



## **CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT OF THE 24<sup>th</sup> ASEAN PLUS THREE SUMMIT 27 OCTOBER 2021**

1. The 24<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Plus Three (APT) Summit was held via videoconference on 27 October 2021. The Summit was chaired by His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah, Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam.

### **Review and Future Direction of APT Cooperation**

2. We underscored the importance of the APT in East Asia cooperation towards the long-term goal of building an East Asia community, with ASEAN as the driving force. We noted the substantive progress in APT cooperation and reiterated our commitment to further strengthening, broadening and deepening APT functional cooperation under the APT process. We further underlined the mutually reinforcing and complementary nature of the APT with other ASEAN-led frameworks. We also recognised the importance of the APT to ASEAN's efforts towards realising the ASEAN Community Vision 2025, the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity (MPAC) 2025, the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) Work Plan IV (2021 -2025), and deeper regional integration in East Asia.
3. We were pleased with the further strengthening of APT cooperation and commended the substantive progress in the implementation of the APT Cooperation Work Plan (2018-2022). We looked forward to the continued effective implementation of the Work Plan through more concrete activities and projects to further enhance APT cooperation, and noted with appreciation the Fourth Progress Report on the Implementation of the ASEAN Plus Three Cooperation Work Plan (2018-2022). We looked forward to the development of the successor APT Cooperation Work Plan for 2023-2027 and its adoption in 2022. We also underscored the importance of the effective utilisation and prudent management of the APT Cooperation Fund to implement activities under the Work Plan.
4. We acknowledged the significance of the APT in maintaining and enhancing peace, security, stability and development in East Asia. We reaffirmed our commitment to strengthen dialogue and cooperation in combatting transnational crimes and addressing non-traditional security issues, such as trafficking in persons, cybercrime, countering terrorism and violent extremism and illicit drug trafficking.

5. We underscored the importance of multilateralism, regionalism and international law in contributing to global and regional peace, stability and prosperity. ASEAN reiterated the value of the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP) as a guide for ASEAN's engagement in the wider Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean regions, and encouraged the enhancement and promotion of APT cooperation in ASEAN priority areas identified in the AOIP, namely maritime cooperation, connectivity, sustainable development, economic and other areas of cooperation to further promote mutual trust, mutual respect, and confidence as well as to contribute to peace and prosperity in the region.
6. We reaffirmed the crucial role of APT cooperation in combating the COVID-19 pandemic in the region and mitigating its socio-economic impacts. We acknowledged the support and contribution of the Plus Three countries to ASEAN Member States, and ASEAN's initiatives in addressing COVID-19 which includes, among others, the establishment of the ASEAN Centre for Public Health Emergencies and Emerging Diseases (ACPHEED), the COVID-19 ASEAN Response Fund, the ASEAN Regional Reserve of Medical Supplies for Public Health Emergencies (RRMS), the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework (ACRF) and its Implementation Plan, and the ASEAN Strategic Framework for Public Health Emergencies. We encouraged our health officials to continue exploring the possibility of establishing an APT Regional Reserve of Medical Supplies for Public Health Emergencies (APT RRMS).
7. We emphasised the need to strengthen APT collaboration in advancing the region's recovery from the adverse socio-economic effects of the pandemic. In this regard, we welcomed the progress made in the implementation of the ASEAN Plus Three Economic Ministers' Joint Statement on Mitigating the Economic Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic adopted on 4 June 2020 and the ASEAN Plus Three Plan of Action (APT POA) on Mitigating the Economic Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic which was endorsed at the 23<sup>rd</sup> AEM Plus Three Consultations on 28 August 2020. These efforts would further strengthen collaboration and cooperation between ASEAN and the Plus Three countries, as well as prepare the region for future challenges, and achieving post-pandemic economic recovery. We welcomed the endorsement of the ASEAN Plus Three Economic Cooperation Work Programme 2021-2022 by the ASEAN Plus Three Economic Ministers during the 24<sup>th</sup> AEM Plus Three Consultations on 13 September 2021, which could enhance further collaboration and cooperation among APT countries in the areas of economic recovery, MSMEs, trade facilitation, supply chain connectivity and resilience and digitalisation among others.
8. We underlined the importance of trade and investment relations between ASEAN and the Plus Three countries. In 2020, total trade between ASEAN and the Plus Three countries reached USD 875.1 billion, representing 32.9 per cent of ASEAN's total trade. Meanwhile, total Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) flows from the Plus Three Countries into ASEAN were valued at USD 22.0 billion in 2020, accounting for 16.7 per cent of total FDI inflows into ASEAN.

