

Chairman's Statement of the 23rd ASEAN Summit

"Our People, Our Future Together"

Bandar Seri Begawan, 9 October 2013

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1. We, the Heads of State/Government of the Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), gathered in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam for the 23rd ASEAN Summit on 9 October 2013. We had extensive discussions under the theme "*Our People, Our Future Together*" which promotes the collective commitment of our people, bound together through the spirit of unity in diversity, to bring forward an ASEAN Community that is politically cohesive, economically integrated and socially responsible.
2. In light of the current global challenges, we reaffirmed the importance of drawing upon the experiences and endeavours of ASEAN in further strengthening the existing bonds of solidarity and cooperation to advance our common interests and overcome challenges within the region and beyond, including through consultations and consensus-building, as well as our mutual respect for fostering greater understanding and good neighbourliness.
3. These existing bonds of solidarity and cooperation underpin our resolve to intensify our community-building efforts by upholding the ASEAN Charter, implementing the Roadmap for an ASEAN Community, particularly the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) Work Plan II (2009-2015), and the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity (MPAC).
4. In advancing the frontiers of our cooperation that will be more responsive to the needs of our people and our future together, we tasked the ASEAN Coordinating Council, in consultations and coordination with the three ASEAN Community Councils, to develop ASEAN's vision beyond 2015. In this regard, we adopted the Bandar Seri Begawan Declaration on the ASEAN Community's Post-2015 Vision.
5. As a reflection of our political will, we agreed to strengthen the ASEAN Secretariat and review the various ASEAN Organs, its processes and institutions in ensuring ASEAN's centrality in the evolving regional architecture. In this regard, we looked forward to the early establishment of the High-Level Task Force on Strengthening the ASEAN Secretariat and Reviewing the ASEAN Organs.
6. We recognised the role of local governments in ASEAN's community building process particularly to better prepare our people to realise the ASEAN Community 2015. In this connection, we commended the Meeting of Governors/Mayors of the Capital Cities of ASEAN under the theme "*ASEAN Goes Local: Contributing to the ASEAN Community 2015*" held in Jakarta, Indonesia on 18-19 September 2013 which reflects their strong commitment to play an active role in the process of ASEAN integration.
7. We noted with satisfaction the continued progress recorded in the implementation of the ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC) Blueprint, which would further strengthen the foundation for dialogue and cooperation for the maintenance of peace, security and

stability in the region. In this regard, we welcomed the report of the Second Biennial Review of the APSC Blueprint in September 2013 and reiterated our political will to implement the remaining measures under the APSC Blueprint in an effective and timely manner.

8. We reaffirmed the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC) as the key code of conduct governing inter-state relations in the region and a foundation for the maintenance of regional peace and stability. We noted that the growing interest demonstrated by countries that wish to accede to the TAC is without precedent and, in this regard, we welcomed the accession of Norway to the TAC at the 46th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting (AMM) and Related Meetings in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam on 1 July 2013. We welcomed the adoption of the revised Guidelines for Accession to the TAC in Southeast Asia by the Foreign Ministers at the 46th AMM and therefore tasked our Ministers to further deliberate on the remaining requests of other countries to accede to the TAC according to the revised Guidelines.

9. On the promotion and protection of human rights in the region, we expressed satisfaction with the work of the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR). We welcomed the on-going efforts of the AICHR in implementing its initiatives and programmes, including the implementation of the Priority Programme/Activities of AICHR 2013 and the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration (AHRD).

10. We underscored the importance of preserving the Southeast Asian region as a Nuclear-Weapon-Free-Zone and free of all other weapons of mass destruction as enshrined in the Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ Treaty) and the ASEAN Charter. We encouraged the full support of the Nuclear Weapon States for the ASEAN-sponsored United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) Resolution on the SEANWFZ Treaty in 2013 and looked forward to its submission and eventual adoption by consensus. We also welcomed the establishment of the ASEAN Network of Regulatory Bodies on Atomic Energy (ASEANTOM) to enhance regional cooperation in nuclear safety, security and safeguards.

11. In working closer together to promote transparency and confidence-building on security-related policies, we welcomed the first publication of the annual ASEAN Security Outlook (ASO), which would help promote greater understanding of each other's defence policy and contains our collective outlook on the security environment in the region.

