

**CO-CHAIRS' PRESS STATEMENT  
THE ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS - COOPERATION  
COUNCIL FOR THE ARAB STATES OF THE GULF (ASEAN-GCC)  
FOREIGN MINISTERS' MEETING**

*New York, 28 September 2019*

1. The ASEAN-GCC Foreign Ministers' Meeting was held on 28 September 2019 in New York, the United States, on the sidelines of the 74<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly. The Meeting, held in an open-ended troika format, was co-chaired by Honourable Dato Erywan Pehin Yusof, Minister of Foreign Affairs II of Brunei Darussalam, and H.E Yusuf bin Alawi bin Abdullah, Minister Responsible for Foreign Affairs of the Sultanate of Oman. The Meeting was attended by Foreign Ministers or Representatives of ASEAN Member States and GCC Member Countries, the Secretary-General of ASEAN, and the Secretary-General of the GCC.
2. The Meeting exchanged views on regional and international issues of common interest and concern such as protectionism, terrorism and violent extremism, geopolitical conflicts, sustainable development, and climate change, among others. In that regard, the Meeting called for greater and closer inter-regional collaboration in addressing common challenges. The Meeting reaffirmed the importance of free and open trade, adherence to the rule of law and the open, rules-based multilateral trading system as embodied by the World Trade Organisation. The Meeting condemned in the strongest terms the attack on the oil facilities in Saudi Arabia on 14 September 2019, as an attack not only on Saudi Arabia but on international peace and security and the stability of global energy markets.
3. The Meeting recalled the Joint Vision adopted at the first full-fledged ASEAN-GCC Ministerial Meeting as well as the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between the ASEAN Secretariat and the Secretariat of the GCC in Manama, Bahrain in June 2009 which serves as the foundation for pursuing closer and beneficial cooperation between the two regions towards promoting peace, prosperity and the well-being for the peoples in Asia and beyond.
4. The Meeting highlighted the long-standing relationship between ASEAN and GCC countries which is rooted in historical and cultural ties, and bolstered by decades of friendship between the Middle East and the Southeast Asian regions. The Meeting further reaffirmed the positive contribution of ASEAN-GCC relations over the past 29 years since its inception in September 1990, towards the promotion and maintenance of peace and security in the region.

5. ASEAN welcomed GCC's continued support for its Community building efforts including under the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and the development of a regional architecture that is open, transparent, inclusive, and rules-based. The Meeting noted the GCC's support for the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo Pacific which serves as a guide for ASEAN's engagement in the wider Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean regions.
6. The Meeting reiterated their support for Thailand's ASEAN Chairmanship under the theme "Advancing Partnership for Sustainability", particularly its focus on promoting sustainable security through reinforcing strategic trust, and pursuing sustainable economic growth and development in order to bring about regional stability and prosperity, and achieve a people-centred, people-oriented ASEAN Community that leaves no one behind, looks to the future, and remains central in the regional architecture.
7. The Meeting reviewed the progress of ASEAN-GCC relations and reiterated their commitment to further strengthen partnership and cooperation to realise the potential for growing cooperation between ASEAN and GCC. To this end, the Meeting agreed to task officials to work towards the early finalization of the ASEAN-GCC Framework of Cooperation for 2020-2024 which identifies activities and measures to be jointly undertaken in areas of mutual interest including trade and investment, smart cities, energy, Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), countering terrorism and violent extremism, Islamic finance, equitable development, tourism, infrastructure and connectivity, agriculture and Halal products, food security, public health, education and training, as well as cultural and other people-to-people exchanges.
8. The Meeting reaffirmed commitment to continue the implementation of the outcomes of the ASEAN-GCC Ministerial Meeting that was convened on 27 September 2018, which among others agreed on the value of increasing direct engagement between ASEAN and GCC in all areas of cooperation at different levels, including the regular convening of ASEAN-GCC Ministerial Meetings, meetings between the Committee of Permanent Representatives to ASEAN (CPR) and officials in Jakarta, and close collaboration between the two Secretariats as well as among relevant bodies of both sides.

\*\*\*\*\*