



CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT OF THE 11TH EAST ASIA SUMMIT (EAS) FOREIGN MINISTERS' MEETING

4 August 2021 via videoconference

1. The 11th East Asia Summit (EAS) Foreign Ministers' Meeting was convened on 4 August 2021 via videoconference. The Meeting was chaired by the Honourable Dato Erywan Pehin Yusof, Minister of Foreign Affairs II of Brunei Darussalam.

Review and Future Direction of the East Asia Summit

2. The Meeting reaffirmed its 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 2020 Ha Noi Declaration on the Fifteenth Anniversary of the East Asia Summit and based on the established principles, objectives and modalities of the EAS.

3. The Meeting reaffirmed that the EAS would continue to be an open, inclusive, transparent and outward-looking forum that is an integral component of the evolving ASEAN-centred regional architecture, under the guiding principles of the ASEAN Charter, the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC) and the 2011 EAS Declaration on the Principles of Mutually Beneficial Relations. The Meeting recognised ASEAN's leading role in shaping of their regional economic and security architecture by promoting close cooperation through ASEAN-led mechanisms, as reconfirmed in the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP). The Meeting reaffirmed ASEAN's central role in the EAS and underscored ASEAN's commitment to strengthen multilateralism founded on the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and based on international law while enabling regional political-security, economic and socio-cultural cooperation among the EAS participating countries.

4. The Meeting underscored the need to further strengthen the EAS to ensure its continued relevance and effectiveness amidst the rapidly evolving regional and global architecture. In this regard, the Meeting recognised the continued importance of constructive dialogue on broad strategic, political and economic issues of common interest and concern in order to foster mutual trust and solidarity as well as advance practical cooperation for mutual benefit.

5. The Meeting welcomed and appreciated the continued efforts to strengthen the EAS work processes, such as through the EAS Ambassadors' Meeting in Jakarta and the EAS Senior Officials' Meeting, to ensure the effective follow-up and implementation of the Leaders' decisions and initiatives in a timely manner, including during inter-sessional periods. In this regard, the Meeting noted the role of the Ambassadors of EAS participating countries in Jakarta to discuss and recommend to the EAS Foreign Ministers, through the EAS Senior Officials, the implementation of the Leaders' decisions as well as exchanging information on regional development cooperation initiatives, security policies and initiatives, and discussions on the evolving regional architecture. The Meeting also called for the further strengthening of the EAS Unit at the ASEAN Secretariat to facilitate and support EAS coordination and cooperation..

Areas of Cooperation

6. The Meeting acknowledged the progress made on the implementation of the Manila Plan of Action to Advance the Phnom Penh Declaration on the EAS Development Initiative (2018-2022). It stressed the need to accelerate efforts to ensure the timely implementation of the Plan of Action by 2022, through the existing EAS mechanisms and relevant ASEAN frameworks, in close consultation with and support from the EAS participating countries and relevant ASEAN Sectoral Bodies. The Meeting recognised that the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the work of the EAS and caused the postponement of some EAS projects and therefore, emphasised the importance of promoting EAS cooperation that can effectively address the adverse socio-economic impacts of COVID-19 and ensure long-term resilience as well as better preparedness in the face of future challenges, including through support for the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework and its Implementation Plan. The Meeting looked forward to the development of a successor Plan of Action, building on the existing Plan of Action's areas of cooperation and current issues and challenges.

Environment and Energy

7. The Meeting took note of the conduct of EAS activities including the 11th EAS High Level Seminar on Sustainable Cities (EAS HLS-SC) held on 29-30 September 2020 via videoconference, hosted by the Philippines. The Seminar shared initiatives, opportunities, practical cooperation and collaboration on sustainable city development and was attended by more than 100 participants from national governments of the ASEAN Member States, some EAS participating countries, local governments from the ASEAN Member States and Japan, international and regional organisations, and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). The Meeting also took note of plans to hold the 12th EAS HLS-SC is planned to be held in 2022. In this connection, the Meeting noted the positive outcomes of the Partnering for Green Growth and the Global Goals 2030 (P4G) Seoul Summit hosted by the Republic of Korea (ROK) held in May 2021 and re-affirmed the need to enhance cooperation on environment and climate change.