12. We noted that the ASEAN Regional Mine Action Centre (ARMAC) shall serve as a centre of excellence to encourage efforts to address explosive remnants of war for interested ASEAN Member States, and shall facilitate cooperation between interested ASEAN Member States and relevant institutions, including the United Nations Mine Action Service and the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining. In this regard, we adopted the Terms of Reference of the ARMAC, which was recommended by our Ministers. We looked forward to the full and effective operationalisation of the Centre.

13. Reflecting our deep concern over the formidable challenges of transnational crime, we commended the comprehensive work undertaken by ASEAN sectoral bodies in combating terrorism, trafficking in persons, and trafficking and production of illicit drugs through various practical measures and programmes. In this regard, we welcomed the outcomes of the 9th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime (AMMTC) and Related Meetings held in Vientiane, Lao PDR on 17-18 September 2013, and the 4th ASEAN SOMTC Experts'

Working Group Meeting held in Manila, Philippines on 4-6 September 2013. We also welcomed the progress made in developing an ASEAN Convention on Trafficking in Persons (ACTIP) and a Regional Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons (RPA) which reflects the need to urgently combat trafficking in persons in the region.

14. We welcomed the outcomes of the 2nd ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Drug Matters held in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam on 1-4 September 2013. In this regard, we reaffirmed our collective commitment in combating drug trafficking and urged concerned sectoral bodies to intensify their efforts to realise a Drug-Free ASEAN in 2015.

15. We welcomed the continued efforts in considering the proposal for an ASEAN Common Visa for non-ASEAN nationals and acknowledged that Indonesia has convened two regional workshops to explore this initiative. We therefore encouraged the relevant officials to further deliberate on ASEAN Common Visa.

16. We appreciated the efforts to strengthen regional maritime cooperation by leveraging upon existing ASEAN frameworks, including the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus), the ASEAN Maritime Forum (AMF), and the Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum (EAMF). In this regard, we welcomed the convening of the 4th AMF on 1-2 October 2013 and the 2nd EAMF on 3 October 2013 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. We looked forward to the convening of the 3rd EAMF in 2014, which would be held back-to-back with the 5th AMF.

17. Recognising the strategic importance of the ADMM-Plus as an effective platform to foster constructive dialogue and cooperation between ASEAN and the Plus countries, we welcomed the outcomes of the 2nd ADMM-Plus held in Brunei Darussalam on 29 August 2013. We particularly appreciated the ADMM-Plus for its efforts in advancing practical cooperation through the work of its five Experts' Working Groups (EWG) on Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief, Maritime Security, Military Medicine, Counter-Terrorism and Peacekeeping Operations. In this context, we welcomed the establishment of the ADMM-Plus EWG on Humanitarian Mine Action. We also welcomed the ADMM-Plus' efforts in encouraging the defence and military establishments of its member countries to set up practical measures that reduce vulnerability to miscalculations, and avoid misunderstanding and undesirable incidents at sea.

18. Moreover, we commended the ADMM-Plus on the success of the ADMM-Plus Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief and Military Medicine Exercise (ADMM-Plus HADR and MM Ex) in Brunei Darussalam on 17-20 June 2013, which was a landmark cooperation among the defence forces of the ADMM-Plus countries. The Exercise has promoted capacity-building, enhanced interoperability, and established mechanisms for effective response among our militaries.

19. We encouraged the holding of regular disaster relief exercises, in order to improve our capacity in disaster preparedness and, as such, welcomed the Mentawai Megathrust Disaster Relief Exercise (MM-DiREx) Field Training Exercise (FTX) in Padang, West Sumatera, Indonesia in March 2014.

20. We were pleased with the continued robust performance of ASEAN's economies. Last year, ASEAN grew by 5.7% and was able to maintain its level of Foreign Direct Investment

(FDI) inflows at US\$108.2 billion as well as recorded US\$2.47 trillion in total merchandise trade. Against the backdrop of weaker global growth, regional growth is expected to moderate in the immediate term. Nonetheless, in the longer term, economic activities in the region are expected to remain robust.

