



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS (ASEAN) BY MS. MARIVIL VILLA VALLES, FIFTH COMMITTEE EXPERT OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES TO THE UNITED NATIONS, ON AGENDA ITEMS 134: PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET 2024 and 135: PROPOSED PROGRAMME PLAN FOR 2024, AT THE MAIN PART OF THE 78th SESSION OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY, NEW YORK, USA
10 OCTOBER 2023**

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I have the honor to deliver this statement on behalf of the Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) on agenda items 134 on *Proposed Programme Budget for 2024* and 135 on *Proposed Programme Plan for 2024*. ASEAN aligns itself with the statement of Cuba, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

At the outset, we would like to express our appreciation and thanks for H.E. the Secretary-General for the presentation of his reports on programme plan and budget for 2024. And likewise, our gratitude to Mr. Abdallah Bachar Bong, Chair of the ACABQ, and the Vice-Chair of the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC), for introducing their respective reports.

Mr. Chair, cognizant of the global efforts to address development challenges on every front, the Secretary General proposed a programme budget, which aims to bolster our moral duty and obligation to uphold a more inclusive, sustainable and prosperous future. The proposed budget, as indicated in the reports, includes programme plans for the year, which are required to effectively implement programmatic activities and legislative mandates.

In this regard, we look forward to the secretariat's comprehensive report on the implementation of the annual budget cycle in 2028, to allow consultations on how to further strengthen the budget process, ensure more accurate planning and improve the budget liquidity of the organization. We, as member States and partners of United Nations, hope to make the most out of what we expect to be an improved budget process.

ASEAN appreciates the continued efforts to improve the Programme Plan presentation and ensure substantial discussions in the CPC. However, a lot remains to be done to improve the conduct of the review process. In particular, during the recently-concluded 63rd session of the CPC, ten (10) out of the twenty-eight (28) programmes did not reach consensus, and therefore resulted with no conclusions and recommendations. This was a substantive increase from last year's, despite the extension of the CPC's session to five (5) weeks with the view to allowing more time for deliberations.

Mr. Chair, ASEAN supports the importance of preserving the role of the CPC, as the main subsidiary organ of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) for planning, programming, evaluation and coordination. The CPC is a useful forum of the United

Nations that remains a legitimate body entrusted to provide guidance on the Secretary-General's Programme Plans. We hope that more can be done to ensure that consensus can be reached on all programmes for the benefit of all Member States. ASEAN is ready to do its part, including by assuming the role of facilitator of the negotiations, as one of our Member States has agreed to, under this agenda item.

Having said that, the 18 Programme plans, which have been adopted, will convey clear messages to the Secretariat on what Member States consider appropriate, what can be improved and what requires modifications. This guidance, after the endorsement of the wider membership, will have an immediate impact on the implementation of the UN mandates in 2024. They will also serve as future reference for Programme managers in the upcoming years as to how they can improve their work by incorporating the views of Member States and reflecting these accordingly in the narratives.

On the other hand, the programme budget is a key agenda item, since it serves as the resource base underpinning the United Nations to enable it to fulfil its role and execute its legislated mandates. The budget reports reflect the strategic vision of the Secretary-General in delivering the mandates and priorities agreed upon by Member States. For this reason, ASEAN has always been fully committed to efforts towards ensuring the delivery of a substantial budget on time, and will continue to work with all sides to ensure that the budget is finalised in a timely fashion. We reiterate our request to the Secretariat and to all Member States to abide by the consistent decisions of the General Assembly that no changes to the established budget methodology, procedures and practices or to the financial regulations should be implemented without prior review and approval by the General Assembly.

Mr. Chair, today, the world has grown even more complex because of the increasing challenges affecting our development. As we rallied together to put forward our collective effort including at the SDG Summit and the Preparatory Ministerial Meeting for the Summit of the Future 2024, we know what our priorities are at this point in order to turbocharge the SDGs, prepare for the future, and contribute to global efforts towards a fair, inclusive, and sustainable future for all.

In line with this, we echo the call for greater financial resources allocated for Technical Cooperation and the Development Account to strengthen support for concrete projects geared towards promoting development causes and capacity building in the field.

We have reaffirmed our existing commitments through the SDGs and the United Nations Charter. We will continue to collaborate towards strengthening the foundations of an effective multilateral cooperation, which can deal with existing, new and future challenges and threats.

In this regard, ASEAN will continue to work towards the strengthening of the development pillar, among others, and ensuring adequate resources for bodies that are integral to it.

On that note, ASEAN is committed to working constructively with all the delegations during budget deliberations in order to reach an agreement that is in the best interests of the organization.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

