



**President U Win Myint sends message on occasion of 51st Anniversary
of founding of ASEAN**

(8 August 2018)

Esteemed Citizens,

Today marks the fifty-first anniversary of the founding of ASEAN — a regional grouping of ten countries that strives to offer a greater sense of hope, expectation, confidence and togetherness to more than six hundred million people in the Southeast Asian region. On this special occasion, I have the pleasure to extend my warmest greetings and best wishes to the people of Myanmar as well as to the peoples of the Member States of ASEAN.

ASEAN Member States share a long-standing tradition of cultural and historical linkages. These affiliations though diverse, bind them together, bridge their differences and make ASEAN more united in dealing with the emerging challenges.

When ASEAN was established on 8 August 1967, there were skepticism about the continued existence of the Association as countries in the region were unique in its diversity and faced with a myriad of challenges. Nevertheless, it is the spirit of ASEAN as well as shared aspirations and strong commitments which have made ASEAN more united, vibrant and stronger than ever. The spirit of mutual respect, trust and cooperation which Member States have forged since 1967 has been the basis for a consensus-based approach that contributed to regional peace and stability we have greatly enjoyed today.

As we celebrate today's achievements, we should not forget the vision of the Founding Fathers of ASEAN who signed Bangkok Declaration that paved the way for a promising regional organization since 1967. We should

applaud their wisdom, vision and courage, and use them as a source of ASEAN's future inspirations.

Esteemed Citizens,

ASEAN has common desire and strong commitments to enhancing peace, security and stability in the region, building vibrant, sustainable and highly integrated economies and uplifting the living standards of its people. ASEAN, 51 years after its inception, has successfully transformed from a loose regional grouping into a rules-based organization with its own Charter and legal personality. ASEAN has been moving forward progressively to a politically cohesive, economically integrated, socially responsible, and truly people-oriented, people-centered and rules-based ASEAN Community.

ASEAN has been growing steadily and emerging as one of the world's fastest-growing markets. It is the sixth largest economy in the world and aiming at becoming the fourth largest single market by 2030. Furthermore, ASEAN has the world's third largest labour forces which provide a greater opportunity for trade, investment and regional prosperity.

ASEAN is now forging together towards realization of ASEAN Community through ASEAN way, which is based on equality and mutual respect, shared commitments and responsibility, consultation and consensus and peaceful settlement of disputes. ASEAN also underlines the importance of complementarities between ASEAN Community Vision 2025, which was endorsed by ASEAN Leaders in 2015, and the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to uplift the living standards of the peoples of ASEAN.

Despite attaining many tangible achievements in community building efforts, ASEAN today is facing with emerging challenges of traditional and non-traditional issues. In addressing the issues of common concern such as trans-national crimes, terrorism, cyber security, climate change and environmental degradation, food and energy security, ASEAN has been able to demonstrate the collective strength and resilience that lie at our core and more united in the face of these challenges. In this regard, it is most timely and relevant that Singapore, Chair of ASEAN has selected "Resilience and Innovative ASEAN" as a theme for this year which strengthens our efforts to meet future challenges.