inaugural ASEAN Plus Australia Senior Officials' Meeting on Drug Matters (ASOD + Australia) Consultation held on 4 October 2024.

15. We reaffirmed ASEAN and Australia's unwavering commitment to addressing the multi-dimensional aspects of TIP. In this context, we noted with appreciation Australia's support in the development of the ASEAN Multi-Sectoral Work Plan Against Trafficking in Persons 2023-2028 (Bohol TIP Work Plan 2.0), that was adopted at the 17th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime (AMMTC) held in Labuan Bajo, Indonesia, on 21 August 2023. We also noted Australia's support in the ongoing development of the cross-sectoral Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Learning (MERL) Framework of the Bohol TIP Work Plan 2.0. We welcomed the launch of the Counter Trafficking in Persons Centre of Excellence in Bangkok, Thailand, on 17 May 2024, supported by ASEAN ACT.
16. We welcomed Australia's ongoing work with ASEAN on conflict prevention, including the Track 2 ASEAN-Australia Workshop on Conflict Prevention and the ASEAN-led Regional Architecture in January 2024 co-chaired by Indonesia, Malaysia and Australia. We looked forward for a continued focus on conflict prevention and crisis management through the Track 1.5 ASEAN-Australia Workshop on Conflict Prevention Crisis Management, and the ASEAN-led Regional Architecture, also co-chaired by Australia and Malaysia later this year. We looked forward to a Track 1 discussion on this topic during Malaysia's ASEAN Chair year which coincides with the 20th anniversary of the East Asia Summit.
17. We welcomed collective efforts to bolster peace and security in our region and address emerging common security challenges by expanding the scope and sophistication of our practical defence cooperation. We noted that Australia is an active member of the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM-Plus), and that ASEAN and Australia valued defence cooperation as a means for confidence-building and conflict prevention, as well as capacity-building. We noted Australia's active engagement in the ADMM-Plus Experts' Working Groups (EWGs), in particular, as Co-Chair of the EWG on Military Medicine in the 2021-2024 cycle with Brunei Darussalam, and the EWG on Cyber Security with Cambodia in the 2024-2027 cycle.
18. We further highlighted the importance of advancing the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda in the region towards ensuring women's full, equal and meaningful participation and leadership in the security and defence sectors to achieve and sustain peace. We appreciated Australia's support for the "ASEAN WPS Summit: High-Level Dialogue to Advance the Implementation of the Regional Plan of Action on Women, Peace and Security", held on 5-7 July 2023 in Yogyakarta, Indonesia and continued integration of WPS across the ADMM-Plus EWG on Cyber Security. We also acknowledged with appreciation the support from Australia in progressing a baseline study on women in the security sector in ASEAN to enhance women's equitable engagement in the sector in close cooperation with the ASEAN Committee on Women (ACW).
19. We welcomed Australia's continued commitment to supporting the work of the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) in partnership with the Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC).
20. We reiterated the importance of the ASEAN-Australia-New Zealand Free Trade Area (AANZFTA). We welcomed the signing of the Second Protocol to Amend the Agreement Establishing the AANZFTA by all Parties and looked forward to the entry into force of the Protocol by the end of 2024, which is one of the Priority Economic Deliverables of Lao PDR during its 2024 ASEAN Chairmanship year. We also welcomed ongoing progress implementing the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) since its entry into force in 2022. We reaffirmed the importance of these two agreements for strengthening the ASEAN-centred regional economic architecture. We welcomed efforts by the Australia-ASEAN Chamber of Commerce (AustCham ASEAN) to strengthen economic integration and to enhance trade and investment opportunities in the region.

