



PHILIPPINES

ASEAN STATEMENT

To be delivered by

Hon. Eduardo Jose A. De Vega

Undersecretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs of the Philippines

HLPF2023 GENERAL DEBATE

**“Building momentum towards the 2023 SDG Summit:
Transformation for accelerating implementation of the SDGs”
Monday, 17 July 2023; 10:45AM-1:00PM**

Madame Chair,

1. I have the honor to deliver a Statement on behalf of the ten (10) Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), namely Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore, Viet Nam, Thailand, and my country, Philippines.
2. ASEAN continues to strengthen its commitment to doubling efforts in the attainment of the SDGs, to realize the ASEAN Vision 2025 that complements with the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development, in its shared principles and values of people-centered development to leaving no one behind.
3. We can proudly inform you today that, including those who deliver their VNR this year, all ASEAN Member States have delivered their VNR Presentation at least twice. This is the ASEAN way of showing commitment and strong support to fully achieve the SDGs in a timely manner.
4. We also reaffirm our commitment to the advancement of sustainable development cooperation in the region, among others, through the effective implementation of the Complementarities Roadmap (2020-2025), the work of the

ASEAN Centre for Sustainable Development Studies and Dialogue (ACSDSD), and the mainstreaming and implementation of the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP).

5. We note the convening of the 2nd ASEAN Ministerial Dialogue on Accelerating Actions to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and the 7th High-Level Brainstorming Dialogue (HLBD) held on 31 March 2023, which are important platforms for ASEAN to exchange best practices and discuss ways forward to enhance cooperation and accelerate the achievement of the SDGs in the region.
6. As ASEAN looks forward to the ASEAN Community Post-2025 Vision, the complementary approach to find synergy with the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development will continue to be updated and strengthened, including through developing an ASEAN Green Agenda, to ensure that sustainable development lies at the heart of ASEAN Community building process.
7. There is a continued momentum of growth in the region despite being confronted with various challenges. The ASEAN economy is expected to achieve a growth of 4.7% in 2023 and 5.0% in 2024, propelled by strong domestic consumption, net exports, and accelerated recovery in services. We are committed to achieve fair, inclusive, and sustainable regional economic growth against the backdrop of multidimensional crises, and to make ASEAN remain credible and relevant for its people, the region, and the world while continuing to serve as the region's epicenter of growth and prosperity.
8. ASEAN is committed to continuing deepening ASEAN economic integration, enhancing intra-ASEAN trade and investment, strengthening supply chain connectivity, and enhancing the implementation of the ASEAN Economic Community Blueprint 2025 to achieve an economically integrated, competitive, connected, resilient, sustainable, and inclusive region, with special emphasis on narrowing the development gap among its Member States.

9. In SDG implementation, we underscore the importance of, among others, the following:

- a. Promotion of rural development and poverty eradication in the region, and the need to fast-track rural transformation. We are committed to establishing ASEAN Villages Network to establish a platform of collaboration among villages and also with external partners and private sectors.
- b. Sustainable energy security through enhanced interconnectivity and accelerated energy transition.
- c. Accelerated digital transformation, and the closing of the digital divide, with an approach that is people-centered, safe, secure and relevant to the needs of end users and various stakeholders.
- d. Increased role of MSMEs in ASEAN and global economy by providing equal opportunities and access through capacity building and digital transformation.
- e. Sustainability as a universal call to end poverty, protect the planet, and improve the livelihood of the people. The ASEAN Harmonized Standards, in this regard, support the achievement of the 2030 Agenda as it enables all three dimensions of sustainability (social, economic, and environmental), which is essential for ASEAN Member States to reduce costs and increase productivity and efficiency.
- f. Strengthened, resilient and responsive health systems, as envisioned in ASEAN Blueprint. We promote the One Health Initiative, noting the devastating and multidimensional impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as other emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases including

zoonoses, antimicrobial resistance (AMR), and the growing impact of other challenges related to climate change on human lives and livelihoods.

- g. Equitable access to social protection for all through the implementation of the ASEAN Declaration on Portability of Social Security Benefits for Migrant Workers in ASEAN, ASEAN Declaration on the Rights of Children in the Context of Migration, and ASEAN Declaration on Strengthening Social Protection.
 - h. Robust disaster risk reduction strategy and its holistic implementation, from policy to operational fronts, as a key element in the collective efforts of maintaining sustainable development progresses.
 - i. More investments that are inclusive, sustainable, and resilient to support alignment of finance to the SDGs, focusing among others on investment in education to address the foundational learning crisis which was exacerbated by the pandemic through the implementation of the ASEAN Workplan on Education 2021-2025.
 - j. Expanded and strengthened engagements with multiple stakeholders to provide the necessary support to implement, monitor and evaluate SDG progress, including among others through south-south and triangular cooperation and participation of civil society, business communities, and the younger generations.
10. Finally, we reaffirm our support to the strengthening of multilateralism, with the UN at its core, by reinforcing the principles of the UN Charter, ensuring that no one is left behind, and promoting mutually beneficial partnerships with the UN. For ASEAN, sustainable development represents an area of win-win cooperation as every country stands to gain from the benefits of sustainable development and a livable planet. We reiterate our commitment to further enhance constructive cooperation in this area with our external partners, in line with the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific. In this connection, we look forward to concrete and

successful outcomes of the SDG Summit and the High-Level Meetings on health-related issues, including on Universal Health Coverage at the UN in September this year, and to effective preparations for a successful Summit of the Future in 2024.

Thank you.