



**CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT OF THE  
13<sup>TH</sup> EAST ASIA SUMMIT  
SINGAPORE, 15 NOVEMBER 2018**

1. The 13<sup>th</sup> East Asia Summit (EAS) and EAS Lunch Retreat was held in Singapore on 15 November 2018. The Meeting was chaired by H.E. Lee Hsien Loong, Prime Minister of the Republic of Singapore, and attended by Heads of State/Government of 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 (US), and their representatives. The Secretary-General of ASEAN was also in attendance.

2. We reaffirmed our commitment to further strengthen the EAS as a Leaders-led forum for dialogue on broad strategic, political and economic issues of common interest and concern with the aim of promoting peace, stability, and economic prosperity in the region, in line with the 2015 Kuala Lumpur Declaration on the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the EAS (KL Declaration) and based on the established objectives, principles and modalities of the EAS.

3. We reaffirmed ASEAN's central role in the EAS, and ASEAN's commitment to work in close partnership with all EAS participating countries to ensure the EAS would continue to be an integral component of the evolving regional architecture, through ASEAN-led processes. We also reaffirmed that the EAS will continue to be an open, inclusive, transparent, and outward-looking Leaders-led forum that will strengthen global norms, universally recognised principles and the international order based on international law, with ASEAN as the driving force, and working in partnership with other EAS participating countries. We emphasised the importance of the rule of law in international relations.

4. We welcomed the continued efforts to strengthen the EAS and its work processes with a view to ensuring effective implementation of the EAS Leaders' decisions and initiatives. We expressed support for the important role of the EAS Ambassadors in Jakarta in discussing the implementation of Leaders' decisions and exchanging information on regional development cooperation initiatives and security policies and initiatives, and developing dialogue on the regional security architecture, as provided in the KL Declaration and in accordance with EAS procedures. We commended the contribution of the EAS Ambassadors in Jakarta in finalising the

outcome documents of the 13<sup>th</sup> EAS. We also welcomed the further strengthening of the EAS Unit at the ASEAN Secretariat to facilitate and support EAS coordination and cooperation effectively.

5. We appreciated the efforts of Singapore, as the EAS Chair, to strengthen the EAS, including to create a more interactive format for the EAS through a Lunch Retreat that promotes more candid and substantive exchanges and trust-building among the EAS Leaders. We also welcomed the launch of the EAS website to promote awareness of the EAS among government officials, stakeholders and the general public, as well as to enhance the profile of the EAS.

### **Areas of Cooperation**

6. We noted with satisfaction the substantive progress made in the areas of EAS cooperation under the Plan of Action to Implement the Phnom Penh Declaration on the EAS Development Initiative (2015-2017). We welcomed the adoption of the Manila Plan of Action to Advance the Phnom Penh Declaration on the EAS Development Initiative (2018-2022) (Manila POA), with the inclusion of maritime cooperation as a new area of cooperation. We were pleased with the positive progress in the implementation of activities under the Manila POA, and looked forward to the timely and effective implementation of the Manila POA through the existing regional frameworks and mechanisms of ASEAN, in close consultation with, and support from EAS participating countries. We welcomed the efforts taken by the EAS participating countries throughout the year to organise activities to further enhance EAS cooperation and to implement the Manila POA.

#### *Environment and Energy*

7. We recognised the importance of promoting rules-based, open, transparent and competitive energy trade and investment markets to deliver resilient economic, energy security and environmental outcomes. We highlighted the need to promote regional energy security, energy supply diversity, energy infrastructure development and the deployment of low-emissions technologies. We reiterated the importance of continued efforts toward improved energy access and affordability in order to address regional energy security and sustainability challenges.

8. We welcomed the progress made in the implementation of the EAS Energy Cooperation Task Force (EAS ECTF) work plan (2017-2018) and the work plan for 2018-2019 under the three EAS ECTF work streams. We also noted the updates on the initiative to promote natural gas in improving energy security in ASEAN and the larger EAS region, recognising its role in the transition to low-emissions economies. We noted the convening of the 23<sup>rd</sup> EAS ECTF Meeting on 25 July 2018 and the 12<sup>th</sup> EAS Energy Ministers' Meeting in Singapore on 29 October 2018, as well as the 4<sup>th</sup>

EAS New Energy Forum in Kunming, China from 29 to 30 August 2018, and looked forward to the convening of the 5<sup>th</sup> EAS New Energy Forum and the EAS Clean Energy Forum in China in 2019.