21. We welcomed Australia's continued support under the Regional Trade for Development (RT4D) Initiative to support the implementation of both the AANZFTA and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (RCEP) through the AANZFTA Implementation Support Program (AISP) and the RCEP Implementation Support Program (RISP) respectively.
22. We noted the successful implementation and conclusion of the Digital Trade Standards Initiative and welcomed opportunities to continue its implementation under the Aus4ASEAN Futures Initiative. We encouraged continued collaboration in areas such as digital entrepreneurship, e-commerce, and Micro Small Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) digitalisation. We welcomed Australia's further support for the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA) to support ASEAN's regional economic integration and sustainable and inclusive economic growth.
23. We encouraged stronger collaboration in areas related to science, technology, and innovation (STI), fostering closer cooperation in tackling common challenges using emerging technologies, and exploring new strategies in STI cooperation, particularly on mutually beneficial topics. We appreciated Australia's support, through the Aus4ASEAN Futures Initiatives, in developing the ASEAN Plan of Action on Science, Technology and Innovation (APASTI) 2026-2035, both in phase I and II. We also welcomed the involvement of Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) Australia in supporting part of the development of this document.
24. We encouraged continued collaboration in areas such as digital entrepreneurship, e-commerce, and Micro Small Medium Enterprises (MSME) digitalisation, including the conclusion of the ASEAN Digital Economy Framework Agreement (DEFA).
25. We welcomed ASEAN and Australia's engagement on ensuring regional food security. We noted progress made in the implementation of the ASEAN-Australia Joint Leaders' Statement on Strengthening Food Security and Nutrition in Response to Crises through the ASEAN-CGIAR Innovate for Food Regional Program and looked forward to the commencement of an ASEAN-specific cohort of the Meryl Williams Fellowship to build the capacity of and meaningful participation of women in ASEAN in the field of agricultural science to enhance food security.
26. We noted continued efforts to accelerate the energy transition to ensure stronger energy security, reliability, accessibility, sustainability, resiliency and affordability, and to support the establishment of the ASEAN Power Grid, including via cable connectivity and resilience. We welcomed the AUD 6.9 million Energy Cooperation Package under the Aus4ASEAN Futures Initiative to support the ASEAN Centre for Energy and the operationalisation of the ASEAN Centre for Climate Change (ACCC) as announced at the 2024 ASEAN-Australia Special Summit to further strengthen climate change and clean energy cooperation. This includes support for the ASEAN Power Grid, renewable energy adoption and regional energy policy. This package aims to improve energy security, accessibility, affordability and sustainability for all ASEAN Member States. It will build on the support provided by Partnerships for Infrastructure (P4I) on energy planning, policy and connectivity as set out in the ASEAN Plan of Action for Energy cooperation 2016-2025 (APAEC) and the 2023 ASEAN-Australia High-Level Dialogue on Climate Change and Energy Transition, co-chaired by Australia, Lao PDR and Viet Nam.
27. We welcomed Australia's continued support for ASEAN's integration and Community-building efforts. We looked forward to further enhancing cooperation between ASEAN and Australia on connectivity and narrowing the development gap, including through support for the implementation of the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity (MPAC) 2025, and the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) Work Plan IV (2021-2025) and the development of their successor documents, i.e. the ASEAN Connectivity Strategic Plan (ACSP) and IAI Work Plan V (2026-2030).

28. We welcomed Australia's support to smart and sustainable urban development, including the ASEAN Australia Smart Cities Trust Fund's support for the implementation of the ASEAN Sustainable Urbanisation Strategy (ASUS), as well as the ASEAN Smart Cities Network (ASCN).
29. We commended Australia for the strong commitment to supporting ASEAN in the implementation of the Action Plan to Enhance Container Circulation which plays a crucial role in enhancing the efficiency, competitiveness, and sustainability of the region's maritime transport sector. We looked forward to continued collaboration with Australia, through the Aus4ASEAN Futures Initiative, to strengthen the long-term capabilities and resilience of regional container shipping industry, which will help ASEAN improve logistics and enhance trade efficiency to support economic growth.
30. We welcomed Australia's contribution to the region's inclusive growth and equitable, sustainable development by promoting sub-regional development through the AUD 222.5 million second phase of the Mekong-Australia Partnership program. We acknowledged Australia's existing support for ASEAN's priorities and needs, including infrastructure investment, and sustainable water resources management.
31. We appreciated Australia's support, through the Aus4ASEAN Futures Initiatives, in developing the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC), ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC), and ASEAN Connectivity Strategic Plans. This included the ASCC Post-2025 Results Framework and Baselines as well as the continuous operation and maintenance of the ASCC Database for Monitoring and Evaluation (ADME) System. We emphasised the importance of establishing enabling mechanisms to support the implementation of the ASCC Strategic Plan.
32. We noted with satisfaction the strong ties between ASEAN and Australia on the socio-cultural spectrum, such as people-to-people connectivity, particularly through education, labour, arts and cultural exchange programmes. We welcomed the Aus4ASEAN Scholarships and ASEAN Scholars Leadership Program, New Colombo Plan, and Aus4ASEAN Digital Transition and Future Skills Initiative TVET Short Courses. We further welcomed the additional Aus4ASEAN Scholarships and Aus4ASEAN Fellowships, announced at the 2024 ASEAN-Australia Special Summit as well as continued contribution for the implementation of the ASEAN TVET Council (ATC) Work Plan (2021-2030) under the Aus4ASEAN Futures Initiative. We appreciated the support of Aus4ASEAN Digital Transformation and Future Skills for the 4th ATC Regional Policy Dialogue in 2024, ASEAN Green Jobs Forum in 2024 and initiatives on green jobs and green skills promotion in ASEAN, planned under the ASEAN Chairmanship of Malaysia in 2025. We appreciated Australia's support to host the 2nd ASEAN Foundation Model ASEAN Plus Australia in September 2024, which brought together students from across ASEAN Member States, Timor-Leste and Australia to learn about ASEAN diplomacy.
33. We welcomed Australia's commitment in increasing access to quality Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) in ASEAN, through the Aus4ASEAN Futures Initiatives, in enhancing the capacities of the ASEAN Member States to undertake systematic, effective, and holistic ECCE financing policy.

