



SUMMARY REPORT

AICHR REGIONAL TRAINING PROGRAMME ON HUMAN RIGHTS

WORKSHOPS ON INTERSECTION BETWEEN CONFLICT AND HUMAN RIGHTS: PATHWAYS AND APPROACHES TO PEACE IN ASEAN

Workshop 1: Building Peace — From Conflict Prevention to Sustainable Peace

2 July 2025

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Introduction

1. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations ('ASEAN') has long played a pivotal role in the region's conflict prevention, conflict management, and peacebuilding efforts, guided by principles of non-interference, consensus-based decision-making, and respect for sovereignty. The ASEAN Political-Security Community aims to enhance regional peace, stability, and security through dialogue and cooperation. However, in today's rapidly evolving geopolitical landscape, ASEAN faces growing challenges, including criticisms of its non-interference policy, constraints on decision-making due to consensus requirements, and the need to balance sovereignty with humanitarian and human rights considerations.

2. To address these challenges and enhance ASEAN's peacebuilding capacity, the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights ('AICHR') is implementing an initiative to develop ASEAN pathways to, and conceptual frameworks on, peace, conflict prevention, and management. Six workshops are planned to take place from July to October 2025 to discuss complex questions regarding human rights, peace, and development.

3. Given AICHR's overarching mandate as ASEAN's Charter body, it is well-positioned to bring together key stakeholders within ASEAN working on peace and peacebuilding efforts. It can enhance ASEAN's capacity to operationalise diplomatic and interlocutor tracks by undertaking strategic initiatives to advance peace. AICHR can also provide a safe space for dialogue, and to theorise and serve as a platform for collaboration among ASEAN actors.

4. The inaugural workshop in the series was convened on 2 July 2025 by AICHR under the leadership of Malaysia as AICHR Chair, with Indonesia and Thailand as co-convenors. The topic of this workshop was 'Building Peace — From Conflict Prevention to Sustainable Peace'.

The meeting brought together AICHR Representatives; representatives from Timor-Leste; officials from relevant ASEAN sectoral bodies; ASEAN Secretariat staff; representatives from selected national human rights institutions; members of civil society organisations (‘CSOs’) with consultative relationship with AICHR; as well as regional and international experts, including representatives from the Australian Human Rights Commission, UN Women, and academic institutions with experience in human rights, peacebuilding, and women, peace and security.

Welcome Remarks

5. The first speaker to deliver welcome remarks was H.E. Associate Professor Dr. Bhanubhatra Jittiang, Representative of Thailand to AICHR and one of the co-proponents of the AICHR initiative to develop guidance on pathways to peace for ASEAN. He affirmed Thailand’s commitment to human rights and regional stability, highlighting that peace is a deliberate process that must be built intentionally and with purpose. He recognised that peace has been integral to ASEAN since its inception, with the original ASEAN Declaration of 1967 (also known as the Bangkok Declaration) drafted in the hope that it would secure peace, freedom, and prosperity.

6. He reflected on the discussions during the launch of AICHR’s Thematic Study on the Right to Peace on 1 July 2025, highlighting the importance of concepts such as negative peace (i.e. the absence of war) as well as positive peace (which requires countries and communities to invest in actively building and sustaining peace). His own work as an academic looks at how conflict impacts displaced populations, generates humanitarian needs, and challenges commitments to upholding human dignity. His research on refugees shows how people do not choose to abandon their homes and become refugees; rather, they want peace, which requires the creation of environments where people can live in safety and fully enjoy their fundamental freedoms and human rights.

7. He stressed that when ASEAN examines issues such as conflict prevention and sustainable peace, it is critical to leave no one behind. This means protecting all groups in ASEAN, including women, children, persons with disabilities, Indigenous Peoples, LGBTQI+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex+) persons, and other vulnerable communities. Their contributions to peace and to the development of robust economic societies must also be recognised. Thailand is committed to promoting a culture of peace and open dialogue, which he noted is the most effective pathway to overcoming conflict and forging peace. ASEAN has built strong foundations through dialogues and peaceful conflict prevention, guided by mutual respect. However, in an era where broader regional architectures are being put to the test, it is important to ask to what extent the ASEAN way, and existing principles and tools, can still guide us through uncertainty.

8. He posed the question of whether there are new tools, frameworks, or principles that can be developed collectively to address changing regional challenges. He encouraged participants to go beyond conceptual debates and to actively shape tangible outcomes that can

transform the lives of people in ASEAN. He hoped that, through respectful discussion and debate, strategies and action plans could be developed to build sustainable peace that reflects human rights and a people-centred ASEAN.

9. **H.E. Anita A. Wahid**, Representative of Indonesia to AICHR, delivered her welcome remarks online, in her role as a co-proponent of the initiative, reiterating the importance of this work at a time when the region faces major threats to peace. She highlighted that peace built without justice and respect for human rights is often temporary, and that development achieved without the protections of human rights is rarely sustainable. Peacebuilding must address root causes; otherwise, it will likely contribute to ongoing instability and deepening divisions.

10. She encouraged analysis of how human rights violations fuel conflict, as well as how human rights frameworks can contribute to sustainable peace through people-centred approaches to conflict prevention and resolution, and peacebuilding. The initiative offers an opportunity to strengthen regional dialogue and cooperation, while prompting reflection on how ASEAN can balance principles of non-interference with the protection of human rights, in the context of shared values of peace, dignity, justice, and people-centred development.