8. The Meeting recognised the importance of a green and sustainable recovery that supports both economic growth and climate and sustainability goals. The Meeting expressed support for full implementation of the Paris Agreement, including pursuing efforts to limit the global average temperature increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial level.

9. The Meeting took note of the progress made in energy cooperation including the convening of the EAS New Energy Forum held on 24 September 2020 via videoconference and co-hosted by the Department of International Cooperation of the Chinese Ministry of Science and Technology and Science and Technology Department of Yunnan Province, China. Under the theme of "The Mission and Future of New Energy to Address the Challenge of Climate Change", the Forum enabled experts and scholars from research institutions in China, Indonesia, Japan, Lao PDR, New Zealand, Singapore, Thailand and the United States to share their research results and practical experience.

10. The Meeting welcomed the fruitful outcome of the 14th EAS Energy Ministers Meeting (EAS EMM) held on 20 November 2020 via video conference, which recognised the continued efforts of the EAS Energy Cooperation Task Force (ECTF) and noted that the Energy Efficiency and Conservation (EE&C) Work Stream for 2020-2021 is expected to include, among others, the conduct of the next round of energy audit for interested ASEAN Member States; analysis of COVID-19 impacts to energy demand and supply; review of economic growth rates in the EAS participating countries between 2020 to 2023; including Work Streams on Biofuels for Transport and Other Purposes Work Stream which were co-chaired by the Philippines and India and Renewable and Alternative Power Generation Work Stream co-chaired by Brunei Darussalam and the ROK; and the second phase of the willingness-to-pay (WTP) surveys with a special focus on consumers in three additional ASEAN Member States namely Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand. The Meeting also noted the special session among the EAS energy ministers and international organizations which discussed the energy sector's contributions to sustainable recovery and pandemic response, and acknowledged the need to pursue realistic, pragmatic and sustainable energy policies to achieve economic recovery and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The Meeting also encouraged enhancing EAS energy cooperation in line with the newly adopted ASEAN Plan of Action of Energy Cooperation (APAEC) Phase II: 2021-2025.

Education

11. The Meeting encouraged the EAS participating countries to foster inclusive long-term, life-long skills development and digital literacy and mutually beneficial education cooperation through the alignment and complementation of the related action lines under the Manila Plan of Action with the ASEAN Work plan on Education 2016-2020 as recommended by the 5th EAS Senior Officials' Meeting on Education

(EAS SOM-ED). The Meeting noted with appreciation the recent adoption of the ASEAN Workplan on Education 2021-2025 by the ASEAN Education Ministers Meeting. The Meeting commended the implementation of inclusive and quality education programmes and activities by EAS participating countries in the areas of technical and vocational education and training (TVET), including initiatives to address the digital divide, and people-to-people exchanges including through scholarship programmes and the promotion of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). The Meeting also looked forward to the convening of the 6th EAS SOM-ED and the 5th EAS Education Ministers Meeting to be hosted by the Philippines on 30 September and 1 October 2021, respectively.

12. The Meeting took note of the proposal by India to establish the ASEAN-India Network of Universities and looked forward to the finalisation of the concept note and development of the project proposal.

Finance

13. The Meeting reiterated the importance to ensure macroeconomic and financial stability in supporting economic growth and the need to consistently monitor risks and vulnerabilities. The Meeting expressed support for the further strengthening of the region's resilience to external shocks through continued regional financial cooperation and closer collaboration with international financial institutions.

