



**CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT
OF THE 20TH EAST ASIA SUMMIT
KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA, 27 OCTOBER 2025**

1. The 20th East Asia Summit (EAS) was convened on 27 October 2025 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The Summit was chaired by The Honourable Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim, Prime Minister of Malaysia and the Chair of EAS. The Summit was attended by ASEAN Member States, Australia, the People's Republic of China, the Republic of India, Japan, New Zealand, the Republic of Korea (ROK), the Russian Federation, and the United States of America (U.S.). The Secretary-General of ASEAN was also in attendance. The Presidents of Brazil, as BRICS Chair, and South Africa, as G20 Chair, briefed the 20th EAS on the potentials for strengthening economic resilience through enhanced engagement between the EAS and the BRICS and G20 frameworks.

Review and Future Direction of the EAS

2. We reaffirmed our commitment to further strengthening the EAS as the 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 East Asia in line with the EAS foundational documents and based on the established principles, objectives and modalities of the EAS.

3. We reaffirmed that the EAS would continue to be an open, inclusive, transparent and outward-looking forum that is welcoming to all, and is an integral component of the evolving ASEAN-centred, rules-based regional architecture that upholds international law including the Charter of the United Nations (UN), the ASEAN Charter, Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC), the 2005 Kuala Lumpur Declaration, and the 2011 EAS Declaration on the Principles of Mutually Beneficial Relations (Bali Principles).

4. We reaffirmed ASEAN Centrality in the EAS and in the ASEAN-led mechanisms, which address challenges to regional security, sustainable development, and economic growth. We underscored ASEAN's commitment to work in close partnership with all EAS participating countries, including to implement the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP), consistent with its principles of openness, transparency, inclusivity, equality and good governance. We emphasised the important role of the EAS in strengthening multilateralism and the rules-based

international order that upholds international law. We further underscored the need to promote an enabling environment for peace, stability, economic growth, and sustainable development for all, through dialogue, consultation and cooperation and by enhancing mutual trust, confidence, and respect for international law.

5. We underscored the need to further strengthen the EAS to ensure its continued relevance and effectiveness in response to geopolitical tensions and conflicts and challenges amidst the rapidly evolving regional and global architecture, especially at the significant milestone of the 20th anniversary of the EAS. We note the value of practical cooperation, including the AOIP's four priority areas, through ASEAN-led mechanisms to reinforce strategic trust and to address common challenges based on mutual trust, benefit, and respect with ASEAN as the primary driving force. We acknowledged that all countries have a responsibility to facilitate an enabling environment for peace, stability and shared prosperity through dialogue and cooperation, confidence-building and respect for international law. We encouraged an outcome-oriented approach that supports concrete AOIP implementation including through building on ongoing initiatives such as the ASEAN-Indo-Pacific Forum (AIPF).

6. We underscored the importance of promoting strategic trust and ensuring transparent, predictable and responsible behaviour in accordance with the principles and norms of the relevant ASEAN instruments. We emphasised our commitment to a region where sovereignty and territorial integrity are fully respected and where differences are managed through dialogue and diplomacy in accordance with international law.

7. We reaffirmed ASEAN's integral role as the region's leading convener for strategic dialogue. We underscored our commitment to deepen cooperation through ASEAN-led mechanisms and other relevant regional and multilateral institutions to strengthen our regional architecture to promote peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region.

8. We recognised the continued efforts to strengthen EAS work processes, to ensure the effective follow-up and implementation of the Leaders' decisions and initiatives in a timely manner, as well as to promote coherence with other ASEAN-led mechanisms which are mutually reinforcing, through fostering complementarity among the mechanisms and avoiding duplication of work. We encouraged the further strengthening of the various platforms under the EAS, including the EAS Unit at the ASEAN Secretariat, to facilitate and support EAS coordination and cooperation.

Areas of Cooperation

9. We noted the progress made under the EAS Plan of Action (2024-2028), including in workstreams such as Peace and Security, ASEAN Connectivity, Economic Cooperation and Trade, Sustainable Development, Climate, Environment and Energy, Education, Health, including Pandemic Diseases and Maritime Cooperation.

10. We affirmed the importance of the areas of cooperation of the AOIP with a view to explore further cooperation through relevant mechanisms, centres and institutions, while upholding ASEAN Centrality and unity. We highlighted that the Plan of Action serves as the principal guide to enhance EAS cooperation and ASEAN's effort of mainstreaming the AOIP over the next few years, with the aim of enhancing the relevance, coherence, responsiveness, and effectiveness of the EAS.