11. Welcome remarks were delivered by **I Gusti Agung Wesaka Puja**, Executive Director at the ASEAN Institute for Peace and Reconciliation (ASEAN-IPR), through a pre-recorded message. He encouraged ASEAN to view human rights in a positive light rather than adopting a defensive attitude, and observed that ASEAN's approach has evolved over time, culminating in the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration. Article 38 on the right to peace emphasises the duty of Member States to ensure peace and stability are maintained through avenues of cooperation.

12. He noted that concepts of peace and human rights have always been deeply entwined: peace is seen as a prerequisite to human rights, and human rights form the foundation for building and sustaining peace. Conflict, however, often provides a fertile ground for violations of human rights, and such conditions can pose serious obstacles to creating an inclusive post-conflict framework. Restoring a peaceful society is not only achieved through peace agreements, but is also measured by the extent to which the rights and dignity of every human being are respected and restored by the implementation of such peace agreements. This underscores the need to address the root causes of conflict by building more just and equitable societies.

13. He referred to the Thematic Study on the Right to Peace launched by AICHR the previous day, noting that the right to peace entails living in an environment of minimal or no conflict, characterised by the promotion of human development and a culture of peace, including respect for fundamental human rights. He highlighted the work of ASEAN-IPR in this regard, and elaborated that ASEAN-IPR and AICHR held their first official meeting in 2024, where they identified two areas for collaboration: raising awareness of the importance of dialogue and mutual understanding, and examining non-traditional security issues. He also noted the recommendation for the two bodies to have a regular annual exchange. He affirmed the potential to work together on issues relating to peace and human rights, which fall within both their mandates. He concluded by reiterating that ASEAN-IPR stands ready to collaborate

with AICHR to support human rights and peace efforts in line with the *ASEAN Community Vision 2045 “Resilient, Innovative, Dynamic, and People-Centred ASEAN”* (*‘ASEAN Community Vision 2045’*).

14. **Ambassador Tiffany McDonald**, Head of Mission of the Australian Mission to ASEAN, also delivered her welcome remarks through a pre-recorded message. She commended AICHR’s work in protecting and promoting human rights and advancing the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration. She acknowledged that sustainable peace and human rights are intertwined, and that AICHR’s current initiatives are a testament to advancing both agendas together.

15. She recognised that the workshop is an important contribution to the future of ASEAN and is critical for Australia’s own efforts to support conflict prevention and advance pathways to peace. ASEAN plays a key role in conflict prevention and peacebuilding by promoting dialogue and confidence-building, ensuring inclusive participation in peace processes, and promoting human rights. Events such as this workshop are important for bringing together a cross-section of stakeholders to share good practices and lessons on human rights and peacebuilding.

16. **Cristina Fernández Escorza**, Programme Coordination Specialist for ASEAN Women Peace and Security at UN Women, delivered the final welcome remarks. She acknowledged UN Women’s ongoing key partnerships with ASEAN and ASEAN-IPR to advance the Women, Peace and Security agenda, supported by Canada, the United Kingdom, and the Republic of Korea.

17. The workshops on peacebuilding currently supported by AICHR directly contribute to the implementation of the Regional Plan of Action on Women, Peace and Security (*‘RPA-WPS’*) adopted by ASEAN leaders in 2023, which calls for institutional capacity-building to support gender mainstreaming, advancing gender-responsive budgeting and fostering evidence-based policymaking across sectoral collaborations. She emphasised that it is essential to include the voices of women and vulnerable groups in ASEAN’s peace efforts, in line with the four pillars of the RPA-WPS and the ASEAN Gender Mainstreaming Strategic Framework 2021–2025.

Keynote Address: Pathways and Approaches to Peace in ASEAN

18. The keynote address was delivered by **Tan Sri Othman Hashim**, Special Envoy of the ASEAN Chair on Myanmar, whose appointment had been endorsed by the ASEAN Foreign Ministers on 19 January 2025 during Malaysia’s tenure as ASEAN Chair. As the fifth Special Envoy of the ASEAN Chair, he is committed to finding peaceful resolutions to the conflict in Myanmar, in line with the ASEAN Five-Point Consensus, building on the work of previous ASEAN Special Envoys.

19. He recognised that in any conflict, human rights are the first to be violated and the last to be restored, which is why peace cannot be discussed in isolation from human rights. Addressing human rights is not optional, but fundamental and foundational. He noted that

considerably more work remains to be done to support peace in Myanmar, and that tackling underlying grievances is essential for achieving sustainable peace. He is focused on a phased reduction of hostilities, while advocating for the scaling up of humanitarian assistance.

20. One major lesson learned from his engagement with stakeholders is that trust is the essential currency that can buy time and space for genuine peacebuilding efforts, but trust is scarce. Another lesson is the need for continuity and sustainability in peacebuilding approaches; every time ASEAN pauses or resets, it creates a vacuum that can enable other actors to threaten peace.

21. He highlighted the need to develop a more sustainable and structured framework for stakeholder engagement, including the possibility of appointing a Permanent Special Envoy on Myanmar. Consideration could also be given to how to more effectively leverage the ASEAN Troika mechanism, comprising the previous, current, and incoming ASEAN Chairs. ASEAN could also learn from previous peacebuilding efforts, such as those in Cambodia and Timor-Leste, to identify what is still relevant and what can be improved.

22. He posed several questions:

- a) Are there viable models from the past that can be used?
- b) Could there be an ASEAN-led mechanism to monitor ceasefires, for example?
- c) Is there a role for civilian protection measures via ASEAN?
- d) Could ASEAN's humanitarian efforts be complemented by regional cooperation and technical assistance for vulnerable and marginalised populations?
- e) Could ASEAN or AICHR conduct human rights assessments to identify key protection gaps, including those affecting civilians?

