



JOINT STATEMENT OF THE ASEAN COMMITTEE IN ISLAMABAD ON THE OCCASION OF THE 59TH ASEAN DAY

Islamabad, Pakistan | 20 August 2026

The ASEAN Committee in Islamabad (ACI), comprising the diplomatic missions of Brunei Darussalam, the Republic of Indonesia, Malaysia, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, the Republic of the Philippines, the Kingdom of Thailand, and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, joins the ASEAN Member States and peoples in commemorating the **59th Anniversary of the Founding of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)**.

On 8 August 1967, the Founding Fathers of ASEAN gathered in Bangkok and signed the ASEAN Declaration, envisioning a region founded upon friendship, cooperation, peace, stability, and shared prosperity. Nearly six decades later, ASEAN has grown into a dynamic and increasingly influential regional community, demonstrating that diversity can be a source of strength and that dialogue, consultation, consensus and mutual trust can help nations address differences and pursue common interests.

The ACI welcomes the continued evolution of ASEAN as a **rules-based, people-centered and future-oriented Community**, guided by the ASEAN Charter and strengthened by the principles of mutual respect, peaceful settlement of disputes, non-interference, cooperation and adherence to international law. These principles remain at the heart of the ASEAN Way and continue to underpin ASEAN's contribution to regional peace, stability and cooperation.

The year 2026 carries particular significance for ASEAN. It marks the **first year of implementation of the ASEAN Community Vision 2045**, ASEAN's long-term roadmap towards a more resilient, innovative, dynamic, integrated and people-centred Community. It is also the **50th Anniversary of the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia**, whose enduring principles of peace, mutual respect, trust and peaceful coexistence continue to resonate not only within Southeast Asia but also among ASEAN's partners and the wider international community.

The ACI likewise welcomes **Timor-Leste as ASEAN's 11th Member State**, a historic development that further strengthens ASEAN's community-building journey and reflects the Association's continuing aspiration for a more inclusive and cohesive Southeast Asia.

Under the Philippines' Chairship of ASEAN in 2026, ASEAN is guided by the theme **"Navigating Our Future, Together."** The theme reflects ASEAN's determination to navigate an increasingly complex international environment through collective action and shared responsibility, anchored on three priorities: **(1) Peace and Security Anchors, (2) People Empowerment, and (3) Prosperity Corridors**.

Through these priorities, ASEAN seeks to strengthen peace and stability through dialogue and cooperation; empower its peoples and communities through inclusion, innovation and opportunity; and advance economic integration, connectivity, digital transformation and inclusive and sustainable development. These efforts contribute to the broader realization of the ASEAN Community Vision 2045 and its aspiration for a future-ready ASEAN.

The ACI reaffirms the importance of **ASEAN Centrality** in advancing these objectives. ASEAN-led mechanisms provide valuable platforms for dialogue, confidence-building, consultation and peaceful engagement among countries with diverse interests and



perspectives. The continued relevance of ASEAN Centrality demonstrates that regional cooperation need not be built upon uniformity, but can instead draw strength from diversity, inclusivity and a shared commitment to peaceful coexistence.

The ACI also recognizes the importance of ASEAN's partnership with the **Islamic Republic of Pakistan**. Since being accorded Sectoral Dialogue Partnership status in 1993 and acceding to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia in 2004, Pakistan has steadily strengthened its engagement with ASEAN. Pakistan's participation in the ASEAN Regional Forum and its growing bilateral cooperation with ASEAN Member States provide additional avenues for advancing mutual understanding and practical cooperation.

The ACI encourages the continued expansion of Pakistan-ASEAN engagement in areas of shared interest, including **trade and investment, connectivity, digital transformation, education, climate resilience, tourism, human resource development, science and technology, and people-to-people exchanges**. The ACI further recognizes the valuable role of academic, business, cultural and civil-society institutions in deepening these linkages.

As ASEAN navigates an international environment marked by geopolitical uncertainty, economic disruptions, technological transformation, climate change and other emerging challenges, the ACI remains committed to strengthening ASEAN's collective voice and presence in Pakistan. The Committee will continue to work closely with the Government of Pakistan, diplomatic partners, academic institutions, business communities and other stakeholders in promoting greater understanding and cooperation between ASEAN and Pakistan.

The ACI believes that ASEAN's greatest strength lies not only in its economic dynamism or strategic importance, but in the enduring bonds among its peoples and in its shared determination to build a peaceful, inclusive, resilient and prosperous region.

On this 59th ASEAN Day, the ASEAN Committee in Islamabad reaffirms its commitment to the ASEAN vision and to the spirit of “**Navigating Our Future, Together.**” As ASEAN moves forward in implementing Vision 2045, the ACI looks forward to working collectively with Pakistan and all partners towards a future defined by **peace, prosperity, resilience, inclusivity and shared opportunity**.

ASEAN: One Vision, One Identity, One Community.