11. We welcomed the adoption of the *ASEAN 2045: Our Shared Future* and its Strategic Plans at the 46th ASEAN Summit to guide the ASEAN Community-building process in the next 20 years. In this regard, the EAS participating countries expressed their commitment to support ASEAN Community-building by cooperating with ASEAN on concrete projects under the relevant ASEAN sectoral bodies and through ASEAN-led mechanisms to realise the vision of the *ASEAN 2045: Our Shared Future* towards achieving a resilient, innovative, dynamic and people-centred ASEAN. We emphasised that future EAS cooperation should align with the strategic goals and objectives outlined in the *ASEAN 2045: Our Shared Future*.

Peace and Security

12. We reaffirmed the importance of the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda, which was showcased through the adoption of key regional frameworks by ASEAN and the convening of consultative platforms, as well as the establishment of mechanisms in advancing WPS that involve EAS participating countries. We noted that this year marks the 25th anniversary of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolution 1325 on WPS, and that reaffirming our commitment to advancing gender equality, promoting inclusive peacebuilding, and ensuring the full, equal, meaningful participation and leadership of women in all aspects of peace and security is imperative. We recalled the adoption of the EAS Leaders' Statement on WPS in 2020 and called for EAS participating countries to undertake more practical activities.

13. We emphasised the growing importance of security in the use of Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs) and reaffirmed the need to enhance cooperation to promote an open, free, secure, stable, accessible, peaceful, interoperable, and cooperative ICT environment, including through capacity building measures and countering the use of ICTs for criminal purposes in accordance with UN General Assembly (UNGA) resolution A/RES/79/243 on United Nations Convention against Cybercrime. In this connection, we encouraged the EAS participating countries to further enhance cooperation in this area based on the guidance provided by the 2015 EAS Leaders' Statement on Issues Related to Security of and in the Use of Information and Communications Technologies and the 2018 EAS Leaders' Statement on Deepening Cooperation in the Security of Information and Communications Technologies and of the Digital Economy.

14. We reaffirmed our commitment to address the evolving threat of transnational crime, including cybercrime such as telecommunications fraud, and online scams, which have increasingly harmed regional security and economic prosperity as well as the wellbeing of our peoples. We expressed concern that these crimes are often associated with trafficking in persons, the smuggling of goods and illicit drugs, and money laundering. We emphasised the importance of safeguarding border security, preventing corruption, and countering cybercrime in line with international law and related domestic laws of the respective EAS participating countries, while reaffirming the shared determination to combat transnational crime and ensure a safe, secure, and prosperous region through practical cooperation. We acknowledged the need for comprehensive, multi-stakeholder responses involving not only states but also the private sector, civil society, local communities, youth and media, and reaffirmed support for the implementation of international and regional frameworks, including the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organised Crime (UNTOC) and relevant ASEAN instruments, including the ASEAN Plan of Action in Combatting Transnational Crime (2026-2035), and the ASEAN Plan of Action on Cooperation on Immigration and Consular Assistance Matters (2022-2031).

15. We welcomed the convening of the Track 1.5 Workshop on Conflict Prevention, Crisis Management and the ASEAN-led Regional Architecture, co-hosted by Malaysia and Australia in December 2024 in Jakarta, Indonesia, and participated by officials and academics from EAS participating countries. The Workshop underscored ASEAN's central role in conflict prevention for the region. We further welcomed a follow-on Track 1 workshop co-hosted by Malaysia, Indonesia and Australia in September 2025 in Port Dickson, Malaysia, which discussed key and concrete recommendations for strengthening the role of the ASEAN-led regional architecture in conflict prevention and crisis management. The Track 1 workshop highlighted that effective regional conflict prevention requires sustained diplomatic investment and practical and inclusive cooperation.

16. We emphasised the importance of further strengthening coordination among EAS participating countries through ASEAN-led mechanisms, including the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime (AMMTC) and its subsidiary mechanisms, the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus), ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Drug Matters (AMMD), ASEAN Digital Ministers' Meeting (ADGMIN), ASEAN Ministerial Conference on Cybersecurity (AMCC), and ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF).