23. He stressed that Myanmar is a key member of ASEAN, hence ASEAN must play a key role in supporting its conflict prevention and peacebuilding efforts. He expressed the hope that ASEAN may one day count Myanmar as a peacebuilding success story. He noted, however, that peace does not always unfold in a neat sequence of ideal steps, from prevention to sustainable peace. More often, peace is built in reverse, with ceasefires supporting the ongoing prevention of further conflict.

24. He elaborated that for Myanmar, this means that he is working to plant seeds of peace by building trust where he can, creating spaces for dialogue, and committing to the vision of a better future for Myanmar. ASEAN cannot allow Myanmar to become a forgotten crisis. In conclusion, he stated: "Peace is not just a document signed in a grand hall, but a commitment made again and again to choose inclusion over exclusion, rights over repression, and humanity over power."

Question-and-Answer Session

25. **H.E. Ambassador Nguyen Trung Thanh**, Representative of Viet Nam to AICHR, congratulated the Special Envoy on his work. He noted that these peacebuilding efforts serve as a field test for ASEAN's efforts to promote human rights and to design concrete pathways to peace and reconciliation.

26. In response, **Tan Sri Othman Hashim** reiterated his strong commitment to moving forward with peacebuilding efforts, but noted that at this stage his focus is still on bringing the various parties together around the negotiating table. He has been engaging with various groups separately, but there is continuing reluctance to come together to discuss peace. His focus remains on identifying the immediate needs, particularly in response to the ongoing humanitarian crisis, as the United Nations ('UN') has estimated that 20 million people are in need of assistance, and 3 million are internally displaced.

27. A **participant** responded to the keynote address by noting that the situation in Myanmar remains complex, while highlighting that there have been many positive developments. He stated that Myanmar has its own Five-Point Roadmap, which he believes complements ASEAN's Five-Point Consensus. According to him, Myanmar has made significant progress in providing humanitarian assistance. Between May 2022 and February 2023, Myanmar supported more than 123 rounds of discussions with both signatories and non-signatories of the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement, resulting in four key agreements: on law and order, working towards a democratic federal union, implementing a multi-party democratic system through free and fair elections, and cooperating for peace and progress. He also noted that a major peace conference was held in June 2025 in Nay Pyi Taw, with participation from both local stakeholders and foreign representatives from Thailand, China, India, and Russia.

28. In response, **Tan Sri Othman Hashim** noted that reports from the UN and other credible sources regarding the humanitarian situation were very bleak, with little assistance being delivered outside State Administration Council areas. He expressed hope that more could be done to provide humanitarian assistance. He also stressed that all parties must de-escalate violence. While noting positively that the Myanmar Government is engaging with various groups in peace dialogues, he emphasised that such dialogues must be inclusive, and no group should be excluded if trust and confidence are to be built across the whole country.

Opening Remarks

29. **H.E. Edmund Bon Tai Soon**, AICHR Chair 2025 and Representative of Malaysia to AICHR, delivered brief opening remarks due to time constraints. He thanked his AICHR colleagues, particularly the Representatives from Singapore, Lao PDR, Viet Nam, and Myanmar, for their invaluable support. He mentioned that the series of six workshops are led by Malaysia, with co-proponents Indonesia and Thailand. He thanked ASEAN-IPR for agreeing to collaborate with AICHR on the workshops through its technical support and expertise, and expressed his hope that this initiative would contribute to building their partnership over the longer term.

30. He also thanked UN Women and Australia for their funding and technical support, noting that this work closely aligns with the RPA-WPS, which supports the agenda of the ASEAN Committee on Women, and the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children ('ACWC'). He highlighted that he wants this initiative to advance the *ASEAN Community Vision 2045*, which aims to ensure that ASEAN mechanisms and institutions are more decisive, responsive, and future-ready; and he wants this approach to apply to ASEAN-led approaches to peace and human rights.

31. He noted the observation by the Special Envoy of the ASEAN Chair to Myanmar, that there are no institutionalised mechanisms to support stakeholder engagement, nor any standing guidance on how to conduct peace dialogues or how to advance peacebuilding activities. He emphasised that there should be some structure for the next peace envoy and/or to guide peacebuilding efforts in relation to other conflicts that may arise in future.

32. In conclusion, he stated his intention to use the series of workshops to explore options for developing more structured and systematic conflict prevention and peacebuilding processes for ASEAN, drawing on the expertise in the room. He welcomed guidance from the participants, who were invited to join a working group to co-design options. His remarks appear as **Annex A**.

Session 1: The What, Why and How — Theories of Peace and Peacebuilding

33. The first session of the workshop was chaired by **Kartika Budhi Wijayanti**, Project Management Officer at ASEAN-IPR. She explained ASEAN-IPR's work, noting that as an ASEAN entity described as a 'Track 1.5 institution', it can engage with anyone. She highlighted that peacebuilding is not a foreign concept for ASEAN, but intrinsic to the region. *ASEAN Community Vision 2045* uses the word "peace" 34 times, and "peaceful" 19 times. Under the ASEAN Political-Security Community Strategic Plan 2025–2045, Strategic Goal 9 relates to peace and human rights, and Strategic Measure 9.1 provides for the "promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms to ensure people of ASEAN live with dignity, in peace, harmony and prosperity". With this context, Session 1 aimed to enhance understanding of the foundations of peace and human rights in the region.

34. Speaking this time in his academic capacity, with expertise in peacebuilding and refugee issues, **H.E. Associate Professor Dr. Bhanubhatra Jittiang** noted that the academic discipline of international relations traditionally studies war and peace, and their dynamics, in a state-centric manner, with peace mainly defined as the absence of direct violence or war. ASEAN's own treaty text calls for non-interference in the peaceful settlement of conflicts. However, academic Johan Galtung encouraged a focus on 'positive peace', which requires conditions that foster justice, equity, social inclusion, and accountable governance. This concept focuses on building peaceful systems that enable communities and people to thrive and survive.

