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Statement

by

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**Cooperation Between the UN and Regional and Subregional Organizations in
Maintaining International Peace and Security: the Role of ASEAN**

Security Council

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Thank You, Mr. President,

We thank the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam for convening this very useful and timely discussion. We extend our gratitude to the Secretaries General for their insightful remarks on a topic that is dear to the hearts of many across our Caribbean Civilization.

Mr. President,

Regional and sub-regional organizations act as conduits that link our global governance architecture to the local and contextual realities found within many states across the world. For small island developing states like ours, regional cooperation creates much-needed buffers that insulate us from the rigours of a rapidly changing, and oft-times tumultuous, global political economy. Indeed, threats to international peace and security are transnational in character and necessitate collective action in order to yield just and equitable outcomes. Such threats include climate change, cross-border terrorism, mass human displacement, and other hazards that hold **no regard** for territorial integrity and easily overwhelm the capacity of many states. For small states like ours, the sharing of such burdens on a regional basis is the only feasible choice.

Mr President,

Justice and equity are often borne through a shared history of struggle and solidarity. Collective struggle shapes collective identities, which in turn fosters deep-rooted and meaningful relationships. In the case of ASEAN, these relationships are conditioned by culturally determined modes of interaction among member states, and mediated in line with the principles of sovereignty, non-

interference, and mutual respect. In the context of CARICOM, our regional identity takes the form of a “Unity in Diversity” embodied across our shared institutions - fostering trust, confidence, and a spirit of partnership. In both cases, a normative "togetherness" is nurtured without impeding local cultures and values from which member states draw their national identities. For both CARICOM and ASEAN, the full respect of sovereignty is an essential condition for peace.

What makes ASEAN distinctive against many similar organizations, however, is its unique method of conflict prevention and conflict resolution, known as the "ASEAN Way." Based on the norms of pragmatism, reciprocity, compromise, discretion and non-confrontational negotiating styles, ASEAN has been able to craft a zone of stable peace without transcending the traditions of statehood that regionalism intends to enhance. At a time when many conflicts seem to stem from clashes of identity along ethnic, communal or political lines, the "ASEAN Way" might offer our United Nations a template from which we can settle our many differences. Similarly, the "Unity in Diversity" fomented across CARICOM can instil in this United Nations a spirit of togetherness while allowing local cultures and national values to flourish.

Excellencies,

If we **truly** want to craft a more peaceful and prosperous world, we can look to regional groups like ASEAN that have found ways to integrate their differences into a singular diverse fabric. What this calls for, *above all else*, is the full respect of *each* country's right to self-determination, no matter what political, social, or economic path they may choose.

Mr. President,

We stand at a dangerous cross-road today. Some parts of the world are being consumed by fire, while others are engulfed by water. As the climate crisis continues to grow in its scope and complexity, we must all band together nationally, regionally *and* globally so that we may weather this storm. As a former Caribbean regionalist, Forbes Burnham, once said "it is either we integrate, or we perish." We must work together in the interest of our common humanity.

Thank you.