Sustainable Development

17. We noted several initiatives relevant to sustainable development that are being led by Thailand as the ASEAN Coordinator for Sustainable Development Cooperation with the involvement of different key stakeholders, including EAS participating countries. The key important document is the development of the Complementarities Initiative 2.0, which aims to ensure continued alignment with the new ASEAN

Community Vision 2045 (ACV 2045) and the UN 2030 Sustainable Agenda. We also welcomed the streamlining of several key ASEAN initiatives into one platform including the High-Level Brainstorming Dialogue (HLBD) on Enhancing Complementarities, the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the ASEAN Forum on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with National Development Planning Agencies; and ASEAN Ministerial Dialogue on Accelerating Actions to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The ASEAN Multi-stakeholder Forum on Sustainability held on 21-22 August 2025 is an effort towards this end, aiming to reduce duplication and foster a more coordinated approach to promoting the SDGs within ASEAN, external partners and stakeholders.

Climate, Environment and Energy Cooperation

18. We discussed the importance of a sustainable recovery that supports economic growth, climate and sustainability goals, as well as the efforts by EAS participating countries to implement the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and its Paris Agreement. We discussed ways and means to address climate change and other environmental issues, including through the adoption of nature-based solutions, technology-based or scientific solutions and ecosystem-based approaches, sharing of best practices, technology transfer and providing resources and technical expertise for regional initiatives, including the operationalisation of the ASEAN Centre for Climate Change and the development and implementation of the ASEAN Climate Change Strategic Action Plan (ACCSAP).

19. We took note of the progress made under the EAS Leaders' Statement on Sustainable Recovery, which was adopted at the 16th EAS in October 2021, including the importance of a sustainable recovery that is comprehensive, inclusive and resilient, and the need to promote economic policies and growth including trade and investment, that contribute to sustainable development and addressing climate change, as well as addressing other economic, social, and environmental challenges. We encouraged regional dialogue and cooperation in driving greater adoption of environmental social governance and sustainability reporting as part of the sustainable recovery efforts, with the aim of enhancing market access, strengthening investment attractiveness, and building economic resilience across the EAS economies.

20. We noted the convening of the 14th High-Level Seminar on Sustainable Cities (HLS-SC) on 26-28 November 2024 in Bangkok, Thailand, back-to-back with the closing workshop of the SDGs Frontrunner Cities Phase 2, demonstrating steady progress of actions of ASEAN cities towards achieving SDG Goals.

21. We encouraged EAS participating countries to strengthen cooperation on addressing air pollution, particularly in relation to climate change sustainable cities, marine pollution, conservation, and a One-Health approach related to environmental health matters. We emphasised the need to address transboundary haze pollution and also encouraged EAS participating countries to explore collaboration for the

establishment and operationalisation of the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Transboundary Haze Pollution (ACC THPC) to fully and effectively implement the ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution (AATHP) and the Second Roadmap for ASEAN Cooperation on Transboundary Haze Pollution Control with Means of Implementation (Second ASEAN Haze-Free Roadmap) 2023-2030. The work of the ACC THPC, ASEAN Specialised Meteorological Centre, ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on disaster management (AHA Centre), ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB), and ASEAN Research and Training Centre for Space Technology and Applications (ARTSA), under the Establishment Agreement of the ACC THPC, will facilitate the effective implementation of this AATHP and further reaffirm ASEAN's commitment in enhancing regional cooperation and coordination on transboundary haze pollution in the ASEAN region.

22. We noted the ASEAN Biodiversity Plan, which was launched at the Convention on Conference of Parties (COP) 16 in Cali, Colombia, in October 2024, as ASEAN's biodiversity strategy and action plan, ensuring complementarity with the National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans of the ASEAN Member States and synergy with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, to address ASEAN community- wide concerns related to biodiversity through region-wide approaches. We encouraged EAS participating countries to cooperate with the regional and/or sub-regional technical and scientific cooperation support centres, including the ACB, to promote the implementation of the Biodiversity Plan.

23. We welcomed the outcome of the 19th EAS Energy Ministers' Meeting on 17 October 2025 that acknowledged the ASEAN Plan of Action for Energy Cooperation (APAEC) 2026-2030 overall theme "Advancing Regional Cooperation in Ensuring Energy Security and Accelerating Decarbonisation for a Just and Inclusive Energy Transition". We welcomed the enhanced contributions from EAS participating countries to advance ASEAN's aspirational energy targets for 2030. We reaffirmed the importance of modernising and expanding electricity infrastructure such as transmission capacity and power grids to strengthen energy security. We recognised that enhancing grid infrastructure through energy storage systems, microgrids, smart grids, and submarine power cables as well as deepening regional interconnectivity can foster more efficient and reliable grids. We also reaffirmed the importance of advancing critical and emerging energy technologies in support of APAEC 2026-2030, including Carbon Capture, Utilisation, and Storage (CCUS), energy storage, smart grids, and Artificial Intelligence (AI). We highlighted the importance of diversifying supply chains, promoting voluntary technology transfer on mutually agreed terms, mobilising finance, ensuring energy security, and exchanged views on sustainability, accessibility and affordability of energy resources.

