



CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT OF THE 18TH EAST ASIA SUMMIT
JAKARTA, INDONESIA
7 SEPTEMBER 2023

1. The 18th East Asia Summit (EAS) was held in Jakarta, Indonesia on 7 September 2023. The Summit was chaired by H.E. Joko Widodo, President of the Republic of Indonesia. 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.), as well as the Prime Minister of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste as an Observer. The Secretary-General of ASEAN was also in attendance. The Chairs of the Indian Ocean Rim Association and the Pacific Islands Forum, as Guests of the Chair, briefed the 18th EAS on their perspectives on the regional architecture in the Indo-Pacific and its contributions to economic growth.

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 fundamental EAS 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 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), the 2005 Kuala Lumpur Declaration on the EAS, the 2011 Declaration of the EAS on the Principles for Mutually Beneficial Relations, the 2020 Ha Noi Declaration on the Fifteenth Anniversary of the EAS-reconfirmed in the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP). We reaffirmed the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific as well as ASEAN's central role in the EAS and underscored ASEAN's commitment to work in close partnership with all non-ASEAN EAS participating countries. We emphasised upholding the important role of the EAS in strengthening multilateralism and the international order based on international law. We underscored the need to promote an enabling environment for peace, stability, prosperity, good governance, and development for all through

ensuring a culture of dialogue and cooperation, enhancing mutual trust and confidence, and respect for international law.

4. We 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, we recognised the continued importance of constructive dialogue on strategic issues among Leaders at the EAS in order to reinforce strategic trust and address common challenges based on mutual trust, mutual benefit, and mutual respect. We reaffirmed the need for all EAS participating countries to promote open channels of communication to reduce risks of misunderstanding and miscalculation and prevent conflict in our region.

5. We welcomed and appreciated the continued efforts to strengthen the EAS, in line with EAS' objectives and principles to ensure the effective follow-up and implementation of the Leaders' decisions and initiatives in a timely manner, as well as to support the coordination between the EAS and other ASEAN-led mechanisms. In this regard, we welcomed the continued efforts to negotiate and conclude the Terms of Reference of the Group of the East Asia Summit Ambassadors in Jakarta which regularises the engagement between the Committee of Permanent Representatives to ASEAN (CPR) and the non-ASEAN Ambassadors of EAS participating countries in Jakarta, in facilitating the implementation of the Leaders' decisions and strengthening EAS Cooperation, as well as exchanging information on evolving regional architecture, security policies and initiatives. We also encouraged further strengthening of the EAS Unit at the ASEAN Secretariat to facilitate and support EAS coordination and cooperation.

Areas of Cooperation

6. We noted with satisfaction the substantive progress made in the areas of EAS cooperation under the Manila Plan of Action to Advance the Phnom Penh Declaration on the EAS Development Initiative (2018-2022) which was extended until the end of 2023. We welcomed the adoption of the successor EAS Plan of Action (2024-2028) at the 13th EAS Foreign Ministers' Meeting on 14 July 2023 in Jakarta, Indonesia, which is structured to focus on the implementation of the EAS Leaders' decisions and initiatives as reflected in the Leaders' Statements and Declarations. We looked forward to the effective implementation of the new EAS Plan of Action to further strengthen the relevance, coherence, and effectiveness of the EAS as the Leaders-led forum for promoting peace, stability, and economic prosperity in the region.

Environment and Energy

7. We welcomed the virtual convening of the 13th EAS High-Level Seminar on Sustainable Cities (HLS-SC) on 1 March 2023, in conjunction with the Zero Carbon City International Forum. The theme of the Seminar for this year is closely linked to the ASEAN SDG's Frontrunners Cities Phase 2 initiative, demonstrating steady

progress of actions of ASEAN cities towards achieving sustainable development, particularly on the initiatives related to combatting marine plastic debris and strengthening climate resilience in the region.