Global Health Issues and Pandemic Diseases

14. The Meeting welcomed the EAS Experts' Meeting on COVID-19 which was held on 14 October 2020 via videoconference, co-chaired by Viet Nam and Indonesia, and co-sponsored by Australia, China and Russia to exchange views and practices on preparedness and response to the future outbreaks of communicable, emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases including diseases with pandemic potential, as well as countermeasures and medical treatment of the diseases, by prioritising cooperation in developing and producing effective, safe, quality assured and affordable anti-viral medicines and COVID-19 vaccines as well as ensuring its equitable access. In this connection, the Meeting took note of the ROK-Australia-ASEAN Vaccine Forum held on 29 June 2021 held via videoconference.

15. The Meeting recalled the adoption of the EAS Leaders' Statement on Strengthening Collective Capacity in Epidemics Prevention and Response at the 15th EAS on 14 November 2020 which, inter-alia, recognises the unprecedented and severe challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic and the need to adopt effective and comprehensive response to the health, well-being, livelihood and safety of our peoples and its adverse impacts on the socio-economic development and sociocultural aspects of EAS participating countries. In this regard, the Meeting reconfirmed that enhancing efforts to achieve Universal Health Coverage (UHC)– while acknowledging each country has its own national approach– with the aim to

leave no one behind is essential in containing the global spread of COVID-19 and preparing for future health crisis.

16. The Meeting recognised the importance of mental health as a critical public health issue that has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and called for greater collaboration on mental health. To this end, the Meeting supported the proposal to convene an EAS Workshop on Mental Health in the COVID-19 recovery to be convened tentatively in November 2021 and co-hosted by Brunei Darussalam and Australia.

17. The Meeting welcomed the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework (ACRF) and its Implementation Plan, which emphasises the value of cross-sectoral collaboration and maximizing the role of ASEAN centres, such as the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB) and the ASEAN Centre for Sustainable Development Studies and Dialogue (ACSDSD), in strengthening the Region's long-term resilience against future pandemics, such as through the promotion of nature-based solutions to ensure impactful implementation of the framework.

18. The Meeting acknowledged the progress of other health-related initiatives for COVID-19 response, such as the COVID-19 ASEAN Response Fund; the ASEAN Regional Reserve of Medical Supplies for Public Health Emergencies; the timely establishment and early operationalisation of ASEAN Centre for Public Health Emergencies and Emerging Diseases (ACPHEED); the ASEAN Strategic Framework for Public Health Emergencies; Mitigation of Biological Threats Programme; ASEAN Vaccine Security and Self-Reliance; and the ASEAN Public Health Emergency Coordination System. The Meeting expressed support for exploring areas of cooperation in these regional initiatives to better prepare for and respond to all hazards and emerging health threats.

19. The Meeting took note of the ongoing consultation among EAS participating countries on the Concept Paper on a Regional Mechanism of Emerging Infectious Diseases Prevention and Control as proposed by Russia.

20. The Meeting also took note of the implementation of the ASEAN Strategic Framework to Combat Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) through the One Health Approach for 2019 to 2030. The Meeting encouraged the engagement of various sectors and partners involved with public health, animal health, food security and safety, agriculture and the environment to accomplish the plan.

21. The Meeting acknowledged the progress of implementation of the Plan of Action for the ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on Disaster Health Management for 2019 to 2025. The Meeting looked forward to the potential collaboration on disaster health management through enhancing relevant regional collaborative frameworks; multi-sectoral participation; strengthening regional and national capacity and knowledge

management. The Meeting also anticipated other ongoing initiatives such as the commitment toward the goal of an Asia-Pacific free of malaria by 2030.

Disaster Management

22. The Meeting reiterated its support for 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, the scale and the solidarity of ASEAN's response. It noted the completion of the implementation of the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) Work Programme (AWP) 2016-2020 and welcomed the newly adopted AWP 2021-2025 in November 2020. It reaffirmed its commitment to supporting the implementation of the priority programmes of the AWP 2021-2025 as well as strengthening the capacity of the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA Centre) as the primary ASEAN regional coordinating agency on disaster management and emergency response.

