**CO-CHAIRS' PRESS RELEASE**

**7th ASEAN-PACIFIC ALLIANCE MINISTERIAL MEETING**

1. ASEAN and the Pacific Alliance welcomed the Ministerial Meeting between the two regional mechanisms during the 7th ASEAN-Pacific Alliance Ministerial Meeting, held on 25 September 2024 on the sidelines of the 79th Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in New York City, USA. The Meeting was co-chaired by H.E. Enrique A. Manalo, Secretary for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Philippines, and H.E. Alberto van Klaveren, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Chile, and was the first high level in-person interaction between ASEAN and the Pacific Alliance after their last Ministerial Meeting in September 2019.
2. Acknowledging global challenges including post-pandemic economic recovery, climate change and disruptive technologies, the Ministers stressed the importance of continued inter-regional cooperation in mutually beneficial areas for the peoples of the two regions. In particular, the Ministers emphasized the importance of promoting free trade, digital economy, and people-to-people exchange. They also expressed continued support to the Micro, Small and Medium sized Enterprises (MSMEs) as a vital driving force of the economies of both regions.
3. The Ministers reviewed the progress of the implementation of the ASEAN-Pacific Alliance (PA) Work Plan (2021-2025), following its adoption in November 2021, and underscored the need to further enhance ASEAN-Pacific Alliance cooperation in the areas of mutual interest, as may be mutually agreed, including trade and investment, digital economy, MSMEs, tourism, education and cultural exchange, people-to-people engagement, science and technology, and sustainable development. The Ministers also took special note of the virtual forum held on 26 June 2024, under the working theme "Mainstreaming Gender Equality: Sharing best practices between the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the Pacific Alliance", where both regional blocs reviewed the importance of sex disaggregated data to push forward women's economic empowerment, and shared the efforts made to mainstreaming the gender perspective in our regions, including the main regional strategies on inclusive trade.
4. The Ministers updated the ASEAN-Pacific Alliance Framework Agreement for Cooperation (FAC), adopted in September 2016, by endorsing the addendum to formally acknowledge that the National Coordinators of the Pacific Alliance subsumed the role of the Group of External Relations of the Pacific Alliance since July 2019. Both sides shared the relevance of institutionalizing the changes by revisiting the FAC periodically.
5. The Ministers noted the recent developments in ASEAN and the Pacific Alliance, including the 57th ASEAN Foreign Ministers’ Meeting and Related Meetings in July 2024, the upcoming 44th and 45th ASEAN Summits and Related Summits in October 2024 and the Pacific Alliance Presidential Summit next December in Chile, and the progress on the accession process of Costa Rica as a PA member and Singapore as a PA associated state.

New York, 25 September 2024