9. We stressed the importance of keeping markets open to strengthen the connectedness, resiliency and sustainability of regional logistics systems and supply chains and maintain the flow of essential goods and services including food, medicines, medical and other essential supplies. We also underlined the need for maintaining necessary, strategic, and functional interconnectedness in the region by facilitating and strengthening the essential movement of people and goods for diplomatic, humanitarian, scientific, medical, technological, and business activities. We reiterated the need for the resumption of safe, secured, unimpeded, and essential travels to jumpstart the region's economic recovery. We also discussed the need to identify joint activities that can be undertaken to promote business linkages among APT countries.
10. We expressed our appreciation to the East Asia Business Council (EABC) for their support and cooperation as well as valuable inputs in advancing regional economic integration, and urged the EABC to continue playing a bigger role in this respect. We also emphasised emergency trade measures deemed necessary for responding to public health emergencies should be targeted, proportionate, transparent and temporary and consistent with World Trade Organization (WTO) rules and not create unnecessary barriers to trade or disruption of global and regional supply chains. We also encouraged greater collaboration towards supply chain and logistics system resiliency and sustainability, particularly for industries engaged in the manufacture and distribution of essential goods and commodities.
11. We reaffirmed our strong commitment to the open, free, fair, inclusive, transparent, and non-discriminatory rules-based multilateral trading system centred on the WTO. We also expressed our support for an enhanced regional economic integration. In this regard, we welcomed the signing of the RCEP Agreement in November 2020, and reaffirmed the commitment to expedite respective domestic procedures to have the RCEP Agreement enter into force in early January 2022, as targeted, and to ensure its full implementation, in order to enhance market access opportunities for businesses and people and to enable the region to achieve post-pandemic recovery in the region.
12. We acknowledged the key leadership role of the World Health Organization (WHO) and the fundamental role of the United Nations system in catalysing and coordinating the comprehensive global response to the COVID-19 pandemic. We recognised the importance of following up on the World Health Assembly Resolution (WHA) 74/7 in its entirety, including the Assembly's call to strengthen WHO preparedness for and response to health emergencies, and supported the WHA Decision 74/16 Assembly's decision to consider the development of a WHO convention, agreement or other international instrument on pandemic preparedness and response.
13. We acknowledged the progress made in the implementation of the ASEAN Plus Three Cooperation Strategy (APTCS) 2016-2025 and looked forward to the convening of the 21<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the ASEAN Ministers on Agriculture and Forestry Plus Three (AMAF+3). We called for the enhancement of APT cooperation in ensuring food security particularly in the post-pandemic period, including through the full and effective utilisation of the

ASEAN Plus Three Emergency Rice Reserve (APTERR) and the ASEAN Food Security Information System (AFSIS), to overcome possible food shortages as well as strengthen the resiliency and sustainability of regional food supply chains and logistics systems by working closely together to ensure that markets are kept open and transportation of agricultural and food products are facilitated. We also encouraged further enhancing cooperation to achieve innovative and sustainable agricultural production and food systems.