9. We acknowledged the continued role of fossil fuels including natural gas and clean coal technologies in the region and called for deeper cooperation and concrete efforts, including mobilisation of finance from a wide variety of sources, to contribute to the region's growth, energy security and sustainable ecosystems. We also recognised the crucial role of natural gas in improving energy security and helping the transition towards a low carbon future, and noted the importance of hydrogen as low emission energy source and decarbonisation of transportation sector.

10. We reaffirmed our commitment to further enhance EAS environmental cooperation. In this regard, we noted the completion of the EAS Model Cities Programme Year 3 (2016-2017). We welcomed the key recommendations of the 9<sup>th</sup> EAS High-level Seminar on Sustainable Cities (EAS HLS-SC) in Siem Reap, Cambodia from 8 to 10 March 2018, which included continuing support of the HLS-SC and support for the implementation of the ASEAN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Frontrunners Cities Programme, which builds upon the success of the EAS-Model Cities Programme Years 1-3, as well as other ongoing ASEAN sustainable cities initiatives, such as the ASEAN Smart Cities Network and the ASEAN Sustainable Urbanisation Strategy. We also welcomed the 3<sup>rd</sup> EAS Senior Officials' Meeting on Environment held in Singapore on 17 August 2018, the EAS Seminar on Environment and Resources Management in Nanning, China from 25 to 28 September 2018 and the next seminar in China in 2019, and looked forward to the 10<sup>th</sup> EAS HLS-SC in Indonesia in January 2019.

11. We recognised that marine debris pollution is a global concern and that cooperation in this area among EAS participating countries is instrumental to address the transboundary nature of this issue. In this regard, we highlighted the importance of regional action and innovative solutions to prevent and reduce marine plastic debris in the region. We noted the importance of addressing the root causes of marine plastic debris from land-based and sea-based activities, including the improper management of plastic waste. We noted the convening of the EAS International Forum on the Prevention and Treatment of Micro-plastics held in Guiyang, China on 8 July 2018. To this effect, we adopted the EAS Leaders' Statement on Combatting Marine Plastic Debris.

12. We expressed concern over the adverse impact of climate change to the economic, social and environmental dimensions of all countries. We noted the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement, for those countries determined to implement it, and looked forward to developing modalities, procedures and guidelines for adoption at the upcoming 24<sup>th</sup> session of the

Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP 24) which will take place in Katowice, Poland from 2 to 14 December 2018.

### *Education*

13. We reiterated our commitment to work together on the 14 priority areas enumerated under the Education Component of the Manila POA. We acknowledged the outcomes of the 4<sup>th</sup> EAS Education Ministers' Meeting held in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar on 1 November 2018, which sought to foster long-term and mutually beneficial education cooperation through the alignment and complementation of future EAS education cooperation with the ASEAN Work Plan on Education 2016-2020. We also looked forward to the convening of the 5<sup>th</sup> EAS Education Ministers' Meeting to be held in the Philippines from 29 to 31 October 2020, to foster dialogue on educational policies among the EAS participating countries.

### *Finance*

14. We reiterated the importance of financial stability in supporting economic growth by consistently monitoring risks and vulnerabilities. We 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*

15. We reaffirmed our commitment to the goal of an Asia-Pacific free of malaria by 2030, and welcomed ongoing efforts to implement proposed actions in the endorsed Asia Pacific Leaders' Malaria Elimination Roadmap. We also reaffirmed the importance of promoting sustainable and resilient health systems and global achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We recognised the public health challenges caused by infectious diseases and emerging threats including antimicrobial resistance, which can potentially lead to greater lives lost as well as higher socio-economic costs if left unaddressed.