24. We highlighted the urgent need for regional collaboration to ensure energy security, advance energy interconnectivity, promote access to affordable and reliable energy, green and low-carbon transitions and address climate change amid growing energy demand affecting the region's energy challenges. The EAS participating

countries welcomed ASEAN's decision to realise the ASEAN Power Grid by 2045 and reaffirmed its commitment to support ASEAN's efforts in advancing a secure, resilient, and interconnected regional energy future, in line with the EAS Plan of Action workstream on energy cooperation. We looked forward to ASEAN's signing of the enhanced APG Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), the endorsement of the Terms of Reference of the Subsea Power Cables Development Framework, and the establishment of the ASEAN Power Grid Transition Finance Facility by this year. We look forward to the successful convening of the 7th EAS Clean Energy Forum and the 11th EAS New Energy Forum that will be hosted by China later this year. We encouraged collaboration on critical minerals value chains and just transition financing, the development of energy-optimising smart cities, raising public awareness on energy usage, and fostering sustainable lifestyles aiming to building an affordable, reliable, clean, resilient, and low-carbon energy future through shared regional goals and international cooperation. We took note of activities under the Asia Zero Emission Community (AZEC) platform that contributes to APAEC and accelerates energy transitions in the region through various pathways. We welcomed the convening of EAS Workshop on Energy Efficiency Policy and Program-Life Style for Environment (LiFE) on 17-19 September 2025 hosted by India at Nalanda University, Rajgir, India.

Education Cooperation

25. We affirmed advancing long-term and mutually beneficial education cooperation among the EAS participating countries, particularly in enhancing youth and people-to-people exchanges through scholarship programmes, life-long skills development and digital literacy. We recognised that the EAS education cooperation has been pursued in line with priority areas under the ASEAN Work Plan on Education 2021-2025. We commended the implementation of inclusive and quality education programmes and activities for all by the EAS participating countries, especially in the areas of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), higher education, research, people-to-people exchanges including through scholarship programmes, strengthening competency of teachers in ICT, and promotion of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and mental health and well-being of students. We supported the priorities of the ASEAN TVET Council (ATC) to advance TVET in the region through the implementation of its Work Plan 2021-2030. We welcomed the convening of EAS Conclave of Heads of Higher Education Institutions hosted by India on 17-19 September 2025 at Nalanda University, Rajgir, India.

26. We called for greater efforts to explore more initiatives for cooperation between ASEAN and the non-ASEAN EAS participating countries in sports, culture, and arts, drawing on the rich cultural diversity and heritage of ASEAN as an engine for economic growth and sustainable development, and forging closer friendship and understanding between ASEAN and the non-ASEAN EAS participating countries.

27. We welcomed the convening of Model EAS organised by the ASEAN Foundation and co-initiated by Japan, Australia and China, in September 2025 in

Jakarta, Indonesia. The Model EAS was funded by and participated by students from all EAS participating countries. It empowers youth with relevant knowledge and skills concerning ASEAN and EAS mechanisms, and commemorate the 20th anniversary of the EAS.

Finance

28. We reiterated the need to work together to strengthen the global economic recovery. We encouraged strengthening regional financial cooperation through ASEAN-led mechanisms involving EAS participating countries, to not only foster regional economic and financial stability but also to reinforce long-term resilience while maintaining flexibility to address near-term challenges.

Global Health Issues and Pandemic Diseases

29. We reaffirmed the importance of the EAS Leaders' Statement on Strengthening Collective Capacity in Epidemics Prevention and Response adopted in 2020 under the joint leadership of Russia, Vietnam, Indonesia, Thailand and China and called for EAS participating countries to undertake more practical activities to implement the Leaders' commitments.