8. We recognised the importance of a sustainable recovery that supports both economic growth and 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 the Paris Agreement. We discussed ways and means to address the impact of climate change, including through the adoption of nature-based solutions and ecosystem-based approaches, sharing of best practices, and providing resources and technical expertise for regional initiatives including the establishment of the ASEAN Centre for Climate Change.

9. We also encouraged EAS participating countries to strengthen cooperation on addressing air pollution, biodiversity loss, and ecosystem degradation, particularly its impacts on climate change, sustainable cities, marine pollution and conservation, and a one-health approach related to environmental health matters. We took note of the need to address transboundary haze pollution and also encouraged EAS participating countries to support the establishment and operationalisation of the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Transboundary Haze Pollution (ACCTHPC) for the full and effective implementation of the ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution (AATHP).

10. We took note of the progress made under the EAS Leaders' Statement on Sustainable Recovery, which was adopted at the 16th East Asia Summit in October 2021, particularly the importance of a sustainable recovery that is comprehensive, inclusive, and resilient, as well as the need for promoting economic policies and growth including trade and investment, that contribute to the sustainable development and tackling climate change, as well as addressing other economic, social, and environmental challenges.

11. We took note of the need to mitigate the impacts of climate change and the need to ensure energy security and resiliency in the EAS region. We reaffirmed our commitment to take concrete actions to facilitate energy transitions following various pathways through financing, technology transfer on voluntary and mutually consented terms, deployment, capacity building and human resource development, taking into consideration respective national circumstances, capabilities, and priorities. We noted relevant initiatives such as the Japan-led Asia Zero Emission Community (AZEC) Asia Energy Transition Initiative (AETI) that support this commitment.

12. We welcomed the fruitful outcome of the 17th EAS Energy Ministers' Meeting (EMM) on 25 August 2023 in conjunction with the 41st ASEAN Ministers on Energy Meeting (AMEM) and Associated Meetings.

Education

13. We expressed support for the advancement of long-term and mutually beneficial education cooperation among the EAS participating countries, particularly in enhancing youth and people-to-people exchanges through scholarship programs, life-long skills development, and digital literacy. We welcomed the progress made in the implementation of the ASEAN Work Plan on Education 2021-2025 and its alignment with the 14 priority areas of education cooperation under the Manila Plan of Action. We commended the implementation of inclusive and quality education programs and activities by EAS countries, especially in the areas of TVET, higher education, and research, people-to-people exchanges including through scholarship programs, strengthening the competency of teachers in information and communications technology (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.

Finance

14. We reiterated the need to work together to strengthen the global economic recovery. We expressed support for the further strengthening of the region's resilience to external shocks through closer regional financial cooperation and exchanging views on macro-economic and financial developments. Considering the scarring effects of COVID-19, as well as the geopolitical dynamics, we encouraged the EAS participating countries to strengthen financial cooperation.

Global Health Issues and Pandemic Diseases

15. We reaffirmed the role of EAS cooperation in mitigating the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and preparing and responding to future health threats. We acknowledged the support and contribution of the EAS participating countries to the ASEAN Member States and ASEAN's initiatives in addressing COVID-19, among others, the establishment of the ASEAN Centre for Public Health Emergencies and Emerging Diseases (ACPHEED); the COVID-19 and Other Public Health Emergencies and Emerging Diseases ASEAN Response Fund; the ASEAN Regional Reserve of Medical Supplies for Public Health Emergencies (RRMS); and the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework (ACRF) and its Implementation Plan with the support of ASEAN Centres. We expressed support in scaling up, sustaining, and exploring complementarity of areas of cooperation between these and other ASEAN-led mechanisms and initiatives, including enhancing efforts to achieve Universal Health Coverage (UHC), strengthening coordination between finance and health authorities, that enhance ASEAN's capacity and capability to better prepare, prevent, detect, and respond to all hazards and emerging and resurgent health threats.