14. We welcomed the productive outcomes of the 18<sup>th</sup> ASEAN+3 Ministers on Energy Meeting (18<sup>th</sup> AMEM+3) hosted by Brunei Darussalam on 16 September 2021 via videoconference. We were pleased to note the commitment of the AMEM+3 to pursue post-pandemic economic recovery towards sustainable development and growth by accelerating realistic energy transition, building a resilient and secure energy supply chain, delivering green jobs, and improving resource efficiency. We also acknowledged the need to explore a variety of options and utilise all fuels and technologies to ensure secure and stable supply of energy for achieving both goals of economic growth from the COVID-19 pandemic and lowering greenhouse gas emissions, and shared the view that there is no single pathway to achieve low-carbon economy, but rather there are different paths for each country. We further encouraged enhancing APT energy cooperation in line with the ASEAN Plan of Action for Energy Cooperation (APAEC) Phase II: 2021-2025. We are encouraged to explore alternative approaches for sustainable recovery, including through cooperation on the Bio-Circular-Green Economy Model and other circular economy approaches to help address common global challenges such as climate change in ensuring that growth can be achieved in a sustainable and balanced manner. In order to ensure economic recovery and sustainable growth, we called for stability in the international oil market through sufficient supply of crude oil, including increased production.
15. We noted the region's increased reliance on the digital economy during the pandemic. To this end, we stressed the need for the region to identify challenges and opportunities as the region's economies prepare themselves for the advent of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR), and to harness the latter as a tool to foster APT's economic recovery, including through facilitating cross-border transfer of information and data by electronic means, as well as strengthening consumer and business trust while respecting both domestic and international legal frameworks.
16. We stressed the need to assist people and businesses affected by the impact of COVID-19, especially the micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), start-ups and vulnerable groups, including through facilitating their integration into the digital economy, access to digital infrastructure and use of technologies to allow the MSMEs to maintain operations and enhance business competitiveness. We reaffirmed our continuing support for future initiatives aimed at preparing MSMEs for the advent of the 4IR.

17. We recognised the potentials of emerging technologies presented by the on-going digital transformation to boost the region's long-term competitiveness and improve the livelihood of its people. We supported the development of digital economy and innovative growth to enhance regional resilience. We were pleased to note the strong interest of the Plus Three countries in advancing smart and sustainable cities development in the region through the ASEAN Smart Cities Network (ASCN) and ASEAN Sustainable Urbanisation Strategy. We acknowledged the need to explore cooperation in intellectual property between ASEAN and the Plus Three countries, recognising the importance of promoting the protection of intellectual properties through cooperation to contribute to the balanced growth of the region.
18. We underlined the importance of the ASEAN+3 Finance Process in enhancing regional economic and financial stability. We welcomed the continued commitment of the ASEAN+3 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors to further strengthen the Chiang Mai Initiative Multilateralization (CMIM) as an effective and reliable regional self-help mechanism and an important component of the Global Financial Safety Net, with the entry into force of the amended CMIM Agreement on 31 March 2021. We also welcomed the outcome of the 24<sup>th</sup> ASEAN+3 Finance Ministers' and Central Bank Governors' Meeting held on 3 May 2021, and decided to continue working together to further enhance regional financial cooperation, including through the CMIM, the ASEAN+3 Macroeconomic Research Office (AMRO), and Asian Bond Markets Initiative (ABMI), as well as pursuit of the Strategic Directions of the ASEAN+3 Finance Process. We noted the need to continue to support the efforts of the Southeast Asia Disaster Risk Insurance Facility (SEADRIF) in strengthening the financial resilience of ASEAN Member States against climate and disaster risks. We encouraged the APT Inter-Bank Cooperation Mechanism (APTIBCM) to provide financing and related services to facilitate social and economic recovery in the region.
19. We commended the efforts of the ASEAN-China Centre, ASEAN-Japan Centre and ASEAN-Korea Centre to promote trade, investment, culture, tourism and people to-people exchanges between and among ASEAN and the Plus Three countries. We recognised that the three Centres had established regular consultation meetings and called for the Centres to enhance linkages among them by exploring possible joint projects in areas of common interest.
20. We were pleased with the progress in implementing the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity (MPAC) 2025 and looked forward to forging cooperation with APT countries to advance its implementation in the strategic area of sustainable and quality infrastructure in accordance with international standards, digital innovation, seamless logistics, regulatory excellence, and people mobility. We reiterated the importance of developing links and synergies between MPAC 2025 and key connectivity initiatives in the region, and noted the successful convening of the Seminar on Connecting the Connectivities: Synergy through Enhanced Partnerships on 22 January 2021.