30. We recognised the importance of mental health as a critical public health issue which has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and called for greater cooperation in this area. We welcomed the successful convening of the 2nd EAS Mental Health Workshop on Advancing Regional and International Cooperation held on 12-13 November 2024 via videoconference as part of the implementation efforts of the EAS Leaders' Statement on Mental Health Cooperation, adopted at the 16th East Asia Summit in October 2021. The Workshop, co-hosted by Brunei Darussalam and Australia, provided an avenue for policy makers, practitioners and mental health experts across EAS participating countries to exchange best practices and foster greater cooperation to strengthen mental health sector. We welcomed the development of the EAS Joint Action Plan on Mental Health Cooperation that will provide a framework for practical mental health collaboration within the EAS.

Cooperation on Natural Disaster Management

31. We reiterated our commitment to continuously support the implementation of the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) and the AADMER Work Programme 2021-2025 and its successor programme. We commended the adoption of the AADMER Work Programme 2026-2030 by the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Management and affirmed our commitment to support its implementation. We also reaffirmed our support to enhance the implementation of the "ASEAN Declaration on One ASEAN, One Response: ASEAN Responding to Disasters as One in the Region and Outside the Region" to increase the speed, scale, and solidarity of ASEAN's response, and the strengthening

of the capacity of the AHA Centre as ASEAN's primary coordinating agency on disaster management and emergency response. We encouraged EAS participating countries to forge stronger collaboration to support ASEAN towards becoming a global leader in disaster risk reduction and strengthening climate and disaster resilience for sustainable development in line with the ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on Sustainable Resilience.

32. We reaffirmed the importance of promoting localisation in anticipatory action for disaster preparedness and response, recognising that local actors and communities play a central role in mitigating the impacts of disasters, enhancing resilience, and strengthening regional cooperation and mechanisms. We looked forward to fostering multi-stakeholder partnerships among EAS participating countries to build capacities and mobilise resources to support localisation efforts, in line with the ASEAN Framework on Anticipatory Action in Disaster Management.

33. We underscored the importance of further strengthening engagement between the ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management (ACDM) and the National Disaster Management Organisations (NDMOs) of non-ASEAN EAS participating countries, including through active participation in ASEAN-led initiatives and practical cooperation. We encouraged EAS participating countries to continue advancing cooperation in disaster management, including through the effective implementation of the 2009 Cha-am Hua Hin Statement on EAS Disaster Management and 2014 EAS Statement on Rapid Disaster Response, while upholding ASEAN Centrality.

Cooperation on ASEAN Connectivity

34. We acknowledged the support and cooperation from non-ASEAN EAS participating countries in advancing ASEAN Connectivity, including the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity (MPAC) 2025. We welcomed the adoption of the ASEAN Connectivity Strategic Plan (ACSP) as the successor document to the MPAC 2025 and looked forward to deepening cooperation in the implementation of the ACSP through tangible initiatives, programmes, and projects to enhance regional connectivity and advance the ASEAN Connectivity agenda in support of the ASEAN Community Vision 2045.

35. We reaffirmed the importance of enhancing synergies among various connectivity initiatives within and beyond the region. We emphasised the need for continued engagement and dialogue between the ASEAN Connectivity Coordinating Committee (ACCC) and the non-ASEAN EAS participating countries, with a focus on advancing connectivity cooperation. We welcomed the continued participation of non-ASEAN EAS participating countries in ASEAN-led connectivity platforms, including the ACCC Consultation with Dialogue Partners and Other External Partners on Connectivity and the 16th ASEAN Connectivity Symposium on 12 September 2025 in Malaysia.

Economic Cooperation and Trade

36. We reaffirmed our commitment to strengthening the open, non-discriminatory, predictable, transparent, free, fair, inclusive, sustainable, and rules-based multilateral trading system with the World Trade Organization (WTO) at its core. We acknowledged that the WTO has challenges, and that meaningful, necessary and comprehensive reform is essential to improve its functions so that it is better able to advance all Members' interests. We underscored the need to work together constructively towards a successful 14th Ministerial Conference (MC14) in March 2026 in Cameroon. We expressed concerns over the rising global trade tensions and increasing uncertainties in the international economic landscape. In this regard, we reaffirmed the importance of strengthening economic relations among the EAS participating countries with ASEAN playing a central role, by fostering cooperation in areas of mutual interest, such as digitalisation, green economy, and supply chain resilience and connectivity, to ensure resilience against future economic shocks and narrow the development gap in the region. We underscored the importance of promoting circular economy approaches to unlock future growth in a more sustainable way and support transitions to sustainable growth in the region.

