

**ASEAN REGIONAL FORUM STATEMENT  
ON REITERATING COMMITMENT TO PRESERVE SOUTHEAST ASIA AS A  
NUCLEAR WEAPON-FREE ZONE**

The 29th ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) held in Phnom Penh on 5 August 2022 under Cambodia's 2022 ASEAN Chairmanship.

**NOTING** that the Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ Treaty) entered into force on 27 March 1997 and 2022 marks the 25th anniversary of the entry into force of the Treaty;

**REAFFIRMING** that the establishment and preservation of SEANWFZ, consistent with the SEANWFZ Treaty, enhances global and regional peace and security, strengthens the global nuclear non-proliferation regime, promotes nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, and furthers the goal of a world without nuclear weapons;

**REAFFIRMING** the need for preserving and upholding the foundations of the international nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime, and the need for all NPT State Parties to comply with its provisions. Recognizing the SEANWFZ Treaty contributes to the objectives of the NPT;

**WELCOMING** that the P5 reaffirmed their commitments and willingness to further advance discussions with the ASEAN countries on the Protocol to the SEANWFZ Treaty, as expressed in the Joint Communiqué of the P5 Conference in Paris on 2 and 3 December, 2021;

**WELCOMING** the ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Statement on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation on 17 February 2022, in which ASEAN reaffirms the commitment to continuously engage the P5 and intensify the ongoing efforts of ASEAN Member States and P5 to resolve all outstanding issues consistent with the objectives and principles of the SEANWFZ Treaty;

**STRESSING** that proliferation of nuclear weapons and nuclear terrorism would seriously threaten the preservation of SEANWFZ, jeopardize the lasting peace, stability and prosperity in the region, the maintenance of which requires the long-term efforts of all ARF Participants;

**REALIZING** that the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes is an inalienable right of states, to be exercised in conformity with their respective international obligations, including the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) where applicable;

**NOTING** with concern the risks of nuclear weapons use and need for joint efforts by all states to reduce these risks through practical measures that complement, but do not substitute for, nuclear disarmament, including measures to build confidence and increase mutual understanding within the P5 process and other available bilateral or multilateral mechanisms involving relevant States;

**NOTING** that the current security context requires more efforts to strengthen the indispensable role of the IAEA in nuclear non-proliferation verification through safeguards implementation and efforts to strengthen the effectiveness and efficiency of safeguards regime including through universalization of the Additional Protocol;

**TAKING** note of the Joint Statement of the Leaders of China, France, Russia, the UK and the USA, on Preventing Nuclear War and Avoiding Arms Races on 3 January, 2022; and further reaffirming the need for those states to act consistent with the statement's intent to taking concrete steps to avoid militarily confrontations, strengthen stability and predictability, increase mutual understanding and confidence, and prevent an arms race, and recognizing actions under the Joint Statement will further the goal of SEANWFZ;

**RECALLING** the support for the establishment of SEANWFZ in the Final Document of the 10th Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), the Final Document of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT, UNGA Resolutions 62/31, 64/39, 66/43, 68/49, 70/60, and UNGA Decisions 72/515, 74/510, 76/517;

**RECALLING** the UN Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 1540 (2004) and the Comprehensive Reviews on the status of its implementation, whose aim is to prevent non-state actors from getting access to nuclear, chemical or biological weapons, their means of delivery and related materials;

**NOTING** the efforts made by ASEAN and ARF on the preservation of SEANWFZ, including the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia, Declaration on the Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality (ZOPFAN), Plan of Action to Strengthen the Implementation of the Treaty on the SEANWFZ (2023-2027), the Practical Arrangements to promote cooperation in nuclear science and technology, applications, nuclear safety, security and safeguards signed by ASEAN and IAEA in 2019, ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Statement on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation in 2022, ARF Ha Noi Plan of Action II (2020-2025), and ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Non-Proliferation and Disarmament and its Work Plans.

## **HEREBY DECIDES TO:**

1. Reaffirm the efforts of ARF Participants at the national, regional and international levels to promote nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, strengthen nuclear safety and security, and combat nuclear terrorism;
2. Call for the renewed commitment of NPT State Parties to strengthen the implementation of the NPT, and strengthening the effectiveness and efficiency of IAEA safeguards regime including through universalization of the Additional Protocol to meet proliferation challenges;
3. Reiterate support to the efforts of preserving Southeast Asia as a Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone and free of all other weapons of mass destruction consistent with the SEANWFZ Treaty and the ASEAN Charter;
4. Promote efforts that strengthen the security of Southeast Asian region as a Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone and support nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation, encourage efforts to reduce nuclear risks and diminish the role of nuclear weapons in security doctrine;
5. Urge all ARF Participants to commit to the full implementation of UNSC Resolution 1540 (2004) and encourage the Participants, on a voluntary basis, to provide necessary assistance, by request, for the full implementation of that Resolution;
6. Reaffirm their support for the inalienable right of the ARF Members to develop, research, produce and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes consistent with their international obligations, including the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) where applicable;
7. Encourage efforts to protect the region from environmental pollution and the hazards posed by radioactive wastes and other radioactive material;
8. Encourage efforts to strengthen coordination with international organizations including the United Nations and the IAEA as well as other Nuclear Weapon-Free Zones.

**Adopted on the Fifth of August in the Year Two Thousand and Twenty-Two (2022) at the 29<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Regional Forum in Phnom Penh, Kingdom of Cambodia.**

Statement Ends