23. The Meeting also encouraged the strengthening of engagement between the ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management (ACDM) and the national disaster management authorities of non-ASEAN EAS participating countries through the participation in ASEAN-led activities/projects including the biennial ASEAN Regional Disaster Emergency Response Simulation Exercise (ARDEX), the annual ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) Partnership Conference (APC) and the annual ASEAN Strategic Policy Dialogue on Disaster Management (SPDDM).

ASEAN Connectivity

24. The Meeting reaffirmed the importance of promoting greater synergies amongst the various connectivity strategies within and beyond the region. Recognising the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Meeting reaffirmed the importance of promoting connectivity efforts to facilitate trade, investment and service competitiveness in the region supporting socio-economic recovery. The Meeting acknowledged that the timely implementation of connectivity projects is critical to strengthen the region's resilience to deal with future public health emergencies and other crises. In this connection, the Meeting welcomed efforts by Mekong development partners to align their efforts with other subregional as well as regional mechanisms, such as the (Ayeyawady-Chao Phraya-Mekong Economic Cooperation Strategy) ACMECS and other strategies that contribute to enhancing ASEAN connectivity and Community building efforts.

25. The Meeting recalled the adoption of the EAS Leaders' Statement on Cooperation to Promote Steady Growth of Regional Economy at the 15th EAS, which acknowledges the importance of long-term development of enhanced connectivity within the region to support ASEAN Connectivity. The Meeting also reiterated that

long-term connectivity would benefit all EAS countries through sustainable and quality infrastructure, digital innovation, seamless logistics, regulatory excellence, and people mobility, which would strengthen regional supply chains.

26. The Meeting expressed support for ASEAN's efforts to effectively implement the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity (MPAC) 2025, which aims to achieve a seamlessly and comprehensively connected and integrated ASEAN that will promote competitiveness, inclusiveness, and a greater sense of community. The Meeting welcomed the outcomes of the Mid-Term Review of MPAC 2025, which put forward recommendations to enhance the implementation of MPAC 2025 at the regional, sub-regional and national levels. The Meeting encouraged further engagement between the ASEAN Connectivity Coordinating Committee (ACCC) and the non-ASEAN EAS participating countries through the ASEAN Connectivity Symposium and ACCC Consultations with Dialogue Partners and Other External Partners on Connectivity. The Meeting looked forward to the upcoming ACCC Consultations with Dialogue Partners and Other External Partners on Connectivity and the 12th ASEAN Connectivity Symposium on 25 and 26 August 2021, respectively.

Economic Cooperation and Trade

27. The Meeting reaffirmed the EAS Leaders' commitment to keep markets open, fair, transparent, inclusive and competitive, which they hope to achieve through a rules-based multilateral trading system with the World Trade Organization (WTO) at its core and by improving transparency, predictability and non-discrimination in the business environment. The Meeting underscored the importance of strengthening economic relations among the EAS participating countries with ASEAN playing a central role. The Meeting encouraged increased dialogue on common economic challenges facing EAS participating countries to further strengthen regional economic integration and narrow the development gap in the region.

28. The Meeting emphasised the importance of strengthening joint efforts among the EAS participating countries to mitigate the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and facilitate post-pandemic regional recovery. The Meeting underlined the role of the EAS in contributing to a rules-based, stronger multilateral trading system with the WTO at its core and more resilient regional economies. In this regard, Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) participating countries welcomed the signing of the RCEP Agreement in November 2020, while emphasising the importance of full implementation of the Agreement. The meeting noted discussions on possible collaboration in promoting sustainable development in all dimensions such as through measures to promote transition towards green and circular economy.

29. The Meeting welcomed the results of the Senior Economic Officials' Meeting (SEOM-EAS) Consultations held on 26 July 2020, and the 8th EAS Economic Ministers' Meeting held on 28 August 2020 via videoconference, which agreed to task

the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA) to undertake policy-based research to improve trade and investment in the EAS, including making the value chains of EAS economies resilient to shocks of EAS economies, effectively addressing the impending recession, promoting new technologies and developing a framework for EAS regional economic integration.