37. We welcomed the convening of the 13th EAS Economic Ministers' Meeting held in September 2025, in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, where the Ministers exchanged views on regional and global economic challenges, including those likely to impact supply chain resilience such as climate change, food and energy security. We commended the Joint Media Statement of the Thirteenth EAS Economic Ministers' Meeting recognising the importance of the WTO, and commitment to international law. We reaffirmed our commitment to further enhance economic integration and cooperation, particularly in the areas of digital economy and economic participation of all communities.

38. We underscored the critical role of digital transformation in driving future economic growth, resilience, and competitiveness for all EAS participating countries. In this regard, we reaffirmed strong support for the ASEAN Digital Economy Framework Agreement (DEFA), which is envisioned as an initiative towards a seamlessly integrated, inclusive, and innovative regional digital economy. We noted the substantial conclusion of the ASEAN DEFA negotiations and encouraged the continued momentum towards its full conclusion, signing, and ratification by 2026. We recognised that an ambitious, comprehensive, and forward-looking ASEAN DEFA will not only deepen digital integration among ASEAN Member States but also create opportunities for enhanced interoperability, cross-border data flows and digital trade, and innovation-driven partnerships with non-ASEAN EAS participating countries to ensure the region collectively benefits from the full potential of the digital economy. We supported MSME digitalisation, AI development, innovation and growth, as well as AI safety and governance and digital skills partnerships to ensure no one is left behind.

39. We emphasised the importance of strengthening collaboration on emerging technologies, digital upskilling, and cybersecurity, including through the implementation of the 2018 EAS Leaders' Statement on Deepening Cooperation in the Security Information and Communications Technologies and of the Digital Economy and active participation in ASEAN-led mechanisms, activities, and joint initiatives. We encouraged continued engagement between ASEAN and non-ASEAN EAS participating countries to ensure that the benefits of digital transformation are widely shared, while upholding the principles of ASEAN Centrality and an open, free, secure, interoperable and inclusive digital future.

Poverty Alleviation

40. We recognised the strategic importance of advancing rural transformative agenda and poverty eradication strategy in ASEAN, and commended the work of the ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Rural Development and Poverty Eradication (SOMRDPE) in strengthening cooperation which aims to eradicate poverty through, among others, the operationalisation of the ASEAN Master Plan on Rural Development (2022 – 2026), annual convening of the ASEAN Public-Private- People Forum on Rural Development and Poverty Eradication, and the ASEAN Villages Network (AVN) that continue to facilitate meaningful dialogue and partnership between ASEAN and its key stakeholders, including the EAS participating countries, towards the implementation of the 2017 EAS Leaders' Statement on Cooperation in Poverty Alleviation to enhance closer relations and cooperation on shared rural and poverty eradication priorities.

41. We recognised the importance of advancing social protection agenda in the EAS and beyond as a basic human right. We further recognised that for social protection to have greater impact on the lives of the people, it must be inclusive, sustainable, future-proof and adaptive to different risks and vulnerabilities brought about by the changes in the economy and labour markets and impacts of climate change, natural disasters, ageing-related challenges, and economic crises across the EAS participating countries. In this regard, cross-sectoral cooperation, particularly from social welfare, health, labour, finance, food, agriculture, disasters, energy, and environment sectors, is crucial. Likewise, the meaningful engagement of the private sector, development partners, civil society, service providers, and community volunteers is important.

42. We welcomed opportunities for cooperation on strengthening social protection systems, especially those that address the needs of the most vulnerable sectors, through building evidence, knowledge exchange and sharing of good practices in support of the implementation of the Regional Framework and Action Plan to Implement the ASEAN Declaration on Strengthening Social Protection and the ASEAN Guidelines on Disaster Responsive Social Protection.

Food Security

43. We reaffirmed our commitment to continue implementing the 2013 EAS Declaration on Food Security and stressed the need to further enhance food and nutrition security including through supporting the implementation of the Food, Agriculture, and Forestry Sectoral Plan for 2026-2030. We expressed support for the implementation of the Action Plan for Sustainable Agriculture in ASEAN and the 2023 ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on Strengthening Food Security and Nutrition in Response to Crises to take practical and concrete measures in strengthening local, regional and global food supply chains and logistics systems to ensure regional and global food security and nutrition and improving resilience against climate change. We supported cooperation on resilient regional rice and staple food supply.

