Mr. Chair,

1. I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

2. On other disarmament measures and international security, the pervasive and constantly evolving nature of cyber threats requires coordinated expertise from multiple stakeholders across different domains and across borders. To this end, ASEAN has established a Cybersecurity Coordinating Committee last year to promote cross-sectoral and cross-pillar cooperation to strengthen cybersecurity in the region. The Committee also welcomed the proposal to develop a Regional Action Plan on the Implementation of the Norms of Responsible State Behaviour in Cyberspace to facilitate ASEAN Member States’ prioritization on the implementation of the 11 voluntary, non-binding norms of responsible State behaviour in the use of ICTs.
3. The 6th ASEAN Ministerial Conference on Cybersecurity held in October highlighted the importance of taking practical steps to enhance the cybersecurity of our region, and the urgent need to protect national and cross-border Critical Information Infrastructure. In addition, the 15th ASEAN Defence Ministers’ Meeting (ADMM) adopted a concept paper on ADMM Cybersecurity and Information Centre of Excellence to promote cooperation on cybersecurity and information.

4. ASEAN will continue coordinating cyber capacity-building programmes to help its Member States to implement the 2015 GGE norms, and also to level up the region’s cyber capacities as a whole. This common goal drives the work of the ASEAN-Singapore Cybersecurity Centre of Excellence in Singapore and the ASEAN-Japan Cybersecurity Capacity Building Centre in Thailand.

5. ASEAN also recognises the need to further develop, on the basis of consensus, voluntary and non-binding norms of responsible State behaviour in cyberspace. The UN must continue to play a central role in discussions on cybersecurity, which must remain open and inclusive. ASEAN welcomes the consensus reports of the Open-Ended Working Group on the Developments in the Field of Information and Communications Technologies in the Context of International Security (OEWG) and the sixth iteration of the UNGGE. ASEAN is pleased that Ambassador Burhan Gafoor of Singapore was elected Chair of the OEWG (2021-2025).
6. On **regional disarmament**, ASEAN reiterates our commitment to the South East Asia Nuclear Weapon Free Zone (SEANWFZ) Treaty. We also reaffirm our adherence to the fundamental principles and purposes enshrined in the ASEAN Charter and Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia in upholding a rules-based regional order anchored in international law. This includes collectively underscoring the importance of strengthening international and regional cooperation in nuclear disarmament and peaceful uses of nuclear energy. On this, we advance our efforts through collaboration between ASEAN and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) through various initiatives including the implementation of Nuclear Technology for Controlling Plastic Pollution (NUTEC) project in South-East Asia Region to address global plastic pollution.

7. We also welcome the finalization of the ASEAN Protocol for Emergency Response Preparedness to a Nuclear or Radiological Emergency by the ASEAN Network of Regulatory Bodies on Atomic Energy (ASEANTOM) this year. It was jointly developed by ASEANTOM and IAEA aimed to strengthen the coordination of ASEAN Member States for preparing and responding to nuclear or radiological emergencies in ASEAN countries or elsewhere potentially having an impact on the region, in the areas of information sharing, assessment, support for decision making and public communications.
8. We also note with satisfaction that ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) has continued to progress as a key multilateral platform for dialogue and consultation on regional political and security issues of common interest and concern.

Mr. Chair,

9. Given the persistent threats to international security, it is necessary more than ever to preserve and strengthen the nature, role and purpose of the various fora under the UN disarmament machinery. ASEAN is of the firm view that global disarmament and non-proliferation issues can be best addressed through multilateralism. Further, ASEAN recognizes that disarmament and non-proliferation issues cut across political-security, economic, and socio-cultural aspects. In particular, ASEAN wishes to emphasize the following:

   i. We encourage all Member States to work constructively to resolve outstanding issues and look forward to the UN Disarmament Commission (UNDC) substantive session which has been postponed in the past three (3) years;

   ii. We continue to advocate for the enlargement of the membership of the Conference on Disarmament and for its increased interactions with relevant stakeholders to bring fresh perspectives to the body;

   iii. We welcome further coordination and cooperation between the General Assembly and Security Council on the non-proliferation
and disarmament of WMDs, illicit proliferation of conventional weapons and small arms and light weapons; and

iv. We also reaffirm our support for the Regional Center for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific (UNRCPD) in promoting regional disarmament priorities, bridging needs and fostering cooperation in our region.

Mr. Chair,

10. In conclusion, ASEAN reaffirms its commitment to be future-ready for any security challenges and to enhance our cooperation with the international community in advancing our shared goals of a world free of nuclear weapons as well as a peaceful, secure and resilient cyberspace. Thank you.