Food Security

30. The Meeting reaffirmed its commitment to implementing the Declaration of the 8th EAS on Food Security and stressed the need to further enhance food and nutrition security through the implementation of the new ASEAN Integrated Food Security (AIFS) Framework and the Strategic Plan of Action on Food Security (SPA-FS) 2021-2025. The Meeting expressed support for the work of the ASEAN Ministers on Agriculture and Forestry (AMAF) in ensuring sustainable food systems and implementing climate smart agriculture that will strengthen the capacity of ASEAN to address the impact of climate change on food production in the region.

Maritime Cooperation

31. The Meeting noted the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) Resolution A/RES/75/239 emphasising, in the Preamble, the universal and unified character of the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (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. The Meeting expressed its support for strengthening maritime cooperation among the EAS participating countries in line with the 2015 EAS Statement on Enhancing Regional Maritime Cooperation and the Manila Plan of Action in a collective and comprehensive approach, at the same time emphasising the need to enhance synergy with other ASEAN led-mechanisms such as the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM-Plus), and the Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum (EAMF), with a view to avoiding duplication of efforts.

32. The Meeting recalled the adoption of the EAS Leaders' Statement on Marine Sustainability at the 15th EAS, which emphasises that addressing negative environmental impacts on ocean systems, including through the mitigation of and adaptation to negative impacts of climate change, are key to ensuring the health, productivity and resilience of the ocean and sustainability of marine resources and the environment, coastal communities and thus the future. The Statement emphasizes on the importance of promoting cooperation on marine sustainability and economic development, protection and conservation of the marine and coastal environment including biodiversity, ecosystems and resources, as well as protecting people who depend on the ocean for their livelihoods from harmful activities and other threats, such as land-based and sea-based pollution, and taking action against cases of illegal,

Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing, through dialogue and optimising ASEAN-led mechanisms to address common challenges and concerns. Through this Statement, the EAS Leaders decided to (i) Promote dialogue and cooperation on marine sustainability; (ii) Promote sustainable use and management of marine resources and marine environmental protection and conservation; and (iii) Strengthen maritime connectivity.

Other Areas

33. The Meeting stressed the growing importance of security of and in the use of Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs), and reaffirmed the need to enhance cooperation to promote a peaceful, secure, open, competitive and cooperative ICT environment and prevent the risk of misperception, miscalculation and escalation of tension leading to conflict and crisis by developing trust and confidence among states, including through capacity building measures. In this connection, the Meeting noted of the convening of the EAS cyber capacity building workshop in 2020, which was co-hosted by Singapore and Australia via videoconference.

34. The Meeting acknowledged that discussions on traditional and non-traditional security issues had been increasingly featured in the EAS, and reaffirmed their commitment to implement the relevant EAS leaders' statements and Declarations, including the 2020 EAS Leaders' Statement on Women, Peace and Security, the 2019 EAS Leaders' Statement on Cooperation to Combat Transnational Crime; the 2019 EAS Leaders' Statement on Combating the Spread of Illicit Drugs; the 2018 EAS Leaders' Statement on the Safe and Security Use, Storage, and Transport of Nuclear and Other Radioactive Materials; the 2017 EAS Leaders' Statement on Chemical Weapons; and the 2016 EAS Statement on Non-Proliferation.

35. The Meeting recognised that tourism is one of the main contributors to economic growth, employment, social benefits and livelihoods of local communities, and commended the relentless efforts of the ASEAN tourism sector in implementing timely and innovative measures to ensure that the tourism sector recovers and becomes more resilient in the face of several setbacks. In this regard, the Meeting welcomed the proposed EAS Leaders' Statement on Economic Growth through Tourism Recovery to revitalise the tourism sector, and to facilitate economic growth and sustainable development in the region.

