Statement by
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on behalf of
The Association of the South East Asian Nations

General Debate of the Agenda item 19
Sustainable Development

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Mr. Chairman,

I have the honor to speak on behalf of the ten Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), namely Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao DPR, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam.

ASEAN aligns itself with the statement made by the distinguished representative of Fiji on behalf of the Group of 77. ASEAN would also like to thank the Secretary-General for the reports presented under this agenda item.

Mr. Chairman,

Sustainable development, by far, is the most important development framework conceived by our generation. On the twentieth anniversary of the Rio Earth Summit last year, world leaders reaffirmed its relevancy.

Keeping with the promise made twenty years ago on sustainable development has always been a huge challenge. Yet, we have gained important lessons along the way. The outcome document of Rio+20 underscored our common endeavor to address the prevailing sustainable development gaps in a concerted manner. Through continuous commitment and concrete actions, ASEAN believes our commitment to sustainable development can be advanced.

In this connection, allow me to underscore some important matters with regard to sustainable development.
First, is on the follow-up process of the Rio+20 Conference.

We relate to the three Rio+20 follow-up processes, namely the OWG on SDGs, the Intergovernmental Committee on Finance for Sustainable Development (ICFSD) as well as efforts to realize the mandate to establish the technology facilitation mechanism.

ASEAN supports both the current process of the OWG SDGs and the ICFSD. Both processes serve as important links to the global development agenda, and in shaping the development agenda beyond 2015. The outcome of the ICFSD is especially significant to sustainable development and the implementation of the global development agenda. We expect that its work would deliver significant inputs to advance the mobilization of financial resources.

With regard to technology transfer, ASEAN recognizes technology as one of the key means of implementation. It is a pending mandate, which ASEAN hopes would be realized under this agenda item this year. In this context, ASEAN supports the findings and conclusions of the UNSG in his report A/67/348, regarding the establishment of an intergovernmental working group to agree on a global mechanism for technology facilitation.

Second, is on the follow-up to the inaugural meeting of the High Level Political Forum (HLPF)

ASEAN is encouraged by the positive and constructive tone of the first inaugural meeting of the HLPF last September. The meeting rightly emphasized poverty eradication as well as sustainable development as the core objectives of the post-2015 development agenda.

We need to ensure that at the next substantive meeting, the HLPF will truly perform its function in mainstreaming sustainable development in the development agenda in a holistic, transparent and action-oriented manner.

In line with its mandate, the HLPF needs to be able to maintain a focused, relevant, dynamic and action-oriented agenda. It is in such a way that the HLPF could prove itself useful in generating the momentum for change, realizing Rio+20’s vision, and not be reduced to just being a new meeting place.

Third, is ensuring the timely Implementation of the Outcome Document of the Special Event to follow up efforts made towards achieving the MDGs

ASEAN is of the view that enhanced commitments and concrete actions are indeed important to pave the way for timely achievement of the lagging goals of the MDGs and in addressing the challenges of sustainable development such as desertification, land degradation and drought, as well as continued biodiversity loss to name just a few.

With disaster risk increasing globally, acceleration of the MDGs will require a risk-sensitive approach. Geographically located on one of the most prone region to natural disasters, ASEAN highly consider the importance of building resilience against disasters.

Therefore accelerated actions, including the implementation of existing commitments are required to ensure efforts to halt and reverse the negative consequences of these challenges.
Fourth, addressing the challenges of climate change

Climate change is one of the most serious global challenges of our times. In strengthening regional coordination and undertaking concrete actions to respond to the adverse impacts of climate change, ASEAN is currently in the process of implementing the ASEAN Climate Change Initiative (ACCI) and ASEAN Action Plan on Joint Response to Climate Change.

On the global front, ASEAN fervently looks forward to a successful outcome of the Warsaw Climate Conference. We reiterate the importance of achieving a comprehensive, balanced, member-states’ driven outcome in Warsaw, guided by the principles and provisions of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).
ASEAN also reiterates the importance of honoring the principle of common but differentiated responsibility and respective capabilities, in our pursuit for a new climate regime in 2015.

Finally Mr. Chairman,

Rio+20 recognized that sustainable development must be at the core the post-2015 development agenda. However, poverty still stands in the way of making sustainable development a reality. Ultimately the aim of the post-2015 development era must be to end poverty in all its forms, drawing on the best practices and lessons learned from MDGs.

ASEAN underscores the importance of maintaining an open, transparent, member-states’ driven and inclusive approach in the deliberations.

I thank you.