16. We acknowledged the significance of Strengthening Collective Capacity in Epidemics Prevention and Response based on the EAS Leaders' Statement on Strengthening Collective Capacity in Epidemics Prevention and Response adopted at the 15th EAS on 14 November 2020 which recognises the unprecedented and severe challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic and the need to adopt an effective and comprehensive response to promote the health, well-being, livelihoods, and safety of our peoples and mitigate the adverse impacts on the socio-economic and socio-cultural development of EAS participating countries.

17. We emphasised the importance of strengthening collective efforts among the EAS participating countries to mitigate the multifaceted impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and facilitate cooperation in the region toward a resilient recovery. As the region gradually transitions from the Reopening to Recovery and Resilience phases, we took note of the significant progress made in the implementation of the ACRF across its five broad strategies on health systems, human security, economic integration, digital transformation, resilience, and sustainability.

18. We acknowledged the significance of mental health as a crucial public health concern, particularly magnified by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. We emphasised the need for increased collaboration in the field of mental health. We commended the progress made in developing the 2nd Workshop on Mental Health Cooperation and Joint Action Plan under the joint leadership of Brunei Darussalam and Australia. This action plan aims to advance regional and international cooperation in strengthening mental health systems, programs, and interventions, guided by the EAS Leaders' Statement on Mental Health Cooperation adopted in October 2021. To further support mental health cooperation, mental health initiatives have been incorporated into the ASEAN Health Cluster 1 Work Programme 2021-2025. We welcomed the collective efforts under the Regional Guidance for ASEAN Member States on Strengthening the Role of Social Workers and the Social Service Workforce in the Health Sector which will further intensify mental health support to most vulnerable groups.

19. We noted the adoption of the ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on One Health Initiative at the 42nd ASEAN Summit in Labuan Bajo, Indonesia on 10 May 2023, and noted the importance of implementing One Health Approach, bolstering regional preparedness and capability in preventing and addressing public health threats, and further strengthening the resilience of the regional health system against future pandemics and epidemics through collaborative efforts. We continued to support the development of a multi-sector joint action plan. This plan will outline specific strategies and activities to effectively implement the Declaration, ensuring the resilience and security of the health system.

Disaster Management

20. We stressed the need to foster closer collaboration in disaster management by incorporating disaster resilience and climate change adaptation in supporting regional capacities in disaster management and humanitarian assistance. We reaffirmed continued support for the implementation of the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) Work Programme (2021-2025). We reiterated our support to 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, 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.

21. We expressed our commitment in strengthening engagements between the ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management (ACDM) and the National Disaster Management Organisations (NDMOs) of non-ASEAN EAS participating countries, through active participation in ASEAN-led activities including ASEAN Disaster Resilience Forum (ADRF), ASEAN Regional Disaster Emergency Response Simulation Exercise (ARDEX) and ASEAN Strategic Policy Dialogue on Disaster Management (SPDDM). In this regard, we encouraged EAS participating countries to promote cooperation in disaster management including through the realisation of the 2014 EAS Statement on Rapid Disaster Response to respond effectively to disasters in the region while respecting ASEAN Centrality. In this connection, we welcomed the successful convening of the ASEAN Disaster Management Week which was held on 21-24 August 2023 in Singapore. The series of meetings under the theme “Disaster Resilience in ASEAN – Now and Beyond”, includes One ASEAN One Response Roadshow, ASEAN Inter-regional Dialogue on Disaster Resilience (AIDDR), the 1st ADRF, the Commemoration of the 20th Anniversary of the ACDM, and the annual ASEAN Strategic Policy Dialogue on Disaster Management (SPDDM).

