



Statement by

**The delegation of the Lao PDR to the United Nations
on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)**

At the Plenary Meeting of the 79th Session of
the United Nations General Assembly

On Agenda Item 72: Strengthening of the coordination of
humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations,
including special economic assistance

New York, 9 December 2024

(Please check against delivery)

Mr. President,

1. I have the honor to deliver this statement on behalf of the Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).
2. At the outset, ASEAN appreciates Mr. Secretary-General and commends him for his comprehensive reports, highlighting the organization's efforts in strengthening coordination for humanitarian and disaster relief assistance.
3. ASEAN is concerned with the increasing complexities of humanitarian emergencies and situations occurring in different parts of the world. Many countries recently encountered more severe impacts from intensified climate-related events and disasters. The conflict-driven crises, in addition, have continued to expand in some regions, exacerbating the already dire humanitarian needs and response. With a growing funding gap based on the Secretary-General's report, the scale of needs and challenges caused by increasingly frequent, severe and protracted climate disasters and conflict crises stretches the ability of relevant UN bodies and other humanitarian organizations to navigate the ongoing difficulties.

Mr. President,

4. ASEAN attaches the importance of collaboration between the UN and ASEAN, especially in light of climate change and increasing disasters. The cooperation with the UN in disaster risk reduction and management remains our priority under the Joint Strategic Plan of Action on Disaster Management 2021-2025 (JSPADM IV). We appreciate the UN's continued cooperation in strengthening ASEAN-UN collaboration, including through the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA Centre) to strengthen ASEAN's disaster response capacities. ASEAN continues to encourage the UN to further collaborate on building disaster resilience in the region, particularly through the preparation for the JSPADM V as well as on the implementation of ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on Sustainable Resilience.

5. We commend the work of the UN system, in particular the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), for its tireless work in providing aid and assistance to affected Member States. ASEAN acknowledges OCHA's continued long-standing programming designed to mobilize a wide range of partners in support of disaster preparedness and response. On this note, ASEAN is ready to accelerate disaster resilience-building by strengthening cross-sectoral collaboration with the region.

Mr. President,

6. ASEAN expresses its grave concern over the dire humanitarian situation in Gaza, which has been exacerbated following the 7 October attacks. We condemn all attacks against civilians and civilian infrastructure, which have resulted in an alarming number of casualties, leading to further deterioration of the humanitarian crisis. We commended the efforts of various ASEAN Member States in providing humanitarian assistance to Gaza and urged all ASEAN Member States and our external partners to continue providing and facilitating such assistance for Gaza.
7. ASEAN supports the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) in the execution of its mandate and the UN Senior Humanitarian and Reconstruction Coordinator for Gaza to discharge her task effectively and efficiently, and to begin the work on post-conflict resolution. We call on all parties to the conflict to protect civilians and to abide by international humanitarian law and international human rights laws. ASEAN urged all relevant parties to accept the ceasefire proposal as outlined in paragraph 2 of UN Security Council Resolution 2735. We called for rapid, safe, unimpeded and sustained humanitarian access to all those in need, including through increased capacity at border crossings, including by sea. We also call for the immediate and unconditional release of all hostages, especially ASEAN nationals, women, children, the sick, and the elderly.
8. Furthermore, ASEAN also expresses great concern over the escalation of tension in the Middle East. We urge all parties concerned to work towards a peaceful resolution to the conflict with a view to realizing the two-State solution in accordance with international law and the relevant UN Security Council and UN General Assembly resolutions. We take this

opportunity to continue calling on all parties concerned to exercise self-restraint, avoid acts that may aggravate the situation, and resolve differences through diplomacy and dialogue in the interest of maintaining peace and stability in the region.

Mr. President,

9. As for ASEAN itself, we have also been experiencing a rise in complex humanitarian situations, emerging from natural and human-induced disasters. Recognized as one of the most disaster-prone regions, ASEAN prioritizes addressing disaster risks as a top priority.
10. We have in place the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) which serves as the foundational policy for member states, promoting collaborative efforts to mitigate disaster risks and enhance response strategies across the region. Achievements were made in 2024 across all Priority Programmes of the AADMER Work Programme 2021-2025, which include several reports and training programmes on strengthening and building capacities under relevant disaster management ASEAN frameworks and mechanisms.
11. Building on past achievements, this year's ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Management (AMMDM) launched the ASEAN Ministerial Declaration on Building a Resilient ASEAN through Inclusive and Sustainable Disaster Recovery, in line with the theme of Brunei Darussalam's AMMDM Chairmanship. The Declaration reiterates ASEAN's resolve to further strengthen the capacity of ASEAN Member States to recover from disasters and to strengthen and harmonize regional early warning system components, accelerate the implementation of Resilient Recovery and explore innovative ways in financing recovery, among others.
12. In this same spirit, we remain committed to strengthening ASEAN's capacity for disaster response through the ASEAN Declaration on One ASEAN One Response: ASEAN Responding to Disasters as One in the Region and Outside the Region including through support for the AHA Centre. The operationalization of this Declaration and the ASEAN Vision 2025 on Disaster Management, both underline ASEAN's foundational aspirations to achieve faster response, mobilize greater resources and

establish stronger coordination to ensure an effective collective response to disasters, and to become a global leader in disaster management.

13. Furthermore, ASEAN reiterates the importance of continuously strengthening resilience to disasters in the region through a holistic, cross-pillar and cross-sectoral approach, in line with the Bandar Seri Begawan Declaration on the Strategic and Holistic Initiative to Link ASEAN Responses to Emergencies and Disaster (ASEAN SHIELD) and the ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on Sustainable Resilience. Efforts have been made to further strengthen ASEAN's disaster management capacity through the ASEAN Capacity Building Roadmap 2025-2030 on Disaster Management.

Mr. President,

14. In conclusion, ASEAN remains committed to its ongoing efforts to strengthen and enhance our disaster management risk and response capabilities. The safety and well-being of our people are paramount, and through our continued commitment to enhancing disaster management capabilities, we aim to create a secure environment where communities can thrive despite the challenges posed by disasters. Together, we will work towards a resilient future for the ASEAN region, ensuring that our societies are not only prepared for emergencies but also capable of recovering swiftly and effectively.

I thank you.