21. While the economic prospects for ASEAN remain broadly positive, we reiterated the need to enhance ASEAN's competitiveness and to continue deepening and broadening our economic integration and meet our set targets in a timely manner. On that note, we were encouraged by the progress of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC), where 279 measures (79.7%) of the AEC Blueprint have been implemented. Recognising the challenges being faced in implementing the AEC, we further agreed to intensify our efforts in those areas under the AEC with high impact to ensure credible integration results by 2015.

22. In this regard, we welcomed the progress in trade and investment liberalisation and facilitation initiatives in the region, such as the on-going work to streamline Non-Tariff Measures (NTMs) and to address Non-Tariff Barrier (NTB) effects of NTMs through National level and Regional level Work Programmes on NTMs, efforts to deepen services integration through the ASEAN Framework Agreement on Services (AFAS), especially the 9th Package of Services commitments and the enhancement of the AFAS, as well as the implementation of the ASEAN Comprehensive Investment Agreement (ACIA). We also welcomed the development of effective rules and regulations, such as on competition policy and intellectual property rights (IPR), to foster a more competitive region.

23. We reaffirmed our commitment to facilitate the movement of ASEAN nationals, business persons and tourists in the region to complement the trade and investment facilitation work. On this note, we commended the initiative undertaken by some ASEAN Member States in designating ASEAN Lanes at their respective airports to facilitate intra-ASEAN travel. We also encouraged our officials to continue their work in exploring the development of the ASEAN Business Travel Card as well as the easing of visa requirements for ASEAN nationals, and to report their progress at the 24th ASEAN Summit.

24. We reiterated the importance of promoting financial literacy amongst the region's people and welcomed the outcomes of the ASEAN Financial Literacy Conference held in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam on 10-11 September 2013. The Conference provided a good platform to share experiences and best practices in promoting financial literacy. This could serve as a possible basis for each ASEAN Member State to develop their own country-specific initiatives to enhance financial literacy in the region. We therefore looked forward for the regional and international financial institutions, such as the Asian Development Bank, to provide the appropriate support to ASEAN Member States towards this endeavour.

25. We also intensified our efforts to build stronger integrated financial markets. We believe that robust capital markets are important to ensure financial stability, efficient allocation of capital, harness foreign capital inflows, and develop new investment vehicles in the region. We also remain committed to spur infrastructure development in the region. We therefore looked forward to the commencement of the ASEAN Infrastructure Fund's (AIF) lending operations this year. We believe that AIF is an integral component of ASEAN's efforts to strengthen regional physical connectivity, and narrow the infrastructure development gaps in ASEAN.

26. Recognising the need to strengthen intra-ASEAN maritime and shipping services, we welcomed the progress achieved in our transport cooperation, including the establishment of a task force to monitor and promote the implementation of the ASEAN Single Shipping Market (ASSM) and the progress of the ASEAN Single Aviation Market (ASAM) particularly on the development of a framework on Ramp Inspection, Aviation Security joint exercise and the ASEAN Regional Contingency Plan. We looked forward to the finalisation of the 8th Package of Commitments on Air Transport Services under AFAS and the MOU on ASEAN Cooperation Mechanism for Joint Oil Spill Preparedness and Response.

27. We are determined to continue enhancing ASEAN energy cooperation in order to address major energy challenges and thus, ensure a secure and reliable energy supply to the ASEAN region. We also welcomed the findings of the ASEAN Plan of Action on Energy Cooperation Mid-Term Review (APAEC MTR) report, which shows that ASEAN is on track to meet most of the key targets set out in the APAEC 2010-2015 by 2015. We looked forward to the identification of key energy strategies by ASEAN to ensure the progress of ASEAN's future energy landscape beyond 2015.

28. We also continued to focus our efforts on ensuring regional food security, which is essential for ensuring broader security of the people in our region. We noted the on-going progress and achievement made in the implementation of the ASEAN Integrated Food Security (AIFS) Framework and its Strategic Plan of Action (SPA-FS) 2009-2013. We acknowledged the good progress made in the implementation of the ASEAN Plus Three Emergency Rice Reserve (APTERR) Agreement, including the establishment of the APTERR Council, and also on the ASEAN Multi-Sectoral Framework on Climate Change: Agriculture and Forestry towards Food Security (AFCC). We supported the initiation of the work on developing the post-2015 vision, objectives and goals of the ASEAN Cooperation in Food, Agriculture and Forestry sector towards 2020. We were pleased with the implementation of the ASEAN Plus Three Comprehensive Strategy on Food Security and Bioenergy Development (APTCS-FSBD) to address climate change, water resources sustainability and bio-energy development in the context of food security.