Maritime Cooperation

44. We expressed support for the strengthening of maritime cooperation among the EAS participating countries to respond to maritime challenges, and promote the sustainable development of the seas and oceans, in accordance with international law, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). We also encouraged maritime cooperation as reflected in the 2015 EAS Statement on Enhancing Regional Maritime Cooperation, 2020 EAS Leaders' Statement on Marine Sustainability, the 2011 Declaration of the East Asia Summit on the Principles for Mutually Beneficial Relations (Bali Principles), and 2023 EAS Leaders' Statement on Maintaining and Promoting the Region as an Epicentrum of Growth, in a collective and comprehensive approach, time emphasised the need to enhance complementarity with other ASEAN-led mechanisms such as the ARF, ADMM-Plus, and Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum (EAMF).

45. We recognised the importance of maintaining and further strengthening stability in the maritime domain in our region, and underlined the importance of upholding freedom of navigation and overflight and other lawful uses of the sea and strengthening maritime cooperation and exploring mutually beneficial initiatives in accordance with international law, including the 1982 UNCLOS. We welcomed the ASEAN Maritime Outlook, which serves as a practical reference in understanding maritime trends and challenges and promoting maritime cooperation in the region. We took into account the cross-cutting nature of maritime cooperation through activities such as the AOIP Seminar Series on Submarine Cables, which was organised and co-hosted by Indonesia, Singapore, Australia, Japan, and the ROK in February 2025 in Jakarta. We noted the past editions of EAS Conference on Maritime Security Cooperation that has been hosted by India in cooperation with EAS participating countries and looked forward to the organisation of its 7th edition. We also noted that India will organise the EAS Maritime Heritage Festival in Gujarat, India.

Tourism Cooperation

46. We recognised tourism as a key driver of economic growth, employment, social benefits and livelihoods of local communities and commended the relentless efforts of the ASEAN National Tourism Organisation (NTOs) in implementing timely and innovative measures as guided by the Post-COVID-19 Recovery Plan for ASEAN Tourism and the updated ASEAN Tourism Strategic Plan (ATSP) 2016-2025. In this regard, we encouraged EAS participating countries to implement the EAS Leaders' Statement on Economic Growth through Tourism Recovery which was adopted at the 16th EAS in 2021, through a dialogue on tourism among relevant agencies of the EAS participating countries and the existing ASEAN tourism mechanisms with the Plus Ones and Plus Three countries in line with the Post-COVID-19 Recovery Plan for ASEAN Tourism. We further encouraged the EAS participating countries to support the implementation of the Action Roadmap for Sustainable Tourism Development in ASEAN, endorsed in 2024, which aims to guide ASEAN and relevant stakeholders in promoting sustainable tourism practices, strengthening regional collaboration, and enhancing ASEAN's position as a competitive and sustainable tourism destination.

47. We recognised the work of the ASEAN Committee on Culture and Information (COCI), as well as the Senior Officials Meeting on Culture and Arts (SOMCA) and its dialogue partners in promoting awareness and appreciation of the cultural heritage of ASEAN. We acknowledged culture and arts as concepts that encompass ways of life, traditions and beliefs manifested through tangible and intangible cultural heritage, creative industries, and cultural tourism, that have an invaluable contribution toward promoting social, economic, human and sustainable development of EAS participating countries. We also acknowledged diversity and the right to enjoy and benefit from culture, and that the EAS participating countries can utilise culture as a key to strengthen regional cooperation, through cultural fora, cultural heritage protection and museum cooperation, and cooperation in culture and creative industries and creative economy.

Advancement and Empowerment of Women and Youth Participation

48. We expressed support for strengthening cooperation towards the advancement and empowerment of women and youth participation in the region, through the ambit of the ASEAN Committee on Women (ACW), ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC), ASEAN Senior Officials' Meeting on Youth (SOMY), and Senior Officials Meeting on Social Welfare and Development (SOMSWD).

49. We emphasised the importance of promoting regional cooperation in articulating and advocating for women's economic empowerment and entrepreneurship as key drivers of inclusive and sustainable growth in the region. We highlighted the indispensable contribution of care work to sustainable development,

social cohesion, and crucially, gender equality and women's empowerment, which is increasingly shaping the cooperation and dialogue between ASEAN and the non-ASEAN EAS participating countries. In this regard, we underscored the need to advance the care economy agenda in the region, encompassing both paid and unpaid care work across formal and informal settings, in addressing persistent gender gaps and fostering more resilient and equitable economies across ASEAN in line with the operationalisation of the ASEAN Declaration on Strengthening Care Economy and Fostering Resilience towards ASEAN Community Post-2025.

