



Statement by

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on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)**

before the Second Committee, 77th Session of the United Nations
General Assembly

On Agenda Item 21: Group of Countries in Special Situations

- (a) Follow-up to the Fifth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries;
- (b) Follow-up to the Second United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries.

New York, 13 October 2022

(Please check against delivery)

Madam. Chair,

1. I have the honor to deliver this statement on behalf of the Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).
2. ASEAN aligns itself with the statement made by the distinguished representative of Pakistan on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Madam Chair,

3. This is another year in which the international community is confronted with an unprecedented global health crisis, environmental factor and geopolitical tension. In particular, the group of countries in special situations who have already faced with narrow and weak economic structure, fragile health systems and limited coverage of social protection systems and limited financial resources. LDCs are most likely to suffer the severe consequences of the projected global economic slowdown. Similarly, LLDCs face even greater problems, given their lack of territorial access to the sea, remoteness from international markets, and dependency on transit nations.
4. This hinders their efforts to meet the agreed global development agendas. For this reason, the development of LDCs and LLDCs must be given a top priority as their needs and challenges would hardly be overcome by themselves. Therefore, the support and assistance from the international community are essential for them to attain the objectives of their national development and implement the agreed global development agenda.
5. ASEAN, for its part, has been implementing the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework, which aims to address the social and economic ramifications of the pandemic, such as disrupted production and supply chains, demand shocks, decreased trade and investment, financial vulnerabilities, high unemployment, growing inequality, and access to fewer resources and opportunities for vulnerable groups.
6. ASEAN continued the utilization of, and the contributions to, the COVID- 19 ASEAN Response Fund and underscored the need to continue strengthening the Fund and the region's capacities to prevent, prepare for, detect, respond to, and recover from future emerging diseases.

Madam Chair,

7. ASEAN highlights the importance of narrowing regional development gap as well as the potential benefits of deeper regional economic integration through a commitment to build a highly integrated, cohesive, innovative, and resilient ASEAN Economic Community to facilitate the seamless movement of goods, services, investment, capital, and skilled labor.
8. Furthermore, ASEAN commended the progress in implementing the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity (MPAC) 2025, which supports COVID-19 recovery and strengthens resilience towards achieving a connected, sustainable, and inclusive ASEAN Community. We welcomed the findings of the Assessment of Future Sustainable Infrastructure Trends and Priorities in a Post-Pandemic ASEAN to assist in promoting new priority areas of sustainable infrastructure.
9. ASEAN also commended the work of the Initiative ASEAN Integration (IAI) which guides our collective efforts to narrow the development gap within ASEAN and between ASEAN and the rest of the world, taking into consideration emerging gaps, challenges, and priorities from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Madam Chair,

10. ASEAN welcomes the adoption of the Doha Programme of Action for LDCs for the decade 2022-2031 and its successful organization of the 1st Part of LDC5 conference which represents a new generation of renewed and strengthened commitments between the LDCs and their development partners, including the private sector, civil society, and governments at all levels.
11. Despite progress made on many priorities of the **Programme of Action for LDCs and LLDCs**, the COVID-19 pandemic has threatened to reverse our decade-long progress and has exacerbated the existing vulnerability and multiple challenges faced prior to the ongoing pandemic, such as poverty, hunger and food insecurity which are on the rise while debts are skyrocketing.
12. Most importantly, both LDCs and LLDCs remain vulnerable to external shocks and climate-related phenomena such as tropical cyclones, flooding, drought, and landslides, which have caused terrible loss and damage to lives, livelihoods, and infrastructure. In this regard, ASEAN has made efforts to address the issue of climate change and disaster risk management recognizing the critical role of the United Nations Development System in mobilizing necessary supports for

national governments to sustainably recover and build forward better in the aftermath of Covid-19.

13. To this end, increasing international support and assistance are crucial for LDCs and LLDCs to take immediate actions, as well as mid-term recovery and long-term strategic measures, to mitigate the devastating socio-economic impacts of the Covid-19, with the goal of safeguarding their hard-earned development progress over the years and accelerating the **Programme of Action for LDCs and LLDCs** implementations in this decade of action and delivery for sustainable development so that they are not left further behind.

Madam Chair,

14. Let me conclude by reaffirming ASEAN's commitment to cooperating with the international community to promote sustainable development through multilateral cooperation to overcome this challenging time. **Thank You.**