



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS BY AMBASSADOR ANTONIO M. LAGDAMEO, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES TO THE UNITED NATIONS, ON THE ORGANIZATION OF WORK OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE AT THE MAIN PART OF THE 77<sup>th</sup> SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, NEW YORK, 3 OCTOBER 2022**

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Thank you, Mr Chair.

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the 10 Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) on the Organization of Work of the Fifth Committee for the main part of its 77<sup>th</sup> session. At the outset, ASEAN aligns itself with the statement made by Pakistan, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Mr Chair, ASEAN takes this opportunity to congratulate you and the members of the Bureau on your election. We are confident that under your leadership, the Committee will engage in constructive deliberations in a fully transparent, consultative and timely manner, in accordance with the UN Charter, despite ongoing challenges such as the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

While we recognise that certain factors beyond our control, including the COVID-19 pandemic, have posed genuine difficulties to member states in paying their assessed contributions, we commend those who, despite these difficulties and challenges, endeavour to meet their obligations to the United Nations. ASEAN continues to call on member states to pay their assessments in full, on time and without conditions.

ASEAN expresses its appreciation to Ambassador Mher Margaryan, Permanent Representative of Armenia to the United Nations, his bureau members, and the Fifth Committee Secretariat for their stellar work during the 76<sup>th</sup> session. We also commend the Secretariat's continued efforts to adopt the best working practices for the Committee, specifically in facilitating the gradual transition back to in-person meetings, with due consideration of the progressive improvement of the prevailing public health situation.

Mr. Chair,

One important agenda item to be discussed this session is the annual budget cycle, which, as you know, concludes its third year of trial implementation on 31 December 2022. ASEAN believes that the annual budget cycle can facilitate the efficient delivery of UN mandates. The past years, during which we experienced the difficulties brought about by the pandemic, have demonstrated how necessary it is for the United Nations to be agile and responsive. At the same time, ASEAN stresses the importance of preserving the sequential nature of the budget process, which may be affected during the three-year trial period of the budget cycle. We, therefore, look forward to hearing updates from the secretariat on the experience with implementing the annual budget during its trial period in 2020-2022.

Programme planning is an essential tool in ensuring that the UN's budget is focused and aligned with its mandates. In reviewing the Programme Plan, ASEAN acknowledges the role of the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC) in examining the Programme budget in accordance with its mandate and following the sequential nature of the review process.

Mr. Chair,

For this session, ASEAN is committed to a productive discussion of the agenda items of the Fifth Committee. In the weeks ahead, the Committee will also address other issues of crucial importance to the General Assembly and the Organization. ASEAN will actively engage in the deliberations on issues such as the Proposed Programme Budget for 2023, Review of Annual budgetary cycle involving CPC and ACABQ Sequencing, the United Nations Common System, Pension System, Umoja, Staff Entitlements and Conditions of Service for ICSC and ACABQ, the review of progress in the implementation of Management Reform, Special Political Missions, subvention to the Extraordinary Chambers in the Court of Cambodia, and Construction and property management, especially the Seismic mitigation retrofit and life-cycle replacements project at the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, or ESCAP, as well as all Programme Budget Implications and Revised Estimates.

We have much work ahead of us. We trust that the Committee will devote equal dedication to all agenda items and that our discussions will be fruitful, and be conducted in an open, transparent, and inclusive manner.

ASEAN will continue to work constructively with all delegations to find middle-ground positions on these various crucial topics in order to reach a timely conclusion of this session.

I thank you, Mr Chair.

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