Regional and International Issues

Developments in Myanmar

36. The Meeting discussed the recent developments in Myanmar and expressed its concern over the situation in the country, including reports of fatalities and violence. The Meeting also heard calls for the release of political detainees including foreigners. The Meeting welcomed Myanmar's commitment to the Five-Point Consensus of the

ASEAN Leaders Meeting on 24 April 2021 and looked forward to the timely and complete implementation of the Five-Point Consensus namely, the immediate cessation of violence in Myanmar and all parties to exercise utmost restraint; constructive dialogue among all parties concerned to commence to seek a peaceful solution in the interests of the people; a special envoy of the ASEAN Chair to facilitate mediation of the dialogue process, with the assistance of the Secretary-General of ASEAN; ASEAN to provide humanitarian assistance through the AHA Centre; and the special envoy and delegation to visit Myanmar to meet with all parties concerned. The Meeting welcomed the appointment by the ASEAN Chair for the Minister of Foreign Affairs II of Brunei Darussalam to be the Special Envoy of the ASEAN Chair on Myanmar, who will start his work in Myanmar, including building trust and confidence with full access to all parties concerned and providing a clear timeline on the implementation of the Five-Point Consensus before the ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting. The Meeting welcomed continued support to ASEAN from non-ASEAN EAS participating countries for ASEAN's efforts in the swift and complete implementation of the "Five-Point Consensus", particularly on humanitarian assistance.

Korean Peninsula

37. The Meeting reaffirmed its support for diplomacy and dialogue in achieving complete denuclearisation and establishment of permanent peace on the Korean Peninsula. The Meeting recognized the efforts made by all parties concerned for the resumption of dialogue. The Meeting also welcomed the restoration of inter-Korean communication lines, and noted that it will contribute to further improving and developing the inter-Korean relations. The Meeting urged all parties concerned to continue working together constructively towards realising lasting peace and stability in the Korean Peninsula, including through the full and expeditious implementation of the 2018 Panmunjom Declaration and Pyongyang Joint Declaration between the ROK and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), and the Singapore Joint Statement by the U.S and the DPRK's Leaders. The Meeting underscored the significance of maintaining peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula and welcomed the ROK's efforts to advance inter-Korean dialogue, engagement, and cooperation to restore the virtuous cycle where inter-Korean relations and U.S.-DPRK relations advance in a mutually reinforcing manner. The Meeting reiterated the commitment to the full implementation of all relevant United Nations Security Council Resolutions. The importance of international efforts to bring about the complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula was stressed in the Meeting. The Meeting stressed the need to promote a conducive atmosphere to peaceful dialogue among the concerned parties, including through utilising ASEAN-led platforms, such as the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF). The Meeting noted views expressed by some EAS participating countries on the importance of addressing the humanitarian concerns of the international community, including the immediate resolution of the abductions issue.

South China Sea

38. The Meeting reaffirmed the importance of maintaining and promoting peace, security, stability, prosperity, safety, and freedom of navigation in and overflight above the South China Sea and pursue peaceful resolution of disputes, without coercion, in accordance with universally recognised principles of international law, including the 1982 UNCLOS. The Meeting underscored the importance of the full and effective implementation of the 2002 Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) in its entirety. The Meeting noted the positive progress in the ongoing negotiations on the Code of Conduct in the South China Sea (COC) despite the challenging COVID-19 situation, including the recent resumption of the textual negotiations of the Single Draft COC Negotiating Text (SDNT), which has resulted in provisional agreement on the Preamble section after delays due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and looked forward to the early conclusion of an effective and substantive COC that is consistent with international law, including the 1982 UNCLOS. The Ministers emphasised the need to promote an environment conducive to the COC negotiations and thus, welcomed practical measures that could reduce tensions and the risk of accidents, misunderstandings and miscalculation. The Meeting stressed the importance of undertaking confidence building and preventive measures to enhance, among others, trust and confidence amongst parties, and reaffirmed the importance of upholding international law, including the 1982 UNCLOS.

