



KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA
PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

327 East 58th Street, New York, NY 10022
TEL: (212) 336-0777 FAX: (212) 759-7672



Please check against delivery

STATEMENT BY

HIS EXCELLENCY MR. SOVANN KE
AMBASSADOR, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF THE KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

ON BEHALF OF
THE ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS (ASEAN)

SIXTH COMMITTEE
AGENDA ITEM 85
THE RULE OF LAW AT THE NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEVELS

76TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

NEW YORK, 8 OCTOBER 2021

Thank you, Madam Chair,

I have the honor to address the Sixth Committee today on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

ASEAN would like to thank the Secretary General for his report on “Strengthening and coordinating United Nations rule of law activities,” contained in document A/76/235. The report notes UN action in strengthening and coordinating rule of law activities at national and international levels, while touching on the support the UN provides to its Member States in promotion of rule of law activities globally.

Since the founding of ASEAN in 1967, we have embraced promotion of the rule of law in all its aspects, and we continue to do so to the day. The ASEAN Charter enshrines the fundamental principles and purposes of the rule of law, asserting ASEAN’s respect for peace and security, good governance and respect for the promotion and protection of human rights.

As a rules-based inter-governmental organization, ASEAN has long been committed to stability and security in the region. Important treaties, declarations and instruments have paved the way for our success, including the ASEAN Charter, the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia of 1976, the Treaty on Southeast Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone of 1995, the Declaration on Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea of 2002, the Declaration of the East Asia Summit on the Principles for Mutually Beneficial Relations of 2011, and the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration of 2012 together with the Phnom Penh Statement on its adoption. Moreover, ASEAN Member States continue to work with China towards the early conclusion of an effective and substantive Code of Conduct in the South China Sea consistent with international law, including the 1982 UNCLOS, within a mutually-agreed timeline.

The subtopic on “Measures to prevent and combat corruption” we discussed last year remains high on the agenda in promoting and contributing to strengthening the rule of law at national and international level. In this regard, ASEAN would like to reemphasize its expanded focus on good governance along with commitment to upholding the culture of integrity and anti-corruption at all levels of our governmental engagement. We strongly believe that transparent and accountable civil service is the backbone of good governance and its open engagement with the private sector and community-based organizations can further promote respect for the rule of law in our region and beyond.

Madam Chair,

ASEAN takes its anti-corruption efforts seriously. Corruption is complex problem, which undermines social and economic development, negatively impacts the effectiveness of

democratic institutions, and hampers progress for future generations. Corruption affects each and every country around the world, and thus must not be associated with any culture or people specifically.

All ten ASEAN Member States have ratified the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC), which provides a strong basis for anti-corruption action. ASEAN has been actively engaged in anti-corruption efforts with partners in the region, and these joint actions have resulted in the establishment of the South East Asia Parties against Corruption (SEA-PAC) in 2004, with the 15th SEA-PAC meeting taking place in October 2019 in Bangkok, Thailand.

Our experience shows that successful anti-corruption efforts require strengthening of cooperation and sharing of information among partners, particularly enhanced law enforcement cooperation. This necessitates close compliance with UNCAC obligations, including extradition, mutual legal assistance, and the recovery of assets and proceeds of corruption. Moreover, sharing of experiences, best practices, and exchange of views regarding effectiveness of anti-corruption efforts must be promoted.

Looking into the future, with a view to promoting the rule of law at the national and international levels, ASEAN urges enhancing coordination under existing bilateral and multilateral mechanisms, including UNCAC. Such efforts must be in full respect of the United Nations Charter, including principles of sovereign equality and non-interference in internal affairs of States.

We strongly support the work of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in this regard, and actively engaged in the special session of the General Assembly on the challenges and measures to prevent and combat corruption and strengthen international cooperation, which took place in June 2021.

Madam Chair,

ASEAN takes note of the Secretary-General's suggestion to consider a sub-topic on "Promoting a people-centred rule of law at the national and international levels as the foundation of our common agenda" for discussion at the 76th session of the General Assembly.

In line with this, ASEAN Political-Security Community Blueprint 2025 seeks to promote a rules-based, people-oriented and people-centred community and the rule of law at the national and international levels by nurturing the culture of integrity and anti-corruption among the people in our region. By instilling these principles into the policies and practices of the ASEAN Community, we seek to promote these ideals through implementation of relevant instruments as appropriate, including the 2030 Agenda for

Sustainable Development, particularly its goal 16 on peace, justice, and strong institutions.

I wish to conclude by reaffirming ASEAN's commitment to strengthening good governance, accessible institutions, and transparency and accountability. We strongly believe that this approach will further promote respect for the rule of law at the national and international levels, which will contribute to greater socio-economic development, peace, justice, and prosperity for all.

Thank you, Madam Chair.