21. We noted the successful convening of the ASEAN Connectivity Coordinating Committee (ACCC) Consultations with Dialogue Partners and Other External Partners on Connectivity and the 12<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Connectivity Symposium, with support from the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA), on 25 and 26 August 2021, respectively.
22. We emphasised the importance of cultural exchanges and people-to-people links to heighten awareness and foster intercultural understanding and ASEAN identity in the region. In this regard, we encouraged the effective implementation of the projects under the ASEAN Plus Three Work Plan on Cooperation in Culture and Arts 2019-2021. Noting that the existing Work Plan is nearing its completion in 2021, we called for the development of a new Work Plan. We also looked forward to the promotion of the 10+3 Network of Culture Cities and City-Level Exchanges especially through the Network of APT Culture Cities.
23. We reaffirmed our commitment in implementing the priority areas of APT health cooperation, which includes Universal Health Coverage, utilising ICT for healthcare, prevention and control of non-communicable diseases, traditional and complementary medicine, health and active ageing, human resources for health, responding to communicable and emerging health threats and food safety, as well as issues related to antimicrobial resistance, ending all forms of malnutrition, and disaster health management.
24. We commended the efforts of the APT Health Ministers Meeting and noted the multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder collaborative activities to be undertaken in promoting healthy and active ageing as complemented by the establishment of the ASEAN Centre for Active Ageing and Innovation (ACAI) in which the agreement entered into force in 2020. We acknowledged the efforts in strengthening the healthcare and welfare system under the Asia Health and Wellbeing Initiative (AHWIN). We noted the commitment of the APT health sectors in continuing efforts on the implementation of the International Health Regulations (IHR) (2005) and the Asia Pacific Strategy for Emerging Diseases and Public Health Emergencies (APSED III) to enhance ASEAN Member States and the Plus Three countries' capacity to prevent, detect, and respond to public health threats.
25. We welcomed the continued commitment of the APT Health Ministers made at their meeting via videoconference on 7 April 2020 in enhancing free, open, transparent and timely sharing of information, data and expertise on COVID-19 prevention, detection, control and response measures, epidemiologic surveillance updates, risk assessment results, epidemiological and clinical studies on the virus and the disease, treatment experience, including the application of traditional medicine and technical guidelines. We also recognised the importance of cooperation in development, manufacturing and distribution of diagnostics, anti-viral medicines, therapeutics and vaccines, adhering to the objectives of efficiency, safety, quality, equal accessibility and affordability, as well as to consider ASEAN's potential as a regional vaccine hub. We noted the role of the

Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI), the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (GAVI) and the International Vaccine Institute (IVI), as well as the COVID-19 Vaccine Global Access (COVAX) Facility and Advance Market Commitment in developing and delivering vaccines. We also emphasised the need to expand vaccine cooperation, including through vaccine research, development as well as procurement, and promote vaccine multilateralism, equitable access to and accelerate production and distribution of safe, effective, quality and affordable vaccines among APT countries, given the rise in COVID-19 variants. We encouraged continuing commitment, after overcoming the challenges related to COVID-19 and revitalising national health systems, on collaboration in learning from the regional and national experiences in responding to COVID-19 challenges, as well as to further strengthen and institutionalise preparedness, surveillance, prevention, detection and response mechanisms of the ASEAN and Plus Three countries on public health emergencies and other crises.

