



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS BY MR BENEDICT TAN, DELEGATE OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF SINGAPORE TO THE UNITED NATIONS, ON AGENDA ITEM 143: IMPROVING THE FINANCIAL SITUATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS, AT THE FIFTH COMMITTEE, MAIN PART OF THE 75TH SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, NEW YORK, 16 OCTOBER 2020

Thank you, Mr Chair.

1 I have the honour to speak on behalf of the 10 Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) on Agenda Item 143: Improving the Financial Situation of the United Nations. ASEAN aligns itself with the statement delivered by Guyana on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

2 ASEAN thanks Ms Catherine Pollard, Under-Secretary-General for Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance, for her presentation on 8 October and for the updates this afternoon.

Mr Chair,

3 As highlighted by the Secretary-General at the opening of the General Debate of the 75th Session of the General Assembly, the world is facing simultaneously ‘an epochal health crisis, the biggest economic calamity and job losses since the Great Depression’ – these are all threats to humanity and to achieving our Sustainable Development Goals. The United Nations is now more relevant than ever. ASEAN calls on all Member States to empower the Secretary-General to implement our collective mandate and deliver concrete results by strengthening the financial situation of the United Nations.

4 ASEAN is therefore concerned about the financial situation of the United Nations, especially the severe deficits in the regular budget. This has been

a problem year after year. Despite lower expenditures as a result of COVID-19, the Organisation continues to face liquidity challenges, as highlighted in the letter from the Secretary-General on 31 August. It is untenable for Member States to allow the Organisation to delay its reimbursements to Troop and Police Contributing Countries, many of whom are developing countries that are facing extreme economic hardships, and to hamper mandate delivery.

5 ASEAN remains strongly committed to fulfilling our financial obligations to the Organisation. We sympathise with Member States who face genuine difficulties in paying their assessed contributions due to factors beyond their control, especially amidst the pandemic. We commend those Member States who, despite these difficulties, endeavour to meet their obligations to the United Nations. ASEAN calls on all Member States to pay their assessed contributions in full, on time and without conditions. This is both a legal obligation enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, and a moral obligation to ensure that adequate resources are provided to implement the mandates that we ourselves have set.

Mr Chair,

6 Now, more than ever, is the time for every Member State to demonstrate greater political will and responsibility to the international community by fulfilling their financial obligations to the United Nations. This is a time for action. ASEAN calls on all fellow Member States to continue working constructively with the Secretary-General to build a stronger and more effective United Nations, and renew our commitment to multilateralism.

7 I thank you.

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