

**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF MEMBERS OF THE
ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS (ASEAN)
BY
H.E. AMBASSADOR DATO' NADZIRAH OSMAN, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF MALAYSIA TO THE OPCW
AT
THE FIFTH SPECIAL SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES
TO REVIEW THE OPERATION OF THE CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION
(FIFTH REVIEW CONFERENCE)**

15-19 May 2023, The Hague, The Netherlands

1. I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (hereinafter "ASEAN") namely Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic (the), Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Viet Nam.
2. Allow me to congratulate His Excellency Ambassador Henk Cor van der Kwast of the Kingdom of the Netherlands on your election as the Chairperson for the Fifth Review Conference. I wish you every success in your stewardship of the Conference.
3. 30 years since the first signing of the Chemical Weapons Convention (hereinafter "the Convention"), commendable progress has been achieved in its implementation. Most notably, 193 States, including all 10 ASEAN Member States, have committed to the Convention and more than 99 percent of chemical weapons stockpiles declared by possessor States around the world have been verifiably destroyed. The Convention also remains at the forefront of promoting the use of chemicals for peaceful purposes in accordance with international law.
4. ASEAN recognises the Convention as a successful model of a multilateral agreement that seeks to eliminate, under international verification, an entire category of weapons of mass destruction. We remain committed to abiding by our international obligations under the Convention and urge all States Parties to the Convention to ensure their compliance.
5. ASEAN and the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) share the common aspiration to ensure regional and global security and safety. We condemn the use of chemical weapons and the use of toxic chemicals as a weapon anywhere by anyone and under any circumstances.
6. ASEAN reaffirms its full support to the OPCW to carry out its mandated work as the implementing body of the Convention in a comprehensive, objective, and impartial manner, in complementarity with the work of the United Nations.

7. ASEAN believes in promoting and achieving the universality of this Convention to move forward in the field of disarmament. We, therefore, urge those States that have yet to sign or ratify the Convention to do so without further delay.
8. As non-possessor States, ASEAN emphasises the importance of strengthening chemical safety and security for the prevention of misuse of toxic chemicals, particularly by non-State actors. In 2018, ASEAN established the Network of ASEAN Chemical, Biological, and Radiological (CBR) Defence Experts (hereinafter “ASEAN CBR Network”) which comprises technical experts from the 10 ASEAN Member States. These technical experts aim to actively contribute to the prevention of and protection against hazards posed by CBR materials in the region.
9. ASEAN strongly believes that the international community should strengthen international cooperation and assistance in chemical safety and security, including through enhanced engagement with industry players in our region as well as with the ASEAN CBR Network. We look forward to the crucial role of the newly inaugurated Centre for Chemistry and Technology (hereinafter “ChemTech Centre”) in promoting international cooperation and assistance. ASEAN hopes that the OPCW will assist with further enhancing technical experts’ capability for ASEAN countries through training programmes of the OPCW and the ChemTech Centre.
10. ASEAN recognises the importance of upholding the principle of equitable geographical distribution and gender balance in all aspects of the work of the OPCW.
11. Let me reiterate by underscoring that ASEAN looks forward to a deeper and more meaningful cooperation and collaboration with the OPCW.
12. Allow me to also seize this distinct opportunity to thank His Excellency Ambassador Lauri Kuusing of Estonia for his tireless efforts and rigorous leadership of the open-ended working group, which was able to draft a text to serve as the basis for the work of the Review Conference.
13. ASEAN would like to give you the assurance of their fullest cooperation in ensuring the success of the Fifth Review Conference and hopes to arrive at concrete results with consensus as shared with other distinguished delegations.
14. I would like to request to have this statement issued as an official document of the Fifth Review Conference and posted on both the external server and the public website.