ASEAN Connectivity

22. We were pleased with the steady progress in implementing the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity (MPAC) 2025 and looked forward to enhancing cooperation with non-ASEAN EAS participating countries in the MPAC 2025 strategic areas of sustainable infrastructure, digital innovation, seamless logistics, regulatory excellence, and people mobility. We commended the non-ASEAN EAS participating countries’ support for ASEAN’s implementation of the MPAC 2025 and looked forward to the development of more tangible connectivity projects and to the timely and effective mobilisation of resources to support regional connectivity. We also encouraged cooperation in other cutting-edge areas such as smart mobility, smart cities, and intelligent transport systems (ITS).

23. We reaffirmed the importance of promoting greater synergies among the various connectivity strategies within and beyond the region and emphasised the need

for continued engagement between the ASEAN Connectivity Coordinating Committee (ACCC) and the non-ASEAN EAS participating countries. We commended the non-ASEAN EAS participating countries for participating in the recent annual ACCC Consultation with Dialogue Partners and Other External Partners on Connectivity held on 26 July 2023 in Surabaya, Indonesia, and looked forward to their participation in the upcoming 14th ASEAN Connectivity Symposium in November 2023 in Jakarta, Indonesia as well as other events organised by the ACCC. In this connection, we also encouraged greater engagement with the private sector in efforts to promote and enhance ASEAN Connectivity.

Economic Cooperation and Trade

24. We reaffirmed our commitment to a rules-based, non-discriminatory, open, free, inclusive, fair, sustainable, equitable, and transparent multilateral trading system with the World Trade Organization (WTO) at its core. While reaffirming the foundational principles of the WTO, we expressed support for working toward necessary reform of the WTO to improve all its functions. We also expressed our support to strengthen the WTO and ensure that it remains fit-for-purpose and forward-looking by pursuing reforms to improve all its functions, including to have a fully and well-functioning dispute settlement system accessible to all WTO members by 2024.

25. We supported the convening of the 13th WTO Ministerial Conference (MC13) scheduled to be held in February 2024 Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, and looked forward to its positive outcomes. We underlined the importance of strengthening economic relations among the EAS participating countries with ASEAN playing a central role in areas of mutual interests, such as digitalisation, green economy, global food and energy security, and supply chain connectivity, to ensure regional resilience against future economic shocks and narrow the development gap in the region.

26. We acknowledged the importance of harnessing the full potential of data and the opportunities of the digital economy, including the importance of facilitating data flow with trust for the development of the digital economy, which strengthens consumer and business trust and supports ongoing negotiations on electronic commerce at the WTO.

27. We noted the progress made since the entry into force of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Agreement in January 2022 including the entry into force for several remaining RCEP Participating Countries, and the signing of the upgraded ASEAN Australia-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement (AANZFTA) by all Parties.

Food Security

28. We reaffirmed our commitment to implement the 2013 EAS Declaration on Food Security to explore ways to increase the level of food security cooperation in the

EAS 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. We looked forward to the Implementation of the ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on Strengthening Food Security and Nutrition in Response to Crises in 2023. We supported the development of the ASEAN Action Plan on the implementation of the ASEAN Regional Guidelines on Sustainable Agriculture that will identify 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. We also noted the ongoing celebration of the International Year of Millets.

Maritime Cooperation

29. We expressed support for strengthening maritime cooperation among the EAS participating countries in accordance with the 2015 EAS Statement on Enhancing Regional Maritime Cooperation and international law, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), and the 2020 EAS Leaders' Statement on Marine Sustainability, in a comprehensive and collaborative manner, at the same time emphasising the need to enhance complementarity 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.

30. We noted the United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/RES/77/248 emphasising, in the Preamble, the universal and unified character of the 1982 UNCLOS, and reaffirming that the 1982 UNCLOS 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.

