

Opening Remarks by the Chair of the 13th ASPC

Heads of delegations from ASEAN Regional Forum Members, ASEAN Secretariat, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

First and foremost, I'd like to convey my deep condolence and sympathy to the families of the victims of the recent disasters in some of our ARF member countries such as earthquakes in Japan, the explosion of the firework in India and air crash in Rostov, Russia that caused a great loss of lives and properties. I do hope that you will be able to go through these difficult moments and have a speedy recovery.

I'd like to take this opportunity to express a warm welcome to you all and I also would like to express my sincere thanks to the Heads of Delegations, delegates and the ASEAN Secretariat for your participation in 13th ASEAN Regional Forum Security Policy Conference (ASPC) held in Luangprabang, Lao PDR today.

Dear colleagues, ladies and gentlemen,

Our conference is convened amidst the regional and global situations are experiencing dynamic changes resulting in both opportunities and challenges. Over the past year, we have noted that our region overall remains stable and the economy is relatively growing. At the meantime, we are also facing security challenges, especially natural disasters, transnational crimes, for example drug trafficking, terrorism and the activities of the Islamic State which are expanding, that have directly impacted on the stability, security and development of our region and no single country can handle this alone. Only if we work together, we can manage the foresaid challenges efficiently. In addition, the issues on Korean Peninsula and South China Sea are also concerned by many parties and these issues should be addressed peacefully through diplomacy and dialogues.

Thus, our meeting today will provide a good opportunity for the exchange of views on regional and global issues, lessons and experiences in order to seek resolutions to address security challenges, and discuss on confidence-building measures so on and so forth.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Last but not least, I believe that everyone will make an active contribution on the discussion and exchange of views in order to contribute to the objectives of this ASPC to together find ways to deal with both current and future problems to ensure regional peace, stability, security and prosperity.

Next, I'd like to officially open the 13th ASEAN Regional Forum Security Policy Conference.

Thank you.