26. We recognised the importance of mental health as a critical public health issue which has been exacerbated by disasters and public health emergencies and other emerging and unprecedented crises, including the COVID-19 pandemic. We commended the priority accorded by the ASEAN Health Sector in the promotion of mental health through its ASEAN Post-2015 Health Development Agenda. In addition, we adopted the APT Leaders' Statement on Cooperation on Mental Health Amongst Adolescents and Young Children, and looked forward to the conduct of a regional workshop on the sharing of best practices on mental health promotion in school settings amongst APT countries in the first quarter of 2022.
27. We reiterated the commitment to advance cooperation in promoting sustainable, inclusive and innovative development, as well as in strengthening cooperation with all stakeholders, including the private sector, to achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We support ASEAN's efforts in narrowing the development gap and promoting sustainable and equitable development across the ASEAN Community including through aligning sub-regional growth with the comprehensive development of ASEAN. We reaffirmed our commitment to forge closer cooperation in poverty alleviation and welcomed the continued progress of the East Asia Poverty Reduction Cooperation Initiative. We called for the development of collaborative projects to protect and conserve the environment and biodiversity, promote sustainable use of natural resources, including water resource management and sustainable development of mineral resources, and to address climate change and the issue of marine plastic debris. In this regard, we welcomed the continuous contribution of the Plus Three countries to reduce marine debris through the ASEAN Plus Three Marine Plastic Debris Cooperative Action Initiative. We welcomed in particular activities of the Regional Knowledge Centre for Marine Plastic Debris (RKC-MPD) of the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA) to address the marine plastic issue, as well as collective efforts towards the achievement of Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP). We noted with appreciation the activities of the Private Sector

Platform by RKC-MPD to promote the collaboration between policymakers and business sectors to tackle the marine plastic issue.

28. We were encouraged by the progress of cooperation on social welfare and development through the SOMSWD+3 platform. We reaffirmed our commitment to forging ahead with the implementation of the *ASEAN Regional Framework and Action Plan on Implementing the ASEAN Declaration on Strengthening Social Protection and the ASEAN Enabling Masterplan 2025: Mainstreaming the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* with the emphasis on strengthening social protection systems for vulnerable groups to ensure access to much needed public goods and services. We looked forward to the roll-out of the Ha Noi Declaration on Strengthening Social Work Towards Cohesive and Responsive ASEAN Community particularly the development and implementation of the declaration's roadmap. We likewise looked forward to the development of regional plans of action to implement the *Declaration on the Protection of Children from all Forms of Online Exploitation and Abuse in ASEAN*, and the *ASEAN Declaration on the Rights of Children in the Context of Migration*.
29. We reaffirmed our commitment in promoting gender equality and empowerment of women and girls through the ACW+3 platform. We commended the continued efforts of ACW to forge ahead with gender mainstreaming efforts across the ASEAN Community Pillars and with advancing Women, Peace and Security. We looked forward to the finalisation of the ASEAN Gender Mainstreaming Strategic Framework and the finalisation of the Regional Plan of Action on Women, Peace and Security in ASEAN. We shared the need to work closely to strengthen gender data and statistics for evidence-informed policy and program.
30. We reiterated the need for an enabling environment with supporting instruments that would facilitate student mobility with quality assurance among the APT countries. In this regard, we looked forward to the adoption of Guide on Making Information Available to Promote Student Mobility in ASEAN Plus Three Region and the finalisation of the APT Joint Guidelines on the Institutional Provision for New Modes of Higher Education in the ASEAN Plus Three Region. We also noted with appreciation the substantive progress made in the implementation of the APT Plan of Action on Education 2018-2025.
31. We welcomed the convening of the 11<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Plus Three Senior Officials Meeting on Education (SOMED+3) and the 5<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Plus Three Education Ministers Meeting hosted by the Philippines on 30 September and 1 October 2021 respectively. We recognised the need to address the profound impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on our national education systems and regional education cooperation.
32. We commended the efforts of the APT Ministerial Meeting on Youth in providing greater access for engagement among youth in APT countries and establishing effective communication through various annual youth exchanges and community immersions which provided an opportunity for meaningful cross-cultural understanding. We commended the commitment of ASEAN Youth Ministers in further strengthening APT

collaborations on youth development with a view to addressing the challenges of Industry 4.0, digitalisation and the evolving demand of the labour market and noted with satisfaction the contribution of youth empowerment activities and people-to-people exchange programmes among APT countries. We welcomed the endorsement of the APT Work Plan on Youth 2021-2025 by the APT Senior Officials' Meeting on Youth to support APT initiatives in youth development and looked forward to its adoption by the APT Ministerial Meeting on Youth.