16. We reaffirmed our commitment to implement the 2015 EAS Statement on Enhancing Regional Health Security Relating to Infectious Diseases with Epidemic and Pandemic Potential, including strengthening surveillance systems and enhancing information sharing and other International Health Regulation capabilities. We noted Russia's proposal to conduct a meeting of the heads of respective agencies of EAS participating countries on cooperation in the field of communicable diseases control and prevention in 2019 to strengthen pandemic preparedness in the EAS.

*Natural Disaster Management*

17. We reaffirmed our support for the implementation of One ASEAN, One Response: ASEAN Responding to Disasters as One in the Region and Outside the Region, the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) Work Programme 2016-2020, as well as for strengthening the capacity of the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on disaster management (AHA Centre).

18. We welcomed engagement between the ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management (ACDM) and the national disaster management authorities of non-ASEAN EAS participating countries, and encouraged further cooperation in disaster management and joint emergency response among the EAS participating countries. In this regard, we noted the EAS International Disaster Management Assistance Workshop hosted by Australia and Indonesia in collaboration with the AHA Centre in Perth, Australia from 8 to 10 May 2018. We also welcomed efforts to further the implementation of the 2011 EAS Disaster Management Initiative.

*ASEAN Connectivity*

19. We 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, and welcomed the establishment of the Lead Implementing Body for the MPAC 2025 Strategic Area on Sustainable Infrastructure. We welcomed the launch of the Connectivity micro-site, which will increase government, private sector and the community's understanding of the importance of regional connectivity. We looked forward to the development of links and synergies between MPAC 2025 and the various regional connectivity strategies.

20. We looked forward to mutually beneficial cooperation with multilateral development banks and international organisations to advance connectivity in the areas of sustainable infrastructure, digital innovation, seamless logistics, regulatory excellence and people mobility. We also reaffirmed the importance of promoting sustainable, quality infrastructure in accordance with international standards, facilitating access to finance, and smart and sustainable urban planning in our growing cities to improve economic growth and integration in our region.

21. We welcomed the establishment of the ASEAN Smart Cities Network and expressed support for the progress made on developing a framework for smart city development in ASEAN as well as city-specific action plans. We also welcomed the ASEAN Sustainable Urbanisation Strategy, which provides cities with useful toolkits to mitigate urban challenges. We looked forward to the non-ASEAN EAS participating

countries' close partnership with ASEAN cities as their efforts to build smart and sustainable communities evolve over the coming years. We noted the convening of the 3/2018 ASEAN Connectivity Coordinating Committee (ACCC) Meeting, the inaugural Monitoring, Review and Evaluation Meeting, the 9<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Connectivity Symposium supported by the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA), and the ACCC Consultations with Dialogue Partners and Other External Partners on Connectivity in Singapore from 4 to 7 September 2018. Recognising the importance of the use of technology as an enabler to improve the lives of our people, we also adopted the EAS Leaders' Statement on ASEAN Smart Cities.

### *Economic Cooperation and Trade*

22. We were encouraged by the continued expansion of trade and investment among EAS participating countries and noted the need for greater certainty and supportive policies to sustain this momentum. We shared the resolve to keep markets open, inclusive and competitive through the rules-based multilateral trading system, as well as improving transparency and predictability of the business environment. Some Leaders emphasised the importance of shared prosperity and being able to compete freely and fairly. We also noted the importance of efforts to improve the functioning of the World Trade Organization (WTO), including its monitoring, rule-making and dispute settlement functions.

23. We noted the discussions of the 6<sup>th</sup> EAS Economic Ministers Meeting held in Singapore on 1 September 2018 on global and regional economic developments as part of efforts to promote economic growth and integration in the region. We recognised the importance of ongoing work to maximise the opportunities of, and address the challenges presented by the digital economy, and the rise of regional and global value chains.

24. We commended the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of ERIA and its contributions to deepening research on economic integration, narrowing the development gap, achieving sustainable development, and strengthening regional health services in ASEAN and East Asia. We encouraged ERIA to continue providing targeted high-quality research on topics that highlight and address the challenges facing the region.