35. He encouraged ASEAN to adopt the concept of positive peace, recognising that many societies that appear peaceful on the surface can be deeply insecure beneath. He cited

Afghanistan, the United States of America ('USA'), and Thailand as examples of countries not actively at war, yet where stability may mask underlying tensions that have potential for conflict. Throughout history, governments have used notions of public order to suppress dissidence and to ensure stability, but that is not real peace — without real justice, peace becomes a fragile illusion. While stability is a prerequisite for the enjoyment of human rights, if it is used to justify marginalisation or inaction in the face of rights abuses, it will undermine the very foundations of sustainable peace.

36. He then discussed the concept of 'human security', which shifts the focus from state sovereignty and stability to individual dignity and security from fear, want and indignity. ASEAN's longstanding emphasis on non-interference and sovereignty supports negative peace, but he encouraged ASEAN to more proactively support efforts to build positive peace across the region. This requires ASEAN Member States ('AMS') to be able to discuss sensitive domestic issues so they can be peacefully resolved in line with human rights principles.

37. He noted that efforts to ensure negative peace must not override human rights — an important point in the context of international security efforts and ASEAN's own emphasis on stability. He spoke positively about an ASEAN conference held in Singapore the previous week that discussed social cohesion, and another conference earlier in the week that discussed gender rights, viewing these as signals that ASEAN is increasingly willing to engage with issues that are directly relevant to building positive peace.

38. Regarding concrete ideas to support peacebuilding that builds positive peace that is just, inclusive, and lasting, he suggested the following:

- a) Investing in inclusive institutions, which ensure equal access to justice and transparent governance.
- b) Prioritising human security through expanded access to healthcare, legal status for all, and specific support for marginalised communities.
- c) Supporting peace champions, for example, by empowering women, youth, religious leaders, and others.
- d) Supporting initiatives that link development with human rights more proactively.
- e) Strengthening regional solidarity by using ASEAN as a platform not only for diplomacy but also for developing joint responses to address challenges to peace.

39. He also called for more inclusive peace processes and peace agreements, noting that settlements excluding women, youth, LGBTQI+ persons, and other marginalised groups are unlikely to endure. In conclusion, he emphasised that positive peace demands accountable institutions and human rights protections; sustainable peace requires inclusion, with human rights serving as a means of ensuring better participation and providing ASEAN with a normative compass. Peace without rights is neither sustainable nor just.

40. **Theerada Suphaphong**, Senior Programme Manager at the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, provided a theoretical grounding in concepts relating to equality, equity, and justice, to guide reflection on how to design processes for peacebuilding that result in long-lasting, sustainable peace, based on expressed needs.

41. She discussed the concept of mediation, describing it as a “process whereby a third party assists two or more parties, with their consent, to prevent, manage, or resolve conflict, by helping them to develop mutually acceptable agreements”. Mediation is different from negotiation, which occurs between two parties, and arbitration, where the third-party arbitrator makes the decision. She highlighted the work mediators do to build trust, gather viewpoints, create interest, evaluate options, and create ‘win-win’ options for the parties. She also reflected on how mediators can engage with different actors (such as leaders, bureaucrats, and grassroots actors) using varied approaches, including dialogues, workshops, and peace commissions.

42. She also discussed transitional justice, which can be important to enable countries to learn from the past in order to create environments conducive to sustainable peace in the future. Bodies that are established can take multiple forms depending on their objectives, such as the right to know what transpired (e.g. truth and reconciliation commissions), the right to reparations, the guarantee of non-recurrence (e.g. disarmament and demobilisation programmes), and the right to justice (e.g. tribunals and domestic trials). Such initiatives need to be supported by investments in the rule of law, reconciliation and conflict transformation.

43. She stressed the importance of understanding the root causes of conflicts by analysing specific events (i.e. what happened), identifying patterns and trends (i.e. what has been happening over time), examining the impact of existing structures (i.e. what factors influence these patterns, how they relate to each other, and what rules, norms, and cultures are relevant), and understanding the mental modes of the protagonists (i.e. what beliefs and values people have about the system, which impact how they engage).

44. **Dr. Noel M. Morada**, C2F Research Professor at the Nelson Mandela Center, Chulalongkorn University, was the final panellist. He reflected on the concept of human rights, noting that these can be suspended or taken away if treated as a privilege, but must be affirmed and protected by law, conventions, and institutions if the rights are recognised as natural.

45. In considering the right to peace specifically, he questioned whether the right (e.g. the right to self-determination) belongs to states, or to peoples and communities, noting that the outcome could result in conflict between states and their people. This is particularly important in the context of ASEAN, as AMS have diverse political systems shaped by unique historical and cultural contexts. While ASEAN still adheres to principles of sovereignty and non-interference, the ASEAN Charter also recognises international law and people-centred principles, such as human rights, the rule of law, good governance, and respect for diversity, ethnic minorities, and religions. The ASEAN Charter also affirms concepts of comprehensive security, including human security.

46. He highlighted Article 38 of the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration regarding the right to peace, noting that it is state-centric in its wording, as it only gives individuals and

communities a right to ‘enjoy’ peace. The AICHR Thematic Study on the Right to Peace launched on 1 July 2025 provided a good foundation for AICHR’s discussions on peacebuilding, which should include non-state actors and dialogue partners. He pointed out that the Thematic Study should be updated to reflect progress in other ASEAN Community pillars. Most notably, the Socio-Cultural pillar endorsed the 2017 ASEAN Declaration on Culture of Prevention for a Peaceful, Inclusive, Resilient, Healthy and Harmonious Society and the RPA-WPS, both of which recognise the need for a bottom-up approach to work on peace.