33. We commended the steady progress of implementation of the ASEAN Plus Three Cooperation on Civil Service Matters (ACCSM+3) Work Plan 2016-2020 which laid down the groundwork to advance the work of ACCSM+3 through the commitments made under the ACCSM+3 Work Plan 2021-2025 that cover areas of mutual interests including e-governance, human resource management and human resource development, productivity in public sector, good governance, public sector reform, local administration capacity building and cooperation, and research and innovation. We supported the ASEAN Declaration on Fostering Civil Service's Adaptability to the New Challenges that was adopted by ACCSM. On this note, we welcomed the initiatives supported by the APT Cooperation Fund that sought to strengthen the overall capabilities of the ASEAN Civil Services, including the ongoing Baseline Study on Governance Systems among APT Countries and the adoption of the ASEAN Guidelines on Public Service Delivery. We also welcomed the adoption of the ASEAN Cooperation on Civil Service Matters Framework of Strategic Partnerships to guide Member States in building partnerships with other ASEAN sectoral bodies and external parties, including APT countries, in promoting good governance principles, agile civil service in the digital era, and other areas of mutual interest pertaining to civil service matters.
34. We noted the strengthening of the APT cooperation in the labour sector through the adoption of the first APT Senior Labour Officials Meeting (SLOM+3) Work Plan 2021-2025 that covered the areas of human resources development, inclusive growth, sustainable development as a response to the ASEAN economic integration, social dialogue, and occupational safety and health in the workplace, and social protection. We looked forward to the effective implementation of the Work Plan through practical activities and projects. We appreciated the support of the Republic of Korea (ROK) to the development and implementation of the ASEAN Guidelines on Gender Mainstreaming into Labour and Employment Policies to Promote Decent Work for All and the Project on Enhancing the Competitiveness of ASEAN Human Resources through Responsive TVET Curriculum supported by Involvement of Industries and Labour Market Information. We also appreciated the support of Japan to the implementation of the ASEAN Guiding Principles for Quality Assurance and Recognition of Competency Certification Systems (Phase 2). We supported the implementation of initiatives in the Roadmap of ASEAN Declaration on Human Resources Development for the Changing World of Work and welcomed the collaboration with the APT countries.
35. We encouraged the enhancement of regional cooperation on disaster management and emergency response, particularly to support the implementation of the AADMER Work

Programme 2021-2025 and the ASEAN Declaration on One ASEAN One Response, by promoting cooperation on policy coordination, information exchanges and conducting joint training to enhance disaster management capabilities, reduce disaster risks and losses in the region, as well as supporting regional capacities in disaster management and emergency response, and addressing their disruptions to the socio-economic development. Cognisant of the importance of nurturing a mutually beneficial and collaborative relationship with ASEAN's partners in the field of disaster management, we welcomed the inaugural ASEAN-China Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Management (AMMDM Plus China) and the ASEAN-Japan Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Management (AMMDM Plus Japan) on 14 October 2021. We also looked forward to the establishment of the ASEAN-ROK Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Management (AMMDM Plus ROK) in 2022.

36. We noted the successful convening of the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of Deans and Directors of Diplomatic Training Institutions of ASEAN Plus Three, hosted virtually by the Foreign Service Training Institute of Japan on 9 March 2021, where useful discussions were held on strengthening knowledge and information sharing, as well as enhancing cooperation among the institutions in the COVID-19 era. We further noted the 2<sup>nd</sup> Young Diplomats Seminar with the theme of "Global Health Agenda and COVID-19", held online alongside on 8 March 2021, as part of the said Meeting.
37. We acknowledged the important contribution of the East Asia Forum (EAF) as a Track 1.5 level platform for government, business, academia and think tanks to further deepen East Asia cooperation. In this regard, we welcomed the convening of the 19<sup>th</sup> EAF under the theme "Working Towards an Inclusive and Resilient Recovery from COVID-19 in East Asia", to be hosted by the ROK in December 2021.
38. We also recognised the important contributions of the Network of East Asia Think-Tanks (NEAT) towards APT cooperation. We welcomed the outcomes of the 33<sup>rd</sup> NEAT Country Coordinators Meeting (NEAT-CCM) on 20 April 2021 and 34<sup>th</sup> NEAT-CCM on 1 September 2021, and the five NEAT working group meetings on various topics held this year, which advocated for regional preparedness and resilience in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, with a focus on helping MSMEs and working towards sustainable development in the region.
39. We also underscored the importance of forging closer cooperation in other areas such as science, technology and innovation, tourism, media, food and energy security, and minerals. We looked forward to the implementation of the APT Tourism Cooperation Work Plan 2021-2025, which focuses on strengthening the APT tourism cooperation in the next 5 years and prioritising the recovery of tourism in the APT region. In this regard, we tasked the APT tourism senior officials to develop strategic cooperation programmes, taking into account new dynamics in the industry and to explore innovative ways to revitalise the tourism sector in the post-COVID19 pandemic in collaboration with all stakeholders including the private sector. We also welcomed the convening of the 3<sup>rd</sup> APT Young Scientists Collaborative Innovation Forum on 9 September 2021. In