### *Food Security*

25. We reaffirmed our commitment to implement the 2013 EAS Declaration on Food Security to further enhance cooperation in food security. We reiterated the importance of international partnerships with relevant UN and regional bodies, sharing of experiences and strengthening public-private partnerships for agricultural investment and infrastructure development in order to attract private sector investment in the agricultural sector both domestically and regionally.

*Maritime Cooperation*

26. We welcomed the inclusion of maritime cooperation as a new area of cooperation under the Manila POA which includes practical and comprehensive action lines to promote this area of cooperation. We expressed support for further strengthening maritime cooperation among EAS participating countries in a collective and holistic manner through ASEAN-led mechanisms such as the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), and the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus), in line with the 2015 EAS Statement on Enhancing Regional Maritime Cooperation. We welcomed the convening of the EAS Conference on Maritime Security and Cooperation in Bhubaneswar, India from 7 to 9 June 2018, the EAS Workshop on the Exchange of Experience in Maritime Search and Rescue in Shanghai, China from 25 to 26 October 2018, co-chaired by China and Thailand, and the EAS Workshop on Connectivity of Ships, Ports and People in China on 26 July 2018, and looked forward to the convening of the EAS Seminar on Maritime Security and International Law in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in February 2019, co-hosted by Australia and Malaysia.

27. We welcomed the outcomes of the 7<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Maritime Forum (AMF) and the 5<sup>th</sup> Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum (EAMF) from 5 to 6 December 2017 in Jakarta, Indonesia and looked forward to the convening of the 8<sup>th</sup> AMF and 6<sup>th</sup> EAMF from 6 to 7 December 2018 in Manila, Philippines.

*Other Areas*

28. We stressed the vital importance of information and communications technology (ICT) security for the digital economy, given that an open, secure, stable, accessible, and peaceful ICT environment is critical to connectivity and the economic development of the EAS participating countries, as well as the digital economy's increasingly important role as a driver of global economic growth, and further emphasised our resolve to promote secure and resilient ICT and critical infrastructure, which can contribute to regional security and stability. In this regard, we adopted the EAS Leaders' Statement on Deepening Cooperation in the Security of ICT and of the Digital Economy, which builds on the 2015 EAS Statement on Issues Related to Security of and in the Use of ICT.

29. We reaffirmed our commitment to strengthen regional cooperation to address security issues, including safety and security of nuclear and other radioactive materials, in accordance with national and international obligations. In this regard, we adopted the EAS Leaders' Statement on the Safe and Secure Use, Storage and Transport of Nuclear and Other Radioactive Materials.

30. We had a broad discussion on the various Indo-Pacific concepts. We noted ongoing discussions within ASEAN to develop collective cooperation in the Indo-

Pacific region. We highlighted that cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region should embrace key principles such as ASEAN Centrality, openness, transparency, inclusivity, and a rules-based approach, in order to enhance mutual trust, respect and benefit.

31. We discussed the humanitarian situation in Rakhine State, which is a matter of concern. We noted the recent agreement at the Joint Working Group meeting between Bangladesh and Myanmar to commence the repatriation of the first batch of verified displaced persons to Myanmar soon. We stand ready to support the repatriation process, and noted Myanmar's commitment to ensuring safety and security for all communities in Rakhine State as effectively as possible to facilitate the voluntary return of displaced persons to Myanmar in a safe, secure and dignified way. We looked forward to the full implementation of the MOU signed among Myanmar, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to facilitate the repatriation process of displaced persons from Rakhine State. We stressed the need to find a comprehensive and durable solution to address the root causes of the conflict and to create a conducive environment so that the affected communities can rebuild their lives. We encouraged Myanmar to fully implement the remaining recommendations of the final report of the Advisory Commission on Rakhine State. We expect the Independent Commission of Enquiry established by the Government of Myanmar to seek accountability by carrying out an independent and impartial investigation of the alleged human rights violations and related issues. We also expressed our continued support for Myanmar in its efforts to bring peace, stability, the rule of law, to promote harmony and reconciliation among the various communities, as well as to ensure sustainable and equitable development in Rakhine State.

