

ASEAN Chairman's statement of the open-ended Troika virtual meeting between ASEAN Foreign Ministers and the Foreign Secretary

1. The Open-ended Troika Virtual Meeting between ASEAN Foreign Ministers and the Foreign Secretary of the United Kingdom on COVID-19 was held on 30 September 2020 in Hanoi, Viet Nam. The Meeting was chaired by H.E. Pham Binh Minh, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Viet Nam, in his capacity as the Chair of ASEAN 2020, and attended by The Honourable Dato Erywan Pehin Yusof, Minister of Foreign Affairs II of Brunei Darussalam, as the incoming ASEAN Chair, H.E. Dato Lim Jock Hoi, Secretary-General of ASEAN, and the Right Honourable Dominic Raab MP, First Secretary of State, Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs of the United Kingdom (UK). Other Foreign Ministers and high representatives of ASEAN Member States also attended the Meeting through video conference.
2. The Meeting expressed concerns regarding the continued spread and severity of COVID-19, which the World Health Organization (WHO) declared as a pandemic on 11 March 2020, and its adverse impacts on livelihoods and socio-economic development around the world.
3. The Meeting expressed deep condolences on the loss of lives, extended sympathies to those suffering from or threatened by COVID-19. The Meeting extended their heartfelt gratitude and support to medical professionals, healthcare workers, and other frontline personnel working tirelessly in the battle against the outbreak. The Meeting recognized the importance of prioritizing the safety, well-being and welfare of all frontline personnel in the fight against COVID-19, including ASEAN medical professionals, healthcare workers, and other frontline personnel working in the United Kingdom.
4. The Meeting affirmed the need for stronger collaboration to build back better with a greener and more resilient and sustainable global economy as envisaged in the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement and looked forward to in-depth discussions on this matter at the 26th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 26) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Summit, to be held in the UK in November 2021. In this regard, the Meeting welcomed the commitment of the UK to support ASEAN with science-based clean recovery assistance to develop green financial systems, sustainable infrastructure and energy efficiency across the region through ASEAN Low Carbon Energy Programme and global Green Recovery Challenge Fund.
5. The UK welcomed the successful Special ASEAN Summit on COVID-19 on 14 April

2020 and the adoption of the ASEAN Leaders' Vision Statement on a Cohesive and Responsive ASEAN: Rising above Challenges and Sustaining Growth at the 36th ASEAN Summit on 26 June 2020, which demonstrated ASEAN's collective determination and shared commitment to strengthen solidarity, enhance cooperation with external partners, including the United Nations and the UK, in the fight against COVID-19, as well as mitigate multi-faceted the impact of the pandemic.

6. The Meeting underlined the need for close collaboration and coordinated efforts to strengthen multilateral frameworks in ensuring a strong global response to the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly on vaccine production. The Meeting welcomed coordinated research efforts, especially those between the UK and ASEAN Member States, to facilitate the rapid and safe development, manufacture and distribution of treatments, vaccines and tests, which are available to all, recognizing the role of extensive immunization against COVID-19 as a global public goods, adhering to the objectives of efficiency, safety, fair and equal accessibility and affordability. The Meeting committed to strengthening close cooperation between ASEAN Members States and the UK to strengthen multilateral efforts around development, production and equitable access to vaccines, therapeutics and diagnostics. In this regard, the Meeting welcomed USD 8.8 billion raised at the Global Vaccine Summit hosted by the UK on 4 June 2020, which will help the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation (GAVI Alliance) to strengthen health systems around the world.
7. The Meeting welcomed the UK's support for ASEAN's efforts to achieve a comprehensive and sustainable recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. The Meeting agreed to enhance cooperation on public health emergencies and ensure the region was better prepared for future pandemics and health challenges. In this regard, ASEAN Member States welcomed the UK's confirmation that they have refocused £50 million of UK funding within ASEAN specifically to tackle the COVID-19, which includes new cooperation: (i) its intention to contribute £1 million to the COVID-19 ASEAN Response Fund to support ASEAN's response to the health impacts of COVID-19; (ii) its contribution of £0.5 million for strategic support to the ASEAN Secretariat to provide technical support to ASEAN on policies to mitigate the economic impacts of COVID-19. In addition, ASEAN Member States welcomed the UK's contribution of £0.2 million to continue cooperation with the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA Centre). In this regard, the Meeting also welcomed the UK's commitment to contribute £4.8 million towards strengthening national health systems to prevent, detect and control the threat of COVID-19, working with governments and institutions in Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Viet Nam. ASEAN Member States further encouraged the UK to support and contribute to the ASEAN Regional Reserve of Medical Supplies to enable rapid response to emergency medical supply needs. The Ministers also encouraged the UK to explore cooperation to tackle COVID-19 through the ASEAN Smart Cities Network (ASCN).
8. The Meeting acknowledged the UK as the region's 13th largest trading partner and the region's 6th largest FDI sources in 2019. The Meeting reaffirmed the

importance of maintaining global supply chains, supporting the global economy through open trade, facilitating sustainable and inclusive global economic growth by working closely with all relevant international and regional organisations and financial institutions, restoring business confidence in the region, and supporting regional connectivity.

9. The Ministers welcomed the outcomes of the ASEAN Economic Ministers (AEM) Troika Open-Ended Dialogue with the UK Secretary of State for International Trade, held via videoconference on 26 August 2020, which further emphasized the need for the UK to deepen its digital partnership with ASEAN through its Digital Trade Network and by funding a new UK-ASEAN Digital Business Challenge, and exploring how tech Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) can deliver solutions to tough business challenges.
10. The Meeting expressed its appreciation to the UK for looking after and providing the necessary consular assistance to ASEAN nationals, especially students during the initial outbreak of the pandemic and emphasised their readiness to continue to provide the necessary and appropriate support and assistance to nationals in each other's countries who are affected by the pandemic, including working together to enable their safe return, as appropriate.
11. The Meeting noted that COVID-19 is posing risks to regional stability and emphasized the importance of promoting trust, confidence, dialogue and cooperation to maintain peace, security, stability and the rule of law in the region. The Meeting recognised the enduring contribution of the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC), to which the UK became a High Contracting Party in 2012. ASEAN Member States appreciated the UK's support for the ASEAN Centrality and the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific.
12. The Meeting looked forward to concerted efforts and close cooperation between the ASEAN Member States and the UK in order to emerge from the unprecedented global challenge posed by COVID-19 stronger and more resilient.