



## **JOINT STATEMENT BY THE ADMM-PLUS DEFENCE MINISTERS ON ADVANCING PARTNERSHIP FOR SUSTAINABLE SECURITY**

We, the Defence Ministers of the Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Australia, the People's Republic of China, the Republic of India, Japan, the Republic of Korea, New Zealand, the Russian Federation, and the United States of America gathered in Bangkok, Thailand on 18 November 2019 for the Sixth ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus (hereinafter referred to as "ADMM-Plus").

We reaffirm our commitment towards regional peace, security and stability by respecting universally recognised principles of international law, promoting cooperation and interactions, reaching out to potential partners as well as responding collectively and constructively to global developments and security issues based on amicable and mutually beneficial relations.

We underscore the significance of the ADMM-Plus as a key component of a robust, effective and open regional security arrangement that contributes to trust and confidence-building as well as practical defence and security cooperation between ASEAN Member States and Plus Countries in response to common security threats in the region, while upholding ASEAN Centrality and unity.

We reaffirm our commitment to maintaining peace and stability of the Asia-Pacific region by working closely together to address common security challenges as stated in the Joint Statement by the ADMM-Plus Defence Ministers on Practical Confidence-Building Measures, issued on 20 October 2018.

We commend and recognise the progress of practical cooperation under ADMM-Plus Experts' Working Groups (EWGs), namely Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief, Maritime Security, Military Medicine, Counter-Terrorism, Peacekeeping Operations, Humanitarian Mine Action and Cyber Security. The dialogue and exercises within the framework of ADMM-Plus EWGs have contributed to capacity-building and interoperability enhancement amongst ADMM-Plus countries, in order to address security challenges for the collective benefit of the region.

We welcome the new Co-Chairs of the ADMM-Plus EWGs for the 2020-2023 cycle, starting at the ASEAN Defence Senior Officials' Meeting Plus in 2020 in Viet Nam onwards.

We welcome the development of ADMM initiatives putting in place practical cooperation amongst ASEAN Member States to collectively prevent miscalculation and respond to regional security threats. We recognise that adherence to international law encourages safe and professional military interactions, prevents armed conflict and provides, in treaties and conventions, mechanisms for the peaceful resolution of disputes.

We recognise the ASEAN-China Maritime Exercise conducted in 2018 and the ASEAN-United States Maritime Exercise conducted in 2019, which reflect practical cooperation on strengthening ASEAN Centrality in regional security architecture, while enhancing mutual trust and confidence amongst ASEAN and Plus Countries.

We recognise that security threats and challenges in the Asia-Pacific are trans-boundary and increasing in frequency and severity. Increasing regional integration and connectivity as well as technological advancement impact non-traditional

security threats and increase their complexity and unpredictability. This calls for countries in the region to forge practical cooperation to find sustainable ways to prevent and address these common security threats.

In this regard, we remain committed to ensuring peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region by strengthening defence and security cooperation. This includes resolving disputes peacefully in accordance with universally recognised principles of international law, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and maintaining and respecting freedom of navigation and overflight as well as advancing our partnership in order to effectively respond to regional security threats in a sustainable manner, particularly through the ADMM-Plus EWGs and ASEAN-led security mechanisms based on mutual trust, mutual respect and mutual benefits.

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