47. He stressed the need for a change of mindset, to move away from state sovereignty and non-interference guiding peace efforts. Sovereignty must be redefined to include the responsibility to protect, uphold human rights, and address the root causes of internal conflicts. Sovereignty needs to be linked to good governance, the rule of law, democracy, and human rights protection, all of which are central to the ASEAN Political-Security Community pillar. Acting on these issues will enhance public trust and the legitimacy of the state.

48. He also emphasised the need to socialise these concepts with ASEAN youth. He stressed that while states bear primary responsibility for protecting human rights and ensuring peace, they cannot do it alone, and need to work with non-state actors including CSOs, educational institutions, academics, and think tanks.

Question-and-Answer Session

49. **One participant** commented that conflict is not necessarily problematic; it can signal deeper grievances, and is an important signal that something needs to be fixed. Conflict does not always need to be equated with negative disruption, as it can be a sign of unmet or repressed needs.

50. **Another participant** reflected on the complexity of peace processes and dialogues, particularly for civil society actors, who are often at a disadvantage in peace negotiations. Referring to reporting from the UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of peaceful assembly and of association, the participant noted that CSOs, especially those working on transitional justice and peace, are sometimes stigmatised by governments. ASEAN is encouraged to ensure a conducive and enabling environment where CSOs are empowered to express their views during peace processes. It would be useful to analyse whether there are any models of CSO engagement that put the safety of CSOs at the centre of peace dialogues.

51. **A third participant** encouraged more deliberate consideration of how to integrate disaster management issues into work on human rights, conflict prevention, and peacebuilding. He urged AICHR to consider how to link this work with disaster response, the protection of human life and livelihoods during and after disasters, and long-term efforts to build communities that are more resilient to both disasters and conflict. He noted that in war-affected areas, natural disasters exacerbate danger while conflict makes it harder for responders to provide support.

52. In her response, **Theerada Suphaphong** agreed that conflicts are natural, and innovations can sometimes be created out of disruption. The challenge lies in managing conflict constructively to avoid destruction. She supported the inclusion of CSOs in peace processes, noting that peace academics have long recognised the role of civil society in peacebuilding. She added that mediators also need to be better supported to convince political leaders to allow space for civil society. She agreed on the need to link disaster risk management with peacebuilding, noting that disasters often create ‘ripeness’ for peace talks, and citing Aceh’s peace processes after the 2004 tsunami as an example. She suggested that work on the humanitarian-development-peace nexus could be relevant for ASEAN.

53. **H.E. Associate Professor Dr. Bhanubhatra Jittiang** concurred that calm societies often hide underlying tensions, and called for ASEAN to be more open to dialogue for grievances to be expressed and addressed. He recognised the need to build trust across different groups, including the military, CSOs, and civilians. Peace academics have often served as a ‘peace bridge’ to facilitate engagement with all parties, share information, and triangulate ideas. He also noted the growing relevance of disaster-related issues in the context of peacebuilding, and highlighted that climate change issues, in particular, are likely to raise security challenges. Man-made disasters such as water contamination also need to be considered, as they can cause grievances that undermine peace.

54. **Kartika Budhi Wijayanti** concluded the session by emphasising the importance of inclusivity, which is common to both peacebuilding and human rights protection. All relevant parties must be included in peace dialogues and negotiations, complemented by opportunities for bottom-up transformation of structures and norms to ensure sustainable peace.

Session 2: Intersection of Conflict, Peace, and Human Rights

55. The second session was chaired by **H.E. Kim Virak**, Chair of the ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management. He briefly introduced the session focusing on the complex relationship between peacebuilding, human rights, and development, and encouraged the panellists to identify factors contributing to conflict prevention and sustainable peace. As an ASEAN disaster management specialist, he recognised that effective disaster risk reduction plays a vital role in building resilience, addressing gender inequalities, facilitating improved livelihoods, and preventing some of the vulnerabilities that can escalate conflict.

56. **Professor Jacqui True**, Professor of International Relations at Monash University and Director at the Australian Research Council Centre of Excellence for the Elimination of Violence against Women (‘CEVAW’), focused on the intersection of peace, human rights, and the role of women’s agency. She referred to a quote from the Women’s School for Peace in Poso, Indonesia, where a woman noted: “If you want to know what the security situation is, what the indicators of safety are, don’t ask the military, don’t ask the government — ask the women.” Notably, the Women’s School for Peace has been at the frontline of conflict prevention in its area, developing an early warning system to prevent the escalation of inter-religious issues into violence, relying on local women’s knowledge of their communities and the relevant issues.

57. She referred to the RPA-WPS, adopted in 2023, which aims to make peace more achievable and lasting by being more inclusive and participatory. She noted that war and conflict, along with crises such as natural disasters, climate-induced problems, trafficking, and organised crime, tend to disproportionately impact women, particularly in contexts of displacement, economic insecurity, and sexual and gender-based violence. The latter issue also makes it more difficult for societies to rebuild, as shame often attaches to victims, fuelling future grievances.

58. Professor Jacqui True noted that the Centre of Excellence for the Elimination of Violence against Women convened an international conference in early 2025 on addressing impunity for sexual violence, which included representatives from Cambodia, Indonesia, Myanmar, and Timor-Leste. They adopted a statement of action identifying ASEAN as a vital region for learning and advocacy. Research from the Centre shows that greater participation by women, as well as men, in community forums increases the likelihood of lasting peace by addressing problems at their root.