39. The Meeting discussed the situation in the South China Sea, during which some concerns were expressed on the land reclamations, activities serious incidents in the area, including damage to the marine environment, which have eroded trust and confidence, increased tensions and may undermine peace, security and stability in the region. The Meeting 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, and pursue peaceful resolution of disputes in accordance with universally recognised principles of international law, including the 1982 UNCLOS. The Meeting emphasised the importance of non-militarisation and self-restraint in the conduct of all activities by claimants and all other states, including those mentioned in the DOC that could further complicate the situation and escalate tensions in the South China Sea.

Countering Violent Extremism, Radicalisation and Terrorism

40. The Meeting reaffirmed its commitment to countering violent extremism, radicalisation and terrorism through the effective implementation of counterterrorism measures at the national, sub-regional and regional levels including under the ASEAN Convention on Counter-Terrorism where applicable, the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, the relevant United Nations Security Council Resolutions, and the 2020 EAS Leaders' Statement on Women, Peace and Security. The Meeting discussed the ongoing need for countries to support a sustained and comprehensive approach involving the active participation and collaboration of all States as well as

international and regional organisations to address terrorist threats. Furthermore, the Meeting reaffirmed its commitment to extend support to the region in its implementation of the ASEAN Plan of Action to Prevent and Counter the Rise of Violent Extremism (ASEAN PoA PCRVE) and national actions plans of ASEAN Member States.

41. The Meeting stressed the importance of strengthening the EAS cooperation to address these threats in a comprehensive manner, in line with the EAS Leaders' Statements adopted in this area to promote greater awareness of different cultures, customs and faiths to foster tolerant and responsible societies. The Meeting also underlined the importance of strengthening international cooperation, consistent with the applicable international and domestic laws, to address the threats posed by the foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs). The Meeting also reaffirmed its strong commitment to preventing and countering the use of ICTs including in the use of the internet for terrorist purposes and countering the spread of or incitement to violent extremism conducive to terrorism.

Enduring Regional Architecture

42. The Meeting recognised the challenges and uncertainties facing the region that could undermine regional security, sustainable development and economic growth, and affect the dynamic of an open and inclusive people-centred ASEAN Community and ASEAN Centrality. The Meeting reaffirmed the importance of the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC) as the key code of conduct governing inter-State relations in the region, underscored its relevance to the wider region and recognised its contribution to promoting regional peace, stability and security. The Meeting noted the importance of the AOIP, as a guide for ASEAN's engagement in the wider Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean regions. The Meeting noted discussions to promote engagement and undertake cooperation in the priority areas identified in the Outlook through practical projects of common interest and mutual benefit, through existing ASEAN-led platforms.

Situation in the Middle East

43. The Meeting heard concerns expressed over the recent developments in the Middle East region. In this regard, the ceasefire announced on 21 May 2021 was welcomed as a step toward creating conditions conducive for dialogue, including the need for a comprehensive, just, and sustainable solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in order to achieve peace and stability in the Middle East region. In this regard, both sides were urged to actively take positive steps to allow for negotiations to gain traction and work together towards the resumption of negotiations to achieve an enduring peace. Furthermore, full support was expressed by some EAS participating countries for the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people for an independent State of Palestine under a two-state solution with Palestine and Israel living side by side in peace and security based on pre-1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital.

Other matters

44. The Meeting noted the following proposals for outcome documents of the 16th EAS namely the EAS Leaders' Statement on Mental Health Cooperation; the EAS Leaders' Statement on Economic Growth through Tourism Recovery; and, the EAS Leaders' Statement on Sustainable and Green Recovery. The Meeting also noted that these statements are being negotiated by the EAS Ambassadors in Jakarta and look forward to their timely submission for the adoption of the EAS Leaders.

45. The Meeting discussed the preparations for the upcoming 16th East Asia Summit to be held in October 2021 via videoconference.

46. The Meeting looked forward to the convening of the 12th EAS Foreign Ministers' Meeting to be held in Cambodia in 2022.

* * * * *