29. We reaffirmed our commitment to realise the potential of SMEs to increase their contribution to the region's economic development and to promote inclusive growth. We welcomed the revision of the ASEAN Strategic Action Plan for SME Development 2010-2015 (SAP SMED) as part of rigorous efforts to align our work with the dynamic economic landscape and regional architecture, as well as the development of a draft Strategic Roadmap to enhance SMEs across the region. We were also pleased to note the continuing support of dialogue partners through various initiatives to promote SME development. In this regard, we welcomed the convening of the Universiti Brunei Darussalam-Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA)-Harvard Symposium entitled "*SME Development and Innovation Towards a 'People-Centred' ASEAN Community*", held on 14 September 2013 in Brunei Darussalam.

30. Recognising the need for effective coordination and engagement between various ASEAN-related business associations, we commended the ASEAN Business Advisory Council for the successful convening of the 1st Joint Consultation Meeting of ASEAN Business Councils in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam on 18 August 2013. We therefore looked forward to future iterations that will further support private sector development

within and beyond the region, with the greater aim of ensuring a successful realisation of the AEC by 2015.

31. We welcomed efforts to further strengthen the IAI as ASEAN's platform for achieving equitable economic development in the region. We looked forward to the results of the Mid-Term Review of the IAI Work Plan II (2009-2015), particularly in terms of identifying concrete and practical measures to fast-track the completion of IAI's objectives and clear recommendations on future direction. We noted the continuing work on the implementation of the ASEAN Framework for Equitable Economic Development (AFEED), and recognised the need to forge ahead to attain significant results under the third pillar of the AEC.

32. We welcomed the progress of the work on integrating ASEAN into the global economy, particularly through the implementation of the ASEAN+1 FTAs, the on-going negotiations for the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) and preparations for the ASEAN-Hong Kong Free Trade Area (AHKFTA) negotiations. We were pleased to note that initiatives are being undertaken to make the existing FTAs more responsive to the needs of businesses and increase their utilisation.

33. We were pleased with the progress made on the RCEP negotiations since its commencement on 9-13 May 2013 and noted that the 1st RCEP Ministerial Meeting was held in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam on 19 August 2013. We welcomed the detailed work now underway in the working groups on goods, services and investment, as well as the development of a work programme for the timely conclusion of negotiations by the end of 2015, and looked forward to further progress at the third round of RCEP negotiations, which will be hosted by Malaysia in January 2014.

ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community

34. We adopted the *Final Report of the Mid-Term Review of the Implementation of the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) Blueprint* and welcomed the generally positive progress with about 90% of all action lines addressed since the Blueprint was approved in 2009. We recognised that this regional component of the Mid-Term Review, undertaken by an independent consultant and funded by Brunei Darussalam, also found that implementation of the Blueprint had reached a critical juncture. We noted that the Final Report complements the other two components of the Review, namely the ASCC Scorecard initiated by the ASEAN Secretariat, and National Assessments, financed through the ASEAN Development Fund (ADF).

35. We acknowledged that recommendations arising from the Mid-Term Review include strengthening the internal mechanisms of the ASEAN Secretariat, refining the ASCC Scorecard and deepening our engagements with socio-cultural stakeholders. We also acknowledged other recommendations highlighting the need for strengthened coordination through cross-sectoral mechanisms, resource mobilisation, multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder approaches, a communication strategy as part of a wider ASEAN Community communication strategy and special consideration for Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Viet Nam. Recognising the additional need for a commitment to implement the recommendations, we welcomed the decision by the 10th ASCC Council Meeting in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam on 26 September 2013 to set up a core working group to

study the recommendations of the Review to help realise our goal of an ASEAN Community that is people-centred and socially responsible.