59. She pointed out that women are effective peace agents because grassroots civil society women leaders are often the most aware of the acute needs in their communities. However, women's participation in conflict resolution, mediation, and mitigation is often hindered by traditional gender norms and historical under-representation in the security sector. If women are provided with knowledge and information, the confidence to engage, and the opportunity to participate, the result is enhanced community peace and security.

60. She noted that empowering women, especially through economic activities and involvement in dialogues and decision-making, can significantly enhance community cohesion and security. This has been reflected in the RPA-WPS, which recognises the “long history in ASEAN of innovative local approaches on peace and security led by women”. As the RPA-WPS is implemented, ASEAN is encouraged to leverage local participation more deliberately and improve coordination to bring together local peace and human rights actors under a common framework that ensures women's participation.

61. **Dr. Eakpant Pindavanija**, Lecturer and Researcher at the Social Research Institute, Chulalongkorn University, reflected on the specific challenges of human rights and peacebuilding in his home country of Thailand. He highlighted three main points:

- a) The importance of initiating discussions around the right to peace in Thailand, recognising that people are entitled to live in a peaceful environment free of violence and conflict, but also of abuse, hostility and violent discourse (i.e. negative peace), as well as a broader right to enjoy all of their human rights (i.e. positive peace), including sustainable development and environmental protections.
- b) The challenges of applying concepts pertaining to the right to peace in authoritarian contexts, noting that such societies are more likely to nurture human rights violations that lead to an escalation of structural violence, which makes democratic resilience more difficult.

- c) The need to find a way forward in promoting domestic democratic peace in Thailand, including through targeted human rights and peace education.

62. He drew attention to democratic peace theory, which suggests that democracies are inherently more peaceful, particularly in their relations with other democracies, and are less likely to engage in violent activities with other communities or countries. The theory also posits that democracies reduce repressive behaviour and state-sponsored violence, and are less likely to restrict civil liberties during times of conflict. The theory also emphasises that the more a society is democratised, the more freedom people have, which is a point of relevance for ASEAN's ongoing discussions on human rights and peace.

63. **Dr. Bencharat Sae Chua**, Lecturer at the Institute of Human Rights and Peace Studies ('IHRPS'), Mahidol University, provided a human rights perspective to the discussion, complementing the contributions of the peace academics preceding her. She endorsed the view that human rights are crucial to sustainable peace, and that many people living in authoritarian regimes do not enjoy positive peace as a result of their limited human rights. She observed that international war is unlikely between ASEAN countries, though there are cases of border disputes, and some civil conflict and local insurgencies exist within AMS.

64. She noted that even without war, however, ASEAN can reflect on whether real peace exists for its citizens. At the outset, it is useful to accept that a degree of chaos and disruption — such as protest, civil disruption, and criticism of ideas — is acceptable in a civil society. What is sometimes termed 'political conflict' is normal in a democratic society and should be tolerated as part of a just society. Rights to freedom of assembly and expression are vital, provided they are not used to promote hate crimes and are exercised through non-violent protest. In this context, ASEAN should support rights-based peacebuilding.

65. She also discussed the importance of transitional justice, which helps societies reckon with past violence and move forward. These concepts are not often discussed within ASEAN, despite multiple countries grappling with violent conflict. Cambodia is the most famous example, as it attempted a truth and reconciliation process, and Timor-Leste also made efforts to reflect on past violations. Such work is important because past violence needs to be acknowledged, and supported by policy and institutional reforms, to ensure violence does not recur. It is crucial to address cultures of impunity, to make clear that violence is not acceptable; this can also be demonstrated by explicitly supporting cultures of peace and a culture of respect for human rights.

66. She endorsed Professor Jacqui True's earlier call for survivor-centred justice in relation to violence specifically against women and children. She gave examples from Thailand and Myanmar, which highlighted the importance of addressing root causes of violence and tackling impunity, including by acknowledging the past and ensuring that communities know the reality of their own history. Sustainable peace requires people's rights to be respected, their identity recognised, and their human dignity upheld. Hostilities need to end, but societies also need to build an environment where people can work together on peace and human rights.

67. The final presentation was delivered online by **H.E. Anita A. Wahid**. She reinforced many of the points made by the previous panellists. She noted that the causes of conflict can be very complex and multi-layered, including political factors (e.g. competition for power, ideological disputes, weak governance, exclusion of certain groups, denials of basic rights to some groups, and uneven distribution of power), economic factors (e.g. competition for resources, and economic inequality), and social factors (e.g. historical grievances and identity conflicts). The root causes of conflict are increasingly complicated by information warfare and misinformation.

68. She observed that human rights violations often underpin conflict, but conflict itself often results in further human rights violations, creating a cycle that can be difficult to break. In this context, when peace processes neglect injustices, there is a risk of building only negative peace, whereby violence may temporarily end, but without real justice or healing. In practical terms, ceasefires may be agreed, but if structures of inequality and repression remain untouched, then the peace that follows remains very fragile.

69. She reiterated that there can be no peace without human rights, highlighting that a key aspect of conflict prevention is alertness to human rights violations that may result in resentment and violence. The discourse and work of promoting human rights provide tools for social transformation. However, peacebuilding has become overly securitised, focusing more on maintaining state order than on supporting people's rights and dignity, often to the extent of perpetuating authoritarian regimes.

70. She pointed out that when considering peace in authoritarian contexts, it is important to recognise that when peace is maintained by central power, some voices may be excluded or actively suppressed. In contrast, a human security approach is needed to build sustainable peace on the foundations of democracy, human rights, and the rule of law.

