



**PERMANENT MISSION OF THE KINGDOM OF
THAILAND**

TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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**Statement on behalf of the
Members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations**

Delivered by

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the Kingdom of Thailand to the United Nations**

**at the Thematic Discussion on Nuclear Weapons
of the First Committee, Seventy-Third Session of
the United Nations General Assembly**

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Mr. Chair,

1. I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), namely Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Viet Nam, and my own country, Thailand.

Mr. Chair,

2. A key aspiration for our ASEAN community is “a rules-based, people-oriented, and people-centred ASEAN in a region of peace, stability, and prosperity.” From the establishment of Southeast Asia as a Zone of Peace, Freedom, and Neutrality (ZOPFAN), and thereafter the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ), the ASEAN community has long viewed non-proliferation and disarmament of nuclear weapons to be fundamental in realizing this aspiration.

Mr. Chair,

3. ASEAN reiterates our commitment to preserving Southeast Asia as a region free from nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction as enshrined in the SEANWFZ Treaty and the ASEAN Charter. We stress the importance of the full and effective implementation of the treaty, including under the Plan of Action to Strengthen the Implementation of the SEANWFZ Treaty (2018-2022). We reaffirm our commitment to continuously engage the Nuclear Weapon States and intensify ongoing efforts of all Parties to resolve all outstanding issues in accordance with the objectives and principles of the SEANWFZ Treaty. ASEAN experts could explore ways to bridge the differences, including the possibility of engaging with Nuclear Weapons States experts.

4. At the international level, the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) constitutes a vital step towards global nuclear disarmament and complements existing instruments. At the same time, we continue to recognize the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) as the cornerstone of the international nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime. We call on all States parties to the NPT to renew their commitment to the urgent and full implementation of existing obligations under Article VI of the treaty. We commend the work of the Netherlands in chairing the 1st NPT Preparatory Committee, Poland in chairing the 2nd NPT Preparatory Committee and are especially pleased that Malaysia, a fellow ASEAN Member State will chair the 3rd NPT Preparatory Committee, leading up to the Review Conference of the treaty in 2020.

Mr. Chair,

5. As we continue to learn and understand more about the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons, we reiterate our firm belief that the total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only absolute guarantee against their use or threat of use.

6. Earlier this year in September, many ASEAN Member States have taken further steps to realize our goal of a nuclear weapon free world.

6.1 On the 25th of September 2018, Thailand ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), making all ASEAN Member States Ratifying Parties to the CTBT. Bearing in mind the significance of the CTBT, ASEAN joins others in urging the Annex 2 States to sign and ratify the treaty as soon as possible in order to realize its entry into force.

6.2 Also on the 26th of September 2018, Brunei Darussalam and Myanmar became signatories to the TPNW. Their signatures and those of Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, the Philippines, Viet Nam and Thailand as well as the ratification of the Treaty by Thailand and Viet Nam are significant steps towards an early entry-into-force of this historic legal instrument.

Mr. Chair,

7. ASEAN welcomes the 3 Inter-Korean Summits and the Summit between the United States and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), hosted in Singapore. We reiterate our support for all efforts to bring about the complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula which will contribute to peace and stability in the region.

Mr. Chair,

8. ASEAN reaffirms the inalienable right of every State to the peaceful use of nuclear technology for its economic and social development. As such, it is our firm belief that the 5-year Work Plan (2018-2022) of the ASEAN Network of Regulatory Bodies on Atomic Energy (ASEANTOM) will ensure that peaceful uses of nuclear energy in ASEAN will always be coupled with safety, security, and safeguards implementation. We also look forward to the formalization of relations between ASEAN and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

Mr. Chair,

9. We welcome the Secretary-General's Disarmament Agenda and its recently launched Implementation Plan. The United Nations' highest disarmament priority of eliminating nuclear weapons reflects ASEAN's will and resolve to achieve such a goal in our region. We stand ready to work together with all relevant parties – States and the civil society – to this end.

10. ASEAN reiterates our strong commitment to move the global non-proliferation and disarmament agenda forward. We call on all Member States, particularly the Nuclear Weapon States, to show goodwill, to promote mutual understanding, to enhance trustworthy cooperation and to ensure responsible collective actions in striving for a world without nuclear weapons.

I thank you.