## **Regional and International Issues**

### *South China Sea*

32. We reaffirmed the importance of maintaining and promoting peace, security, stability, safety and freedom of navigation in and overflight above the South China Sea and recognised the benefits of having the South China Sea as a sea of peace, stability and prosperity. We underscored the importance of the full and effective implementation of the 2002 Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) in its entirety. We also noted the continued improving cooperation between ASEAN and China and the progress of the substantive negotiations towards the early conclusion of an effective Code of Conduct in the South China Sea (COC) on a mutually-agreed timeline. We noted the agreement among ASEAN Member States and China on a Single Draft COC Negotiating Text. In this regard, we emphasised the need to maintain an environment conducive to the COC negotiations. We also welcomed practical measures that could reduce tensions, and the risk of accidents, misunderstandings and miscalculation, such as the successful testing of the ASEAN Member States and China MFA-to-MFA hotline to manage maritime emergencies in the South China Sea, and the operationalisation of the Joint Statement on the

Application of the Code for Unplanned Encounters at Sea (CUES) in the South China Sea adopted on 7 September 2016. We also stressed the importance of undertaking confidence-building and preventive measures to enhance, among others, trust and confidence amongst parties.

33. Some Leaders underscored the importance for the COC to be consistent with international law, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

34. We discussed the matters relating to the South China Sea and took note of some concerns on the land reclamations and activities in the area, which have eroded trust and confidence, increased tensions and may undermine peace, security and stability in the region. We reaffirmed the need to enhance mutual trust and confidence, exercise self-restraint in the conduct of activities and avoid actions that may further complicate the situation, and pursue peaceful resolution of disputes in accordance with international law, including the 1982 UNCLOS. We also 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.

#### *Korean Peninsula*

35. We welcomed the Inter-Korean Summits held on 27 April 2018, 26 May 2018 and from 18 to 20 September 2018, as well as the Singapore Summit between the US and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) on 12 June 2018. We also welcomed the Panmunjom Declaration and the Pyongyang Joint Declaration signed between President Moon Jae-in of the ROK and Chairman of the State Affairs Commission of the DPRK Kim Jong Un, as well as the Joint Statement signed between US President Donald J Trump and Chairman Kim.

36. We urged the DPRK to fulfil its stated commitment to complete denuclearisation and its pledge to refrain from further nuclear and missile tests. We reiterated our commitment to the full implementation of all relevant United Nations Security Council Resolutions (UNSCRs) by all UN member states. In this context, we are committed to international efforts to bring about the complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula which will contribute to peace and stability in the region. Some Leaders emphasised the importance of addressing issues of humanitarian concerns of the international community, including the resolution of the abductions issue.

*Counter-Terrorism*

37. We strongly condemned terrorist attacks in recent months that had caused significant loss of life. We discussed the need for countries to support a sustained and comprehensive approach involving the active participation and collaboration of all States and international and regional organisations to impede, impair, isolate, and incapacitate the terrorist threat. We reaffirmed our commitment to combat the scourge of terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism, and the threat posed by foreign terrorist fighters and returnees through the effective implementation of counter-terrorism measures at the national, sub-regional, and regional levels including under the ASEAN Convention on Counter-Terrorism where applicable, the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, and the relevant UNSCRs. We also underlined the importance of strengthening international cooperation, consistent with applicable international and domestic laws, to address the threat posed by foreign terrorist fighters. In this regard, we adopted the EAS Leaders' Statement on Countering the Threat of Foreign Terrorist Fighters and Returnees.

*Regional Economic Integration*

38. We reaffirmed our efforts to enhance regional economic integration and the importance of strengthening economic relations among the EAS participating countries and ASEAN's central role in the regional economic architecture. We welcomed the substantial progress made in the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) negotiations in 2018. We noted with satisfaction that the RCEP negotiations have advanced to the final stage, and Leaders of RCEP participating countries expressed their determination to conclude a modern, comprehensive, high quality, and mutually beneficial RCEP in 2019. They also expressed their commitment to uphold a global trade environment that is open, mutually beneficial, rules-based and inclusive through the RCEP.

**14<sup>th</sup> EAS**

39. We looked forward to the convening of the 14<sup>th</sup> EAS in Thailand in 2019.

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