34. We acknowledged Australia's sustained commitment to ASEAN on health-related recovery efforts from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic; strengthening health systems; supporting the promotion of mental health; including under the ASEAN-Australia Youth Mental Health Fellowships; including through the Second East Asia Summit (EAS) Workshop on Mental Health to be held 12-13 November 2024; strengthening the One Health Initiatives through the ASEAN-Australia One Health Fellowship Program; and enhancing health security. We welcomed Australia's AUD 21 million to support the preparatory phase and establishment of the ASEAN Centre for Public Health Emergencies and Emerging Diseases (ACPHEED). We also appreciated Australia's support for the digitalisation of the health sector through the development of the ASEAN Health Sector Knowledge Management Platform. We noted the sustained cooperation in implementing the ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on One Health Initiatives through the ASEAN One Health Joint Plan of Action (2023-2030) and the ASEAN One Health Network.
35. We appreciated Australia's cooperation with ASEAN to address environmental challenges such as climate change and biodiversity conservation. We appreciated Australia's contribution for the development of the ASEAN Strategy for Carbon Neutrality. We noted ASEAN and Australia remain committed to promoting regional resilience and adaptation through climate action. We welcomed Australia's assistance to operationalize the ACCC in Brunei Darussalam and looked forward to Australia's continued support towards strengthening regional cooperation, coordination and preparedness to address climate change. We recognised the work of the ASEAN Centre for Sustainable Development Studies and Dialogue (ACSDSD) in Thailand. We also noted the implementation and operationalisation of the ASEAN Specialised Meteorological Centre (ASMC) and ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Transboundary Haze Pollution Control (ACCTHPC) in Indonesia for the implementation of the ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution.
36. We noted efforts to further enhance ASEAN's capacity to assess and monitor risks, prevent and mitigate, and respond to and recover from disasters, including through cooperation with the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on disaster management (AHA Centre). We agreed to continue working together on the implementation of the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) Work Programme (2021-2025). We appreciated Australia's participation as observer in the ASEAN Regional Disaster Simulation Exercise (ARDEX) 2023 in Indonesia. We encouraged Australia to continue to participate in future exercises.
37. We acknowledged Australia's continuous support to raise the standard of civil service in the ASEAN region through cooperation between the ASEAN Cooperation on Civil Service Matters (ACCSM) and the Australian Public Service Commission (APSC). We looked forward to further cooperation between ASEAN and Australia on civil service matters, including civil service reform and workforce planning, transformative leadership, talent management, human resources professionals' capacity building, and other areas of mutual interest.
38. We welcomed Australia's continued cooperation with ASEAN to address rural development and poverty alleviation, including the ASEAN Villages Network, through the Aus4ASEAN Futures Initiatives.