50. We commended the initiative of the SOMSWD and ACWC in safeguarding the rights of children in the digital space through convening the annual ASEAN ICT Forum on Child Online Protection with wider participation of the private sector from the IT and Communication industries. We expressed support to further accelerate the implementation of the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action for the Protection of Children from All Forms of Online Exploitation and Abuse (ASEAN RPA on COEA) through collaboration on the common agenda, including knowledge exchange and shared advocacy on child protection online.

51. We emphasised the importance of preventing and eliminating the worst forms of child labour guided by the ASEAN Roadmap on the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour by 2025. We welcomed the adoption of the ASEAN Declaration on the Prevention of Child Labour, Including the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour during the 44th and 45th ASEAN Summits spearheaded by the Senior Labour Officials Meeting (SLOM) in close collaboration with the ACWC. We also welcomed the finalisation and adoption of the Post-2025 ASEAN Roadmap of the Prevention of Child Labour including the Elimination of its Worst Forms by the ASEAN Labour Ministers Meeting (ALMM) this year. We were pleased to note the ongoing work towards the completion of the Checklist on ASEAN Member State Governments, Labour Recruiters and Employers of Migrant Workers on Fair Recruitment and Decent Work Employment Practices following its adoption by the ALMM.

52. We expressed commitment to advancing gender equality and women's empowerment and social inclusion through robust joint efforts in implementing the ASEAN Gender Mainstreaming Strategic Framework (AGMSF), ASEAN Enabling Masterplan 2025: Mainstreaming the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and Regional Plan of Action on Implementing the Kuala Lumpur Declaration on Ageing: Empowering Older Persons in ASEAN across the three ASEAN Community pillars as gender, disability, ageing, and social inclusion rights are integral in the ongoing and future collaborative initiatives.

53. In the context of the 30th anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women, we reiterated our commitment to promote the full and effective implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

Regional and International Issues

54. We exchanged views on regional and international issues of concern, including developments in the South China Sea, the situation in Ukraine, the conflict in Palestine, particularly Gaza, the situation in the Korean Peninsula, and the crisis in Myanmar. We reaffirmed our shared commitment to upholding international law, including the UN Charter, and relevant UNGA and UNSC resolutions.

55. We reaffirmed that the East Asia Summit remains a key and meaningful avenue for dialogue towards bridging differences. We further emphasised the importance of promoting trust and confidence-building measures, and reaffirmed the EAS' commitment to constructive diplomacy that enhances regional cooperation and mutual understanding. In this regard, we underscored the importance of building trust and confidence, fostering a spirit of collective responsibility, and promoting responsible actions towards achieving lasting peace and stability.

Guests of the Chair

56. We noted South Africa's briefing on its G20 Presidency under the theme "Solidarity, Equality, and Sustainability", including its priorities to strengthen disaster resilience and response, ensure debt sustainability, mobilise finance for a just energy transition, and harness critical minerals for sustainable and inclusive growth. We welcomed South Africa's commitment to multilateralism, as well as its support for closer cooperation between ASEAN and the African Union to enhance connectivity, economic resilience, and sustainable development between the two regions.

57. We noted Brazil's briefing on its BRICS Presidency under the theme "Strengthening Global South Cooperation for More Inclusive and Sustainable Governance", including its efforts to strengthen intra-BRICS trade to narrow development gaps and foster shared prosperity among developing economies. We welcomed Brazil's initiatives to promote inclusivity, sustainability, and multilateralism, as well as its climate efforts, including the declaration to quadruple the use of sustainable fuels by 2035 and the establishment of the Forever Tropical Forest Fund to support sustainable forest management and green investment. We looked forward to enhancing ASEAN-Brazil cooperation under the ASEAN-Brazil Practical Cooperation Areas 2024–2028.

Other matters

58. In the timely momentum of the 20th anniversary of the EAS and with a view to enhancing cooperation in response to existing and emerging issues and challenges, we adopted the Kuala Lumpur Declaration on the Twentieth Anniversary of the East Asia Summit, and EAS Leaders' Statement on Promoting Localisation in Anticipatory

Action for Disaster Preparedness and Response. We noted with appreciation the work of the Group of the EAS Ambassadors in Jakarta towards finalising these outcome documents.

59. We looked forward to the convening of the 21st East Asia Summit in the Philippines in 2026.

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