addition, we encouraged the APT countries to explore closer cooperation in other areas such as supporting MSMEs, environment, climate change, climate resilience of agricultural production, digital transformation, cyber security, data protection, human resource development, women empowerment and gender equality, disaster management and narrowing the development gap.

## **Regional and International Issues**

### *Developments in Myanmar*

40. We discussed the recent developments in Myanmar and expressed concern over the situation in the country, including reports of fatalities and violence. We also heard calls for the release of political detainees including foreigners. We called on Myanmar to fulfil its commitment to the Five-Point Consensus of the ASEAN Leaders' Meeting on 24 April 2021 and acceptance for the timely and complete implementation of the Five-Point Consensus, namely, the immediate cessation of violence in Myanmar and all parties to exercise utmost restraint; constructive dialogue among all parties concerned shall commence to seek a peaceful solution in the interests of the people; the Special Envoy of the ASEAN Chair to facilitate mediation of the dialogue process, with the assistance of the Secretary-General of ASEAN; ASEAN to provide humanitarian assistance through the AHA Centre; and the Special Envoy and delegation to visit Myanmar to meet with all parties concerned. We welcomed the efforts by the Special Envoy of the ASEAN Chair on Myanmar and called on all parties concerned in Myanmar to swiftly and fully implement the Five-Point Consensus, including by facilitating the visit of the Special Envoy to Myanmar to build trust and confidence with full access to all parties concerned. We welcomed the provision of humanitarian assistance to the people of Myanmar through the AHA Centre. We welcomed the continued support from our external partners, including China, Japan and the ROK, for ASEAN's efforts in the swift and complete implementation of the Five-Point Consensus, particularly on humanitarian assistance.

### *Korean Peninsula*

41. We reaffirmed our support for diplomacy and dialogue in achieving complete denuclearisation and establishment of permanent peace on the Korean Peninsula. We recognised the efforts made by all parties concerned to resume dialogue and advance the peace process on the Korean Peninsula over the past four years. We stressed the importance of continued sustainable peaceful dialogue amongst all parties concerned in order to achieve peace and stability in a denuclearised Korean Peninsula. We also welcomed the restoration of inter-Korean communication lines and acknowledged that it will contribute to further improving and developing the inter-Korean relations. We urged all parties concerned to continue working together constructively towards the complete denuclearisation and permanent peace on the Korean Peninsula, including through the full and expeditious implementation of the 2018 Panmunjom Declaration,

the Pyongyang Joint Declaration between the ROK and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), and the Singapore Joint Statement by the Leaders of the United States and the DPRK. We underscored the significance of maintaining peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula and welcomed the ROK's efforts to advance inter-Korean dialogue, engagement, and cooperation to restore the virtuous cycle where inter-Korean relations and U.S.-DPRK relations advance in a mutually reinforcing manner. We reiterated our commitment to the full implementation of all relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions. The importance of international efforts to bring about the complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula was stressed in the Meeting. We stressed the need to promote a conducive atmosphere to peaceful dialogue among the concerned partners, including through utilising ASEAN-led platforms. We noted views expressed by some Leaders on the importance of addressing the humanitarian concerns of the international community, including the immediate resolution of the abductions issues.

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