39. We commended Australia's strong commitment to gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls in the region. We welcomed Australia's support to ASEAN's work on mainstreaming gender across the three ASEAN Community pillars through the implementation of the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) and the ASEAN Gender Mainstreaming Strategic Framework. We appreciated Australia's support for the End-term Review of the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on the Elimination of Violence Against Women and its successor regional framework. We further welcomed the ASEAN-Australia Women's Leadership and Gender Mainstreaming in Infrastructure Workshop in March 2024.
40. We commended Australia's strong support for the conduct of the 3rd ASEAN Women Leaders' Summit and Pre-Summit Events that were held on 21-24 August 2024 in Vientiane, Lao PDR. Guided by the theme, "Strengthening Care Economy and Resilience Towards ASEAN Community Post-2025", the Summit is one of Lao PDR's priority deliverables during its term as ASEAN Chair. We likewise commended Australia for supporting the development of the Declaration on Strengthening Care Economy and Fostering Resilience in ASEAN Community Post-2025.
41. We commended Australia's strong collaboration in advancing disability inclusive development and empowering persons with disabilities in the region. We appreciated Australia's collaboration for the implementation and mid-term review of the ASEAN Enabling Masterplan 2025: Mainstreaming the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and we looked forward to discussions on the roll-out of the recommendations arising from the Mid-Term Review of the Masterplan.
42. We commended Australia's commitment to supporting evidence-based policymaking through the ASCC Research & Development Platform on Care Economy, which will play a vital role in driving research and analysis on ageing and care, a critical issue as the region faces shifting demographics.
43. We also looked forward to Australia's continued support to ASEAN in protecting and promoting the rights of migrant workers and their family members through the Tripartite Action to Enhance the Contribution of Labour Migration to Growth and Development in ASEAN (TRIANGLE in ASEAN) programme, including the annual conduct of the ASEAN Forum on Migrant Labour (AFML) and development of the ASEAN Guidelines on Portability of Social Security Benefits for Migrant Workers. We appreciated the support of the TRIANGLE in ASEAN and ASEAN-ACT in the development of the ASEAN Declaration and Guidelines on Protection of Migrant Workers and Family Members in Crisis Situations, ASEAN Declaration and Guidelines on Placement and Protection of Migrant Fishers, Vientiane Declaration on Skills Mobility, Recognition, and Development for Migrant Workers and its Checklist, as well as workshops and compilation of good practices on employers' education programmes on fair recruitment and decent employment of migrant workers.
44. We appreciated Australia's support for the work of the ASEAN Task Force on Fake News (TFFN) under the auspice of the ASEAN-Australia Political-Security Partnership (APSP), including the Digital SPARK Challenge engaging ASEAN and Australian youth on disinformation in Jakarta on 30 September to 3 October 2024, as well as the ASEAN-Australia Workshop to Familiarise with the ASEAN Guideline on Management of Government Information in Combating Fake News and Disinformation in the Media on 01 October in Jakarta.

45. We 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. Some countries called on the DPRK to comply fully with all relevant UNSC resolutions and we called for peaceful dialogue among the concerned parties, and continuing working towards the realisation of lasting peace, and stability in a denuclearised Korean Peninsula. We called for the full implementation of all relevant UNSC Resolutions. Some countries noted international efforts to bring about the complete, verifiable, and irreversible 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. The Meetings 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.

46. 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 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 underscored the importance of the full and effective implementation of the DOC in its entirety and committed to maintaining and promoting an environment conducive to the negotiations of an effective and substantive Code of Conduct in the South China Sea (COC) that is in accordance with International Law, including the 1982 UNCLOS.

47. We discussed the developments in Myanmar and expressed our deep concern over the escalation of conflicts and humanitarian situation. We reaffirmed our support for the ASEAN Leaders' Five-Point Consensus (5PC), which remains the main reference to address the political crisis in Myanmar. We also reaffirmed the relevant decisions in the ASEAN Leaders' Review and Decision on the implementation of the Five-Point Consensus. We denounced the continued acts of violence 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 a conducive environment for the delivery of humanitarian assistance and inclusive national dialogue. 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 acknowledged the convening of the informal consultation consisting of the current, previous, and incoming Chairs of ASEAN on the implementation of the 5PC during the 57th AMM/PMCs and Related Meetings. We welcomed the adoption of the ASEAN Leaders' Review and Decision on the Implementation of the Five-Point Consensus. 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.

48. 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 reaching a just and lasting peace based on the purposes and principles of the UN Charter in all their entirety and an immediate cessation of hostilities and the creation of enabling environment for peaceful resolution. 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.

49. 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. 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.