36. We noted the outcomes of the 8th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Youth (AMMY) in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam on 22 May 2013, including the convening of the First ASEAN Young Entrepreneurs Seminar and Expo (AYESE) and the establishment of an ASEAN Young Professionals Volunteer Corps (AYPVC), which has since completed inaugural projects in Cambodia, Philippines, and Indonesia. The Volunteer Corps is a Brunei Darussalam initiative in collaboration with Singapore non-governmental organisation Mercy Relief with the aim of establishing a spirit of cooperation and togetherness among young professionals of ASEAN Member States through grass-roots community work in areas of their expertise. We also noted the recommendations of the ASEAN Youth Employment Forum in Semarang, Indonesia, in May 2013. To this end, we adopted the Bandar Seri Begawan Declaration on Youth Entrepreneurship and Employment.

37. We encouraged cross-sectoral coordination and multi-stakeholder participation, including greater civil-military coordination in emergency response operations. We also supported the convening of the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Management (AMMDM) and their coordination with the various relevant mechanisms related to disaster management in ASEAN to synchronise their activities and policies using the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) as the common platform for disaster management. In this regard, we adopted the ASEAN Declaration on Enhancing Cooperation in Disaster Management.

38. We noted the outcomes of the 8th ASEAN Ministers Meeting on Rural Development and Poverty Eradication (AMRDPE) in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, in July 2013 including the acknowledgment of the importance of participatory approaches involving our communities, village leaders, civil society, grassroots organisations, volunteers, the private sector and other stakeholders in ensuring the effectiveness and sustainability of community empowerment programmes. We welcomed the 1st ASEAN Rural Development and Poverty Eradication Leadership Awards and looked forward to the successful implementation of the 11 regional projects and activities under the Framework Action Plan in 2013 and 2014.

39. We encouraged effective implementation of the ASEAN Action Plan on Joint Response to Climate Change, with particular attention to vulnerable groups in adaptation efforts. We recognised the importance of preserving, managing and sustaining use of water resources, and call on ASEAN Member States to continue effectively implementing the ASEAN Strategic Action Plan on Water Resource Management, including assessing impacts that economic development has on the environment and people's livelihoods in major river basins including the Lower Mekong Basin.

40. We recognised the importance of preserving and managing water resources for sustainable development. In this regard, we welcomed the Chiang Mai Declaration by the 2nd Asia-Pacific Water Summit in Chiang Mai, Thailand, in May 2013, which reiterated the importance of water as an essential part of human life and the environment as well as human security and the economy. As such, we acknowledged that water is an issue affecting all three pillars of the future ASEAN Community.

41. We took note of the report of the 10th ASEAN Social-Cultural Community (ASCC) Council Meeting and welcomed the adoption of the recommendation of the 14th Informal ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on the Environment (IAMME) for an ASEAN Sub-Regional Haze Monitoring System (HMS), as a joint haze monitoring system among Sub-Regional Ministerial Steering Committee (MSC) on Transboundary Haze Pollution countries. We also took note of the outcomes of the trilateral meeting on transboundary haze between the Foreign Ministers of Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore at the sidelines of the ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Retreat in Hua Hin on 14 August 2013. We also welcomed Indonesia's commitment to the ratification of the ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution and looked forward to Indonesia's ratification of the Agreement at the earliest time.

42. Specifically on labour, we reiterated the importance of job creation and social safety nets for small and medium-sized enterprises to narrow development gaps in the region through direct engagement with non-governmental organisations and the private sector. We reaffirmed our collective commitment to further strengthen human resource development and acknowledged the importance of education cooperation to improve regional productivity and prosperity. Recalling our statement on the 22nd ASEAN Summit on the ASEAN instrument on the protection and promotion of the rights of migrant workers under the ASEAN Labour Ministers Meeting (ALMM), we encouraged ALMM to accelerate the on-going drafting process of deliberations on the instrument to be concluded according to the agreed timeline.

43. We recognised the importance of establishing an ASEAN Qualification Reference Framework, together with initiatives to strengthen quality assurance system in different ASEAN Member States as well as ASEAN as a region, aimed at accelerating student mobility and human resource empowerment in the region. In this regard, we encouraged the relevant ASEAN sectoral bodies to further develop the concept on ASEAN Regional Qualification Framework: Regional Inter-Operability of National Qualification Framework.

44. Mindful of the need for a strengthened holistic and multi-disciplinary approach that is responsive to gender and age as well as being sensitive to children, we adopted the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women and the Elimination of Violence Against Children in ASEAN. We noted that the Declaration, in recognition of the specific situations of women and children, particularly victims and survivors of violence, indicates the kind of support and services to be provided in ASEAN Member States.

