Statement by

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the United Nations

before the Second Committee

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Agenda Item 21: Globalization and Interdependence

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I am speaking on behalf of the ten Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), namely Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Vietnam and my own country, Thailand, on this important Agenda Item on Globalization and Interdependence.

At the outset, ASEAN aligns itself with the statement delivered by the distinguished representative of Fiji on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

1. Role of the United Nations

A renewed global partnership is needed to address the challenges of globalization. The changing character and glowing complexity of globalization require a more effective and inclusive multilateral system to ensure that everyone will benefit from globalization. ASEAN reaffirms our full support to the central role of the United Nations in global policy governance based on inclusiveness and transparency and in promoting development in the context of globalization and interdependence.

We thank the Secretary-General for his reports pertaining to this Agenda Item, namely the Role of the United Nations in Promoting Development in the Context of Globalization and Interdependence; Science and Technology for Development; Development Cooperation with Middle-income Countries and Culture and Development.

2. Economic globalization

ASEAN agrees with the UNSG’s report on “international trade and development” that International trade can be a powerful catalyst for achieving socioeconomic objectives. It can serve as an engine to propel growth and as an instrument for poverty alleviation for all countries and peoples.

ASEAN must emphasize that trade does not always lead to sustainable development. We must therefore continue to implement effective trade-related policies in order to ensure equitable, inclusive and sustainable development. These include ensuring free and fair trade and investment, reducing the uses of non-tariff measures and connecting producers to global markets.

On our part, economic integration through trade and investment has been a major driving force of ASEAN’s growth and economic development. We believe that the realization of the ASEAN Economic Community in 2015 will provide even greater opportunities for us to achieve our development goals and also provide new impetus to the global economic recovery.
ASEAN also believes that a rule-based global trading system will help support our efforts to achieve our development goals. The 9th Ministerial Conference (MC9) in Bali in December 2013 needs to yield a meaningful and balanced outcome that benefits all member countries. In this regard, ASEAN member countries commit to demonstrate the political will and flexibility necessary to achieve convergence by MC9. We encourage other member countries to approach the conference in the same spirit.

However, trade alone will not be sufficient to ensure the inclusiveness and sustainability of development. Coherent institutional and policy support are also required to complement international trade. We must also take into account the special needs and circumstances of developing countries, especially, the Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDs) and conflict and post-conflict societies.

The role of the UN and other international financial institutions must be further strengthened to assist developing countries and promote global economic governance through different measures and arrangements.

3. Science and technology

Science, technology and innovation, essential pieces of the post-2015 development agenda, will play a vital role in meeting the challenges of globalization. However, many developing countries still lack affordable access to science and technology, especially in information and communication technology (ICT).

ASEAN believes that the international technology regime needs to be more in line with and complement the UN sustainable development goals. International mechanisms are necessary for effective technology transfers between developed and developing countries as well as among developing countries. Together, we must promote people’s greater awareness on science and technology development and its roles and contributions towards sustainable economic development as well as in providing ways and means for innovation.

4. Development cooperation among middle-income countries

ASEAN agrees that an overreaching, well defined strategic framework for development cooperation among middle-income countries and improvement in coordination and cooperation with the UN system are necessary. ASEAN is of the view that the cooperation should focus on redesigning development strategies of middle-income countries to avoid the middle income trap and ensure sustained long-term economic growth. We encourage more activities in key areas of cooperation, namely innovative economy, physical and human capital accumulation and improvement as well as research and development.
5. Culture and Development

ASEAN acknowledges the importance of culture to the achievement of sustainable development and the MDGs. We recognize and commend the role of the UN system, including the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), in providing support to assist member states, upon request, in developing their national capacities to optimize the contribution of culture to their national development.

In this regard, ASEAN welcomes the World Culture in Development Forum (WCF) to be held in Bali, Indonesia on November 24-29 2013. The Forum expectedly could further enrich the debate on the impact of culture to the three pillars of sustainable development.

6. International migration and development

International migration poses both benefits and challenges for development. In order to manage migration in a sustainable manner, migration management needs to guarantee safe and humane conditions for migrants as well as their prospect for growth and development.

ASEAN supports the High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development. We consider the Dialogue to be an important part of the process. It is our hope that the linkages between migration and sustainable development will gain greater recognition from the international community and be adequately reflected in the relevant post-2015 thematic priorities. This will encourage greater mainstreaming of migration into national development policies of member countries.

ASEAN is committed to making the United Nations a more effective organization that continues to underpin the multilateral system. ASEAN is committed to working with other member countries and the organization in addressing the challenges that lie ahead of us as we forge ahead together into the post-2015 development era.

Thank you.