71. She concluded by highlighting that a human security approach requires inclusivity and the wider participation of society, including inclusive governance that engages those most in need, such as women, youth, persons with disabilities, and displaced people. Human rights protection should not be considered as an issue to be addressed at later stages of a linear peacebuilding process; rather, protecting human rights is an intrinsic part of the entire process, and must be addressed at all stages.

Question-and-Answer Session

72. **A participant** reflected on the remarks relating to transitional justice and the need to address cultures of impunity by building a culture of human rights, and asked whether good practice models exist.

73. **Dr. Bencharat Sae Chua** noted that good practices encourage trust-building at the individual level, to find ways for people to live together again. Rwanda provides a good example, where conflict was primarily between ethnic groups that needed to learn how to co-exist after the genocide. However, there are not many successful cases in instances where

violence is state-sponsored. Academics point to South Africa and Argentina, which supported fact-finding, documentation, truth and reconciliation, and education processes. In ASEAN, however, past violence has not been acknowledged in many countries, which can make it challenging for communities to move forward.

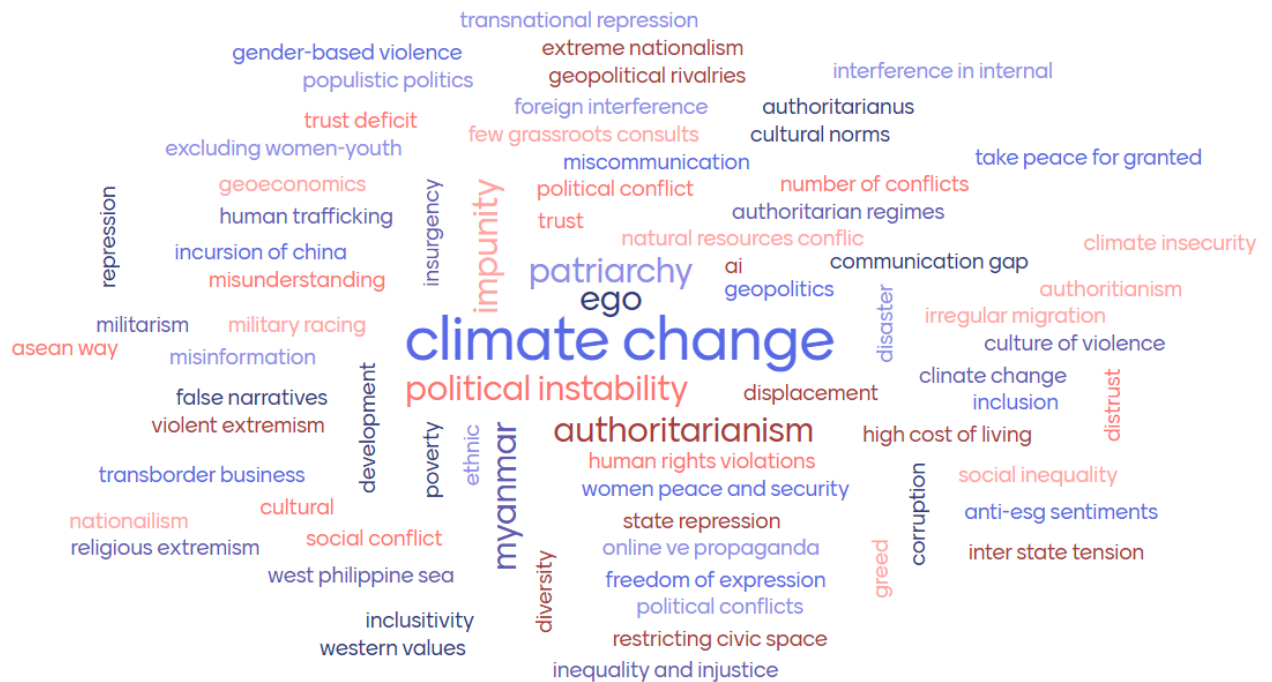
74. **Dr. Eakpant Pindavanija** highlighted the need to reflect on past human rights violations and injustices to support broader social healing processes, noting that this requires platforms and processes that everyone can trust so that mutual understanding can be developed. He observed that issues relating to amnesty for violence can be particularly fraught.

75. **A second participant** agreed that conflict is not always undesirable, as it can offer new options for transformation. The critical issue is preventing non-violent conflict from escalating into violence. A human rights-based approach to peace requires four conditions: a legal framework, which in ASEAN is supported by many national laws as well as the regional ASEAN Human Rights Declaration; structural conditions for peace; participation and inclusion of marginalised groups, noting that development in the region has tended to be biased against the poor and the environment, and towards industrialisation; and accountability and redress for human rights violations, as silence and impunity are enemies of peace and human rights protection.

Sessions 3A and 3B: Horizon Scanning and Mapping of ASEAN Peace Actors

76. Sessions 3A and 3B were jointly facilitated by **Theerada Suphaphong**; **Rifat Fachir**, Communications Officer at ASEAN-IPR; and **Cristina Fernández Escorza**. Over the course of two related sessions — a plenary, and a breakout session for group work — participants examined the key factors impacting regional conflict prevention and peacebuilding efforts. The breakout session offered a safe space for government officials and civil society representatives to work together to identify the issues most important to the region, with a view to laying the foundation for subsequent planned workshops that will explore human rights and peacebuilding issues in greater depth.