31. We recognised the need to maintain and further strengthen stability in the maritime sphere in our region and underlined the importance of strengthening maritime cooperation and exploring new initiatives towards this end. We took into account the cross-cutting nature of maritime cooperation through activities such as the 10th EAMF, hosted by the Philippines on 6-7 December 2022 in Manila, 11th EAMF hosted by Indonesia on 2 August 2023 in Bali, EAS Workshop on Maritime Cooperation with the theme "Technical and Scientific Cooperation Towards Clean, Healthy, and Sustainable Oceans" held in Manila, Philippines on 30 August-1 September 2022, and the EAS Hackathon on Combatting Marine Plastic, co-organized by Australia, India, and Singapore held on 13-16 December 2022 in Jakarta, the ASEAN Indo-Pacific Workshop on Marine Plastic Debris, co-hosted with New Zealand, in Bali, 14-15 June 2023, and the EAS Workshop on Developing Coastal Economy with speakers from Australia, China, India, Indonesia, and Russia held in Bali, 4-5 August 2023. We also looked forward to India's plan to organise the 6th EAS Conference on Maritime Security and Cooperation later this year.

Other Areas

32. We underscored 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, secure, stable, accessible, peaceful, interoperable, and ICT environment, including through capacity-building measures. 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. We further encouraged the EAS participating countries to safeguard the rights of ASEAN people, especially women, and children, ensuring their safety and protection from potential harm, exploitation, and abuse in the digital platform and greater participation from the ICT sector in finding and implementing better solutions against online exploitation and abuse.

33. We highlighted the importance of following up on all EAS Leaders' Statements and Declarations, We commend the convening of the ASEAN Summit on Women, Peace, and Security: High-Level Dialogue to Advance the Implementation of the Regional Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security held on 5-7 July 2023 in Yogyakarta, Indonesia and via videoconference.

34. As the tourism sector is one of the main contributors to economic growth, employment, social benefits, and livelihoods of local communities, we commended the relentless efforts of this sector in implementing timely and innovative measures. In this regard, we encouraged all EAS participating countries to implement the EAS Leaders' Statement on Economic Growth through Tourism Recovery which was adopted at the 16th EAS on 27 October 2021, through the existing ASEAN tourism mechanisms in line with the post-COVID-19 Recovery Plan for ASEAN Tourism. We expressed our support for the development of an Action plan to implement the ASEAN Framework on Sustainable Tourism Development in the post-COVID-19 Era.

Maintaining the Region as the Epicentrum of Growth through ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific

35. We supported ASEAN to take the lead in shaping the region's economic and security architecture and ensuring that geopolitical and geostrategic dynamics will continue to bring about peace, security, stability, and prosperity for the people in Southeast Asia as well as in the wider Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean regions. We reaffirmed the commitment to support the ASEAN Charter and the importance of the TAC and Bali Principles as the key code of conduct governing inter-state relations in the region. We reaffirmed our support and our commitments to building an ASEAN-centred open, inclusive, and transparent regional architecture that upholds international law and is built upon ASEAN-led mechanisms.

36. We recognized the strategic importance of ASEAN as an Epicentrum of Growth for the wider region's peace, security, stability, and prosperity. ASEAN and ASEAN-led mechanisms remain inclusive platforms that facilitate constructive dialogue and concrete cooperation, therefore contributing to the development of the evolving regional architecture. We are determined to further promote and mainstream the AOIP through the implementation of concrete projects and activities in accordance with the objectives and principles contained in the Outlook, in priority areas identified in the AOIP, namely maritime cooperation, connectivity, UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), economic and other areas of cooperation. Moreover, we looked forward to following up on the ASEAN-Indo-Pacific Forum: Implementation of AOIP held this year.

Regional and International Issues

Korean Peninsula

37. We expressed grave concern over the launch of ballistic missiles, and usage of ballistic missile technology, by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK). The recent surge in the DPRK's intercontinental ballistic missile testing and ballistic missile launches and tensions in the Korean Peninsula are a worrisome development that threatens peace and stability in the region. We urged all concerned parties to resume peaceful dialogue and continue working towards the realization of lasting peace and stability in a denuclearised Korean Peninsula. Efforts toward this end, including diplomatic efforts for the creation of a conducive environment for peaceful dialogue among all concerned parties, remain our priority. We reiterated our commitment to the full implementation of all relevant UN Security Council Resolutions and noted international efforts to bring about the complete, verifiable, and irreversible denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula in a peaceful manner. We emphasised the importance of addressing issues of human rights and humanitarian concerns of the international community, including the immediate resolution of the abductions and detainees issues.

