



**PERMANENT MISSION OF THE LAO PEOPLE'S
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC TO THE UNITED NATIONS**



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

Delivered by

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**At the Thematic Discussion on Cluster 2: Other Weapons of Mass
Destruction (WMD)
of the First Committee, Seventy-Fourth Session of the United
Nations General Assembly**

New York, 22 October 2019

Mr. Chairman,

1. I have the honor to deliver this statement on behalf of the Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), namely Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Viet Nam and my own country, the Lao People's Democratic Republic.

Mr. Chairman,

2. ASEAN welcomes the UN Secretary-General's Agenda for Disarmament, particularly "ensuring respect for norms against chemical and biological weapons concerns the interests of all humanity". Given the fact that other weapons of mass destruction, if detonated intentionally or by accident, can cause massive loss of life, damage to property and great harm to the environment, ASEAN member States condemn in the strongest possible terms the use of such weapons by any party under any circumstances, as this constitutes a serious violation of international law. Therefore, ASEAN reiterates that the international community needs to fully and effectively implement all treaties concerning weapons of mass destruction.
3. On chemical weapons, all ASEAN Member States are parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons (CWC). ASEAN recognizes that the Convention remains one of the most successful instruments of disarmament that completely prohibits an entire category of WMD in accordance with strict international law. ASEAN Member States take our international obligations seriously in this regards.
4. ASEAN believes that the international community should increase its efforts to strengthen international cooperation in order to eliminate chemical weapons and enhance international support to help all victims suffering from the chemical weapons.
5. ASEAN commends the OPCW for its unwavering efforts to support the implementation the provisions of the CWC. ASEAN welcomes, in eliminating chemical stockpiles since the entry into force of the Chemical Weapons Convention in 1997.

Mr. Chairman,

6. As ASEAN Member States are parties to the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), we recognize that the BWC represents a critical component of the international legal framework related to WMD. Therefore, ASEAN reaffirms its support to the efforts of the international community to prevent terrorists and other non-state actors from acquiring such weapons of mass destruction and their means of distribution by enhancing cooperation in information sharing.
7. ASEAN recognizes the threats and dangers of the existence and use of chemical, biological and radiological weapons and calls for universal adherence to applicable international legal instruments prohibiting these weapons. In this regards, ASEAN emphasizes the importance of full and effective implementation of the Security Council Resolution 1540 (2004) and other Weapons of Mass Destruction related treaties.
8. In terms of regional cooperation, ASEAN is also committed to improving regional capacity to address chemical, biological and radiological threats. At their 12th Meeting in Singapore last year, the ASEAN Defence Ministers announced the establishment of an ASEAN network of chemical, biological and radiological defence experts to share best practices and to make quick contact during chemical, biological and radiological crises. Moreover, at their 13th Meeting in Thailand on 11 July 2019, ASEAN Defense Ministers adopted and signed the Joint Declaration of the ASEAN Defence Ministers on Sustainable Security.
9. In addition, the Regional Secretariat of the EU CBRN Center of Excellence in Southeast Asia has been working to enhance the capacity of the ASEAN Member States in mitigating CBRN-related risks by ensuring cooperation and coordination in South-East Asia and supporting efforts to identify CBRN risk mitigation needs, develop National CBRN Action Plans and formulate and implement regional project proposals. As part of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), the Workshop on Raising Awareness and Promoting Cooperation on Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Risk Mitigation was held in Manila last year for policy professionals, practitioners, security forces and health experts.

Mr. Chairman

10. Let me conclude by reaffirming ASEAN support to the work of the OPCW and by stressing the importance of enhanced international support for States Parties in need of assistance to build national capacity for the implementation of treaties related to weapons of mass destruction in accordance with national and international law and the UN Charter.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman