



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE  
ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN  
NATIONS BY MR TERRENCE TEO,  
COUNSELLOR, PERMANENT MISSION OF  
THE REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE TO THE  
UNITED NATIONS, ON AGENDA ITEM 143:  
IMPROVING THE FINANCIAL SITUATION OF  
THE UNITED NATIONS, 14 MAY 2021**

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14 May 2021

Thank you, Mr Chair.

1 I have the honour to speak on behalf 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 made by Guinea 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 7 May and for her updates today. We also thank Mr Chandramouli Ramanathan, Controller and Assistant Secretary-General for Programme Planning, Finance and Budget, for his presentation on the management of the liquidity situation on 10 May.

Mr Chair,

3 ASEAN remains concerned about the financial situation of the United Nations, in particular the continued unpredictability in collections amidst the COVID-19 crisis. Nevertheless, we are also heartened that many member states had responded positively to the Secretary-General's appeal in March. Compared to this time last year, more member states have fully paid their assessments for the regular budget, peacekeeping budget and the tribunals. We commend the member states that have fulfilled their financial obligations, and hope that full and timely payments will become the norm rather than the exception going forward.

4 Notwithstanding this, the current unpaid assessments remain large enough to pose serious liquidity challenges, in particular during the ‘dry months’ of the third quarter of the year. Over the past years, the Organisation has had to impose drastic measures to manage the liquidity situation. ASEAN stresses that the Organisation should not be perpetually operating in a cash-conservation mode, as this has serious negative impacts on mandate implementation.

5 We are pleased to note that the measures approved in General Assembly resolution 73/307, such as cash pooling for active peacekeeping missions and the advance collection of peacekeeping assessments, have borne some fruit in improving the liquidity situation. But let us be clear: these measures merely alleviate the symptoms, rather than address the root cause of the issue. The simplest and most effective solution remains for all Member States to pay their assessed contributions in full, on time and without conditions. First, this is a legal obligation that is enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. Second, having given our mandates to the Secretary-General, Member States have the moral obligation to ensure that adequate resources are provided to implement these mandates.

Mr Chair,

6 ASEAN sympathises with Member States who face genuine difficulties in paying their assessed contributions due to factors beyond their control. We commend those Member States who, despite these difficulties, endeavour to meet their obligations to the United Nations. While the share of ASEAN’s assessed contributions to the United Nations has been increasing, ASEAN remains strongly committed to fulfilling our financial obligations to the Organisation. We have heard it many times now: multilateralism is not an option, but a necessity. ASEAN calls on our fellow Member States to also re-affirm their support and their commitment to the United Nations and to multilateralism.

7 I thank you.

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