South China Sea

38. We recognized the benefits of having the South China Sea as a sea of peace, stability, friendship, prosperity and cooperation. We reaffirmed our shared commitment to safeguarding and promoting peace, security, and stability in the South China Sea, particularly given the recent development, therefore reaffirmed the need to enhance mutual trust and confidence, exercise self-restraint in the conduct of activities that would increase tension, complicate or escalate disputes and affect peace and stability, and 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 non-militarisation and 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 negotiation of the COC that is consistent with International Law, including the 1982 UNCLOS.

Ukraine

39. With regard to the war against Ukraine, we reiterated our national positions as expressed in other fora, including the UN Security Council and the UN General Assembly, which, in Resolution No. ES-11/1 dated 2 March 2022 as adopted by majority vote deplors in the strongest terms the aggression by the Russian Federation against Ukraine and demands its complete and unconditional withdrawal from the territory of Ukraine. Most members strongly condemn the aggression against Ukraine and underscore the need to reach a just, and lasting peace based on the principles of the United Nations Charter, including the territorial integrity, sovereignty, and political independence of Ukraine. The war in Ukraine has further aggravated the ongoing food security crisis around the world, especially in developing and least developed countries. We note with deep concern the adverse impact of the war in Ukraine and stress that it is causing immense human suffering and exacerbating existing fragilities in the global economy – constraining growth, increasing inflation, disrupting supply chains, heightening energy and food insecurity, and elevating financial stability risks. In this context, the use or threat of use of nuclear weapon is inadmissible. We underlined our shared interest to maintain and strengthen ASEAN as the epicentre of growth for the region and the world.

Non-proliferation

40. We are committed to disarmament and the global non-proliferation objectives that promote international peace and security, and acknowledge the critical role played by NPT state parties in this regard, while acknowledging the important role of political and diplomatic means in effectively addressing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery. We welcomed ASEAN's commitment to preserving Southeast Asia as a Nuclear Weapon Free Zone and the contribution of the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ) Treaty towards strengthening regional security and stability, as well as promoting nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament.

Developments in Myanmar

41. We discussed the development in Myanmar, particularly the implementation of the Five-Point Consensus (5PC) and strongly condemned the continued escalation of violence, causing prolonged suffering for the people of Myanmar, humanitarian crisis, the destruction of houses and public facilities such as schools, hospitals, markets,

churches and monasteries, and adverse impacts on regional stability, particularly along the border region.

42. We reiterated our position that the 5PC remains as ASEAN's main reference to address the political crisis in Myanmar, and in that regard, we were gravely concerned by the lack of substantial progress on its implementation by the Authority in Myanmar, despite their commitment to the 5PC in April 2021.

43. We appreciated the ASEAN Chair's efforts and the intensive and inclusive engagements by the Office of the Special Envoy in ensuring concrete progress on the implementation of the 5PC and welcomed the Chair's comprehensive report and assessment in that regard. We reviewed the progress of the 5PC and decided on the way forward. In that regard, we endorsed the ASEAN Leaders' Review and Decision on the Implementation of the Five-Point Consensus. We reaffirmed our commitment to continued and sustainable ASEAN's ongoing strategies and approach to help the people of Myanmar find peaceful, comprehensive and durable solutions.

Other matters

44. With a view to enhancing EAS cooperation in response to existing and emerging issues and challenges, we adopted the EAS Leaders' Statement on Maintaining and Promoting the Region as an Epicentrum of Growth.

45. We look forward to the convening of the 19th East Asia Summit in Lao PDR in 2024.
