



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS BY MS FELICIA CHUA, DELEGATE OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF SINGAPORE TO THE UNITED NATIONS, ON AGENDA ITEM 138: PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET 2022, AT THE MAIN PART OF THE 76TH SESSION OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY, NEW YORK, 13 OCTOBER 2021

Thank you, Mr Chair.

1 I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) on agenda item 138: Proposed Programme Budget for 2022. ASEAN aligns itself with the statement delivered by Guinea on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

2 ASEAN thanks the Secretary-General for his introduction of the proposed programme budget for 2022. We also extend our appreciation to Mr Abdallah Bachar Bong, Chair of the ACABQ, for introducing the report of the ACABQ.

Mr Chair,

3 Geopolitical tensions and a protracted pandemic have exacerbated existing challenges in the world. Last month, the Secretary-General reiterated the need to deal with these challenges and to pursue a sustainable and inclusive recovery in his report on our common agenda. ASEAN supports the Secretary-General's efforts to better equip the UN to address these global challenges. A prerequisite for an effective and responsive organisation is a realistic and results-oriented budgeting procedure.

4 ASEAN reiterates its firm belief that the Organisation's mandates must be adequately funded. We cannot expect the UN to do more, while giving it less. Arbitrary cuts to the proposed budget or deliberate withholding of

contributions undermines the UN at a time when solidarity is needed to address global challenges. Unfortunately, this is a reality that we have been dealing with for years. If left unchecked, these artificial constraints will set the UN up for failure. The Secretary-General has expressed his commitment to delivering results on the ground. Member States must work together to support his efforts to produce results with both words and actions. At the same time, ASEAN stresses the importance of the efficient and responsible utilisation of the Organisation's resources as well as full transparency and accountability to Member States.

Mr Chair,

5 ASEAN recognises the efforts of the Secretary-General to improve the presentation of the programme budget, in line with directions given by the General Assembly. Nevertheless, we note the ACABQ's comments on enhancing the presentation of deliverables and justifications for proposed resources in the budget. We encourage the Secretary-General to continue his efforts to improve the presentation of the programme budget. We also look forward to the dashboards and analytics capabilities that the Secretariat is developing, which would provide human resource and other data that will enhance transparency on issues such as equitable geographical representation and gender parity.

Mr Chair,

6 ASEAN notes that the initial estimates to finance Special Political Missions in the proposed budget amount to over US\$730 million. This accounts for over 23 percent of the proposed budget for 2022. We believe that it is time this Assembly had a serious discussion on the funding arrangements for Special Political Missions vis-à-vis other development priorities. This is pertinent in view of the ongoing reform of the UN's peace and security architecture. We look forward to having further discussions on this topic when the specific agenda item on the funding and backstopping of Special Political Missions is considered during this session.

Mr Chair,

7 In closing, let me assure you that ASEAN will take an active interest in the forthcoming discussions, and that we will participate in a constructive and productive manner with all stakeholders.

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