45. We also adopted the ASEAN Declaration on Strengthening Social Protection, which sets out principles, strategies and mechanisms in accordance with the domestic laws and policies of ASEAN Member States in ensuring equitable access to services, social welfare and justice as well as development of social services for all to bring about prosperity in the region.

46. We agreed on the urgent need to accelerate actions to reduce risk factors caused by the four main noncommunicable diseases, namely cardiovascular diseases, cancers, diabetes and chronic respiratory diseases. We recognised that they are not only the leading cause of death in most ASEAN Member States but that increasingly younger people are affected by premature death caused by such medical conditions. We therefore adopted the Bandar Seri Begawan Declaration on Noncommunicable Diseases.

ASEAN Connectivity

47. We noted the progress in realising the MPAC and emphasised the importance of increasing its implementation rate, particularly through more effective coordination, communication and resource mobilisation. We recognised the importance of mobilising financial and technical resources, utilisation of the AIF, and the promotion of public-private partnership (PPP) especially through collaboration with dialogue partners and external parties.

48. We recognised the importance of ensuring synergy and mutual reinforcement between sub-regional cooperation arrangements and the MPAC. We also welcomed the ASEAN Connectivity Coordinating Committee's (ACCC) engagement with dialogue partners, external parties as well as the private sector in the implementation of the MPAC. In this connection, we welcomed the outcomes of the 4th ASEAN Connectivity Symposium entitled "*Partnering Private Sector for ASEAN Connectivity*" held in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam, on 27 August 2013 with the contribution of the ERIA.

External Relations

49. We reiterated the importance of ASEAN's central role and leadership in the evolving regional architecture and reaffirmed our commitment to work closely with all our external partners to ensure the maintenance of peace, security, stability and prosperity through the various ASEAN-led processes, including the ASEAN Plus One, ASEAN Plus Three, ARF, ADMM-Plus and East Asia Summit (EAS). In this regard, we looked forward to meeting our partners at the forthcoming ASEAN Plus One Summits, the ASEAN Plus Three Summit and the EAS.

50. We encouraged all external partners of ASEAN to support the implementation of the Roadmap for an ASEAN Community (2009-2015) and the Bali Declaration on ASEAN Community in a Global Community of Nations (Bali Concord III) to bring the ASEAN common platform on global issues into reality by 2022. We took note of Indonesia's idea to promote second generation external relations and dialogue partnership, with the aim of having an equal, mutually beneficial and meaningful partnership.

51. Recalling the relentless efforts of the ASEAN Plus Three in addressing the challenges posed by the Asian financial crisis in 1997, we called on the ASEAN Plus Three to remain steadfast and even more united in ensuring the economic well-being of the region. Recognising the global dimension of the prevailing economic situation, we remain committed to cooperate with the Plus Three countries in ensuring the prosperity and stability of the region, through among others, the Chiang Mai Initiative Multilateralisation Agreement (CMIM), the ASEAN Plus Three Macroeconomic Research Office (AMRO), the work plan for the implementation of the Asian Bond Markets Initiative (ABMI) New Roadmap+, and the inauguration of the guarantee transaction of the Credit Guarantee and Investment Facility (CGIF).

52. We reaffirmed the principles, objectives and modalities of the EAS as stipulated in the 2005 Kuala Lumpur Declaration on the Establishment of the EAS, and the 2010 Ha Noi Declaration on the Commemoration of the 5th Anniversary of the EAS, which underlined the common vision of the EAS as a Leaders-led forum for dialogue and cooperation on issues of strategic importance to the region, including political, security, economic and development issues so as to further promote peace, stability, economic prosperity and integration in East

Asia. We further reaffirmed ASEAN's central role in the EAS, and ASEAN's commitment to work in close partnership with all EAS participating countries, to ensure that EAS would continue to be an important integral component of the emerging regional architecture. We welcomed the progress of cooperation in the EAS, especially in the six (6) priority areas, namely energy and environment, education, finance, disaster management, global health issues and pandemic diseases as well as ASEAN Connectivity. We noted with appreciation, Indonesia's idea of having a treaty of friendship and cooperation that include a wider indo-pacific region based on the principles contained in the TAC and in line with the 2011 Declaration of the East Asia Summit on the Principles for Mutually Beneficial Relations (Bali Principles).