Figure 1: Threats to peace identified by participants



77. During the plenary session, the facilitators used the Mentimeter application to gather the participants' views on the most significant threats to peace in the region. **Figure 1** above captures the participants' responses, with larger fonts indicating greater consensus on the identified topics. The top three issues raised were climate change and security, authoritarianism and political instability, and impunity. Each issue was assigned to a breakout group, where participants were tasked with mapping the relevant peace actors, contextual dynamics, and existing processes addressing the issues at the national, regional, and international levels. The groups were given 45 minutes for discussion, followed by 30 minutes to report back in plenary. The results of the group discussions are set out in **Annex B**.

Closing Session: Summary and Charting the Way Ahead

78. Closing remarks were delivered by AIHR Chair 2025 **H.E. Edmund Bon Tai Soon**, in his role as co-convenor of this first workshop. He thanked the ASEAN sectoral bodies participating in the workshop, including representatives from the ACWC, the Disaster Management Unit, and various working groups, as well as the lead authors of the Thematic Study on the Right to Peace and all other experts who generously offered their insights and guidance.

79. He highlighted the value of maintaining consistency across the group over the next five workshops, so that participants can build on their knowledge and take ownership of the final

outcomes. Participants were invited to join an informal working group to co-design the next set of workshops and the final outcome document.

80. He also extended his thanks to Lao PDR for its leadership in championing the right to peace in the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration, and for advancing the concept note that culminated in the Thematic Study on the Right to Peace, which has now come to fruition.

81. **A participant** encouraged AMS to draw on the expertise of the ASEAN Women for Peace Registry. Established in 2018, it allows each AMS to nominate three members to the Registry. Its mandate is to support ASEAN-IPR and AMS on issues concerning women and peacebuilding. Registry members include academics, leaders of non-governmental organisations, diplomats, and government officials, who could also be considered for participation in future meetings.

82. **A second participant** extended thanks to AICHR for the inclusion of the ACWC, noting that the work it has produced on the Regional Plan of Action on Eliminating Violence Against Women and Children ('RPA-EVAWC') and the RPA-WPS offers inputs relevant to the broader discussion on peacebuilding and human rights. A new RPA-EVAWC is being developed, and this workshop offered a valuable opportunity to engage with interested stakeholders. The ACWC representative encouraged participants to be involved in the national consultations on the new RPA-EVAWC that are currently underway.

83. **H.E. Edmund Bon Tai Soon** concluded the workshop by highlighting AICHR's eagerness to work more closely with ACWC, including in relation to the planned series of workshops. In 2015, AICHR set up the inter-sectoral technical working group on the rights of women and children, and more recently held a cross-sectoral consultation on the rights of women and girls when Indonesia chaired AICHR in 2023. He urged AICHR and ACWC to coordinate more closely to establish an interface to facilitate better collaboration. He thanked participants once more and encouraged them to look forward to the next workshop, to be held in Thailand in early August 2025.

84. The following is a summary of the key lessons from Workshop 1:

- a) Peace must be understood as a human-centred and rights-based concept, not just the absence of conflict (positive peace vs. negative peace). Conflict should be reframed as a human rights issue, not merely as a political or security concern.
- b) The right to peace is closely linked to development and human dignity, reinforcing ASEAN's people-centred vision.
- c) Human rights can serve as a unifying framework for peace, stability, and development in ASEAN. Human rights frameworks can help identify risks, prevent escalation, and guide responses.
- d) Structural inequalities and exclusion are key drivers of conflict and must be addressed.

- e) The impacts of conflict are uneven and intersectional, especially for women, children, and marginalised groups. An intersectional approach is therefore necessary.

Workshop 2: ASEAN Mechanisms for Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding

13 August 2025
Jakarta, Indonesia

Introduction

1. AICHR, led by Malaysia with co-proponents Indonesia and Thailand, held three workshops in Jakarta, Indonesia, from 13 to 15 August 2025 as part of a series of six workshops under the theme ‘AICHR’s Regional Training Programme on Human Rights Workshops on Intersection Between Conflict and Human Rights: Pathways and Approaches to Peace in ASEAN’.
2. The six workshops are aimed at developing an ASEAN framework for conflict prevention, crisis management, and regional peacebuilding. The workshops in Jakarta were the second, third, and fourth workshops in the series, following the first workshop held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on 2 July 2025.
3. Workshop participants included AICHR Representatives; representatives from Timor-Leste; officials from relevant ASEAN sectoral bodies; ASEAN Secretariat staff; representatives from selected national human rights institutions; members of CSOs with a consultative relationship with AICHR; as well as regional and international experts, including representatives from UN Women and academic institutions with experience in human rights, peacebuilding, and women, peace and security. The workshop provided a platform for dialogue and the exchange of best practices to strengthen collaboration as a step towards achieving peace in the region. In addition to discussions and case studies, simulations were conducted to examine the application of ASEAN’s peace initiatives in practice.

Welcome Remarks

4. **H.E. Associate Professor Dr. Bhanubhatra Jittiang**, Representative of Thailand to AICHR, warmly welcomed all participants to the training programme in Jakarta. He highlighted the importance of the planned series of workshops focusing on peacebuilding and human rights in ASEAN, emphasising peace as a deliberate and active process, beyond merely the absence of conflict. He stressed ASEAN’s longstanding commitment to peace through dialogue and mutual respect, while acknowledging current challenges and the need to adapt mechanisms for conflict resolution.
5. He shared a poignant personal story about a young refugee girl, to underscore the human cost of conflict and reinforce the urgency of peace efforts. He urged open, respectful dialogue, and truthfulness throughout the workshops, advocating for a culture of peace grounded in human rights for all peoples in the region, irrespective of nationality. He reassured participants of his openness to constructive dialogue and affirmed his commitment to human rights for the entire ASEAN community.

6. Speaking online, **H.E. Anita A. Wahid**, Representative of Indonesia to AICHR, extended a