



ASEAN DECLARATION ON GENDER EQUALITY AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT

WE, the Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (hereinafter referred to as “ASEAN”), namely: Brunei Darussalam, the Kingdom of Cambodia, the Republic of Indonesia, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Malaysia, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, the Republic of the Philippines, the Republic of Singapore, the Kingdom of Thailand, and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, on the occasion of the 43rd ASEAN Summit held on 5 September 2023:

RECALLING the principles of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights that recognises the family as the natural and fundamental unit of society and entitled to protection by society and the State, as well as the commitments of all ASEAN Member States to the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) including the full development and advancement of women and men, and girls and boys, and the commitment to achieving SDG 5;

REAFFIRMING the commitment of ASEAN to promote family development, women’s empowerment, gender equality, and child protection enshrined in all ASEAN related policies and regulations;

UPHOLDING the principles in the ASEAN Charter to enhance the well-being and livelihood of the peoples of ASEAN by providing them with equitable access to opportunities for human development, social welfare and justice, and to promote a people-oriented ASEAN in which all sectors of society are encouraged to participate in, and benefit from, the process of ASEAN integration and community-building;

RECALLING the Narrative of ASEAN Identity that was adopted by the ASEAN Leaders during the 37th ASEAN Summit in November 2020 which enunciates the values of respect, collectivism, and social harmony in ASEAN Community to increase ASEAN Awareness, Relevance, and Appreciation by ensuring the integration of ASEAN in its people’s daily lives, as well as increasing people to people contacts and emphasise in providing of ASEAN-related symbols and ideals in the community; and recalling further the Bandar Seri Begawan Declaration on the Importance of Family for Community Development and Nation-building as well as the ASEAN Comprehensive Framework on Care Economy;

WELCOMING Indonesia's chairmanship under the theme "ASEAN Matters: Epicentrum of Growth" as ASEAN collective commitments to strengthen ASEAN region to enable to address today's challenges and remain relevant and beneficial to its people, the region, and serving as the regions' epicentre of growth;

UNDERSCORING the crucial role of the family as an essential institution and building block of societies to address current and emerging crises, challenges and complexities, more so in the post-COVID 19 pandemic era, as well as the essential contributions of women and men, and girls and boys to the development and well-being of the whole family;

MINDFUL of prevailing social and cultural norms and gender stereotypes that perpetuate violence against women and children, unequal gender-based relations and burden of care work and households' responsibilities faced by women and men, and girls and boys in the family; whereas family as a social institution that imparts gender equality, non-discriminatory and non-gender-based violence values;

RECOGNISING that the advancement of family development, women's empowerment, and gender equality are necessary for socio-economic growth and inclusive development in ASEAN, and an important component of a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable community; that family development and women's empowerment are mutually complementary and reinforcing, where strong and supportive families provide the foundation for the promotion, protection and fulfilment of women's rights, and for women to achieve their aspirations and realise their full potential in partnership with men, in line with the ASEAN Community Vision to move towards a more inclusive community guided by a life-cycle approach;

EMPHASISING the importance of equal partnership between women and men, and girls and boys in all aspects, including the family, as families are the pivot upon which this partnership is nurtured and promoted, in line with the values of mutual respect, collectivism and social harmony.

DO HEREBY:

RESOLVE to work together towards strengthening family development, women's empowerment, gender equality, and inclusive sustainable growth in line with the values of respect, equality, collectivism, and social harmony, in accordance with prevailing national laws, policies and regulations, through the following actions:

1. Develop and implement strategies and approaches which strengthen family's resilience, and well-being throughout their life-cycle in ASEAN to achieve a condition in which every family has capacity to develop themselves and live independently and harmoniously in pursuit of a prosperous, safe and equal life through the development, implementation, and evaluation of family-centred policies in ASEAN and its Member States, and promote gender mainstreaming in these policies.

2. Promote economic empowerment of women, increasing opportunities for girls and women in education and vocational education training, mainstreaming gender into labour and employment policies and programmes toward balancing work-life balance and shared family responsibilities among men and women workers.
3. Strengthen regional and national capacities of stakeholders, including on sex-disaggregated data and statistics on family; to increase awareness on family inclusive approaches and family-centred and gender equality policies and programmes; and to monitor and evaluate the implementation of family-centred policies and programmes.
4. Increase and enable investments in building universal, gender-responsive and sustainable care systems, and social services to recognise and reduce the burden of unpaid care work for women and girls in family.
5. Strengthen cross-sectoral and inter-pillar cooperation across the ASEAN Community, such as through knowledge exchange and research, as well as engage ASEAN's relevant stakeholders, academia, and business and private sector, social enterprise, experts, practitioners, dialogue partners and international organisations among others, to promote family development, women's empowerment, gender equality and inclusive sustainable growth.

ENGAGE relevant ASEAN Sectoral Bodies in the three ASEAN Community Pillars together with women's organisations, civil society organisations, academic institutions, private sector, community partners in ASEAN, to strengthen collaboration on the implementation of this Declaration, and **TASK** the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Women (AMMW), with the support of the ASEAN Committee on Women (ACW), to undertake measures to implement this commitment, including mobilising appropriate resources and systematic review of the implementation.

Adopted on this Fifth Day of September in the Year Two Thousand and Twenty-Three in a single original copy in the English Language.