Regional and International Issues

53. We discussed the situation in the South China Sea and further reaffirmed the importance of maintaining peace, stability, and maritime security in the region in accordance with the principles contained in the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC), ASEAN's Six-Point Principles on the South China Sea, and the Joint Statement of the 15th ASEAN-China Summit on the 10th Anniversary of the DOC. In this regard, we reaffirmed the collective commitments under the DOC to ensuring the resolution of disputes by peaceful means in accordance with universally recognised principles of international law, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, without resorting to the threat or use of force, while exercising self-restraint in the conduct of activities.

54. We remain committed to ensure the full and effective implementation of the DOC in its entirety, including the mutually agreed joint cooperative activities and projects in accordance with the Guidelines for the Implementation of the DOC. In this regard, we welcomed the commencement of formal consultations between ASEAN and China on the COC following the 6th ASEAN-China Senior Officials Meeting on the Implementation of the DOC and the 9th ASEAN-China Joint Working Group on the Implementation of the DOC held in Suzhou, China on 14-15 September 2013. Taking into account the importance of the 10th anniversary of the ASEAN-China Strategic Partnership in 2013 and the positive progress of dialogue and consultations, we looked forward to intensifying official consultations with China on the development of the Code of Conduct in the South China Sea (COC) with a view to its early conclusion. The COC will serve to enhance peace, stability and prosperity in the region. We also looked forward to developing the ideas of establishing hotlines of communication to further enhance trust, confidence and to respond to emergency situations at sea and cooperate in the area of search and rescue for vessels in distress at sea as part of an "early harvest" package of the COC.

55. We stressed the need to maintain peace, security and stability in the Korean Peninsula, and encouraged peaceful dialogue including creating a positive atmosphere for the resumption of the Six-Party Talks. We reiterated the importance of fully complying with obligations in all relevant United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolutions and commitments under the 19 September 2005 Joint Statement of the Six-Party Talks. We reiterated our support for all efforts to bring about the denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula in a peaceful manner and reaffirmed our commitments to fully implement the relevant UNCS Resolutions to this end.

56. We reaffirmed our support for the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people for an independent state of Palestine and a two-state solution where both countries and peoples can live side by side in peace. We welcomed the recent resumption of direct peace talks between Palestine and Israel and called on all parties to make efforts to remove obstacles related thereto, in particular the construction of illegal settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territories to reach a final status agreement.

57. We shared the concerns of the international community on the use of chemical weapons in Syria which has caused the loss of lives. We further stressed the importance of ensuring the safety and security of civilians, including personnel involved in international peace operations. In this regard, we underscored the importance of resolving the crisis in a peaceful manner and supported all efforts, particularly by the United Nations, including the adoption of the UNSC Resolution 2118.

58. We welcomed the outcomes of the G20 Summit held in St. Petersburg, Russia, on 5-6 September 2013 and appreciated the opportunity to share ASEAN's views on current issues affecting the global economy, through the participation of the ASEAN Chair. ASEAN continues to support the work of the G20 to achieve strong, balanced, and sustained growth and we looked forward to Australia's invitation for the Chairman of ASEAN in 2014 to engage the G20.

59. We congratulated Indonesia for the successful outcomes of the 21st APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting held in Bali, Indonesia on 7-8 October 2013. The work of APEC, especially the key priority areas of attaining the Bogor Goals, achieving sustainable growth with equity and promoting connectivity which is the focus this year, will complement our goals in ASEAN to realise the AEC by 2015. To this end, we reaffirmed our support for APEC's work and take this opportunity to welcome China as the next APEC Chair in 2014.

60. We recognised that a strong, rules-based multilateral trading system, continues to be essential in sustaining international trade flows and ensuring the growth of the global economy. In this regard, we reaffirmed our commitment towards a successful outcome at the 9th WTO Ministerial Conference in Bali, Indonesia, which will include trade facilitation, some elements of agriculture and a set of development issues that would be a stepping stone towards seeking to successfully conclude the Doha Development Agenda (DDA) Round and providing renewed confidence in the multilateral trading system.

61. We welcomed the progress made by the ASEAN Coordinating Council Working Group (ACCWG) in their deliberations on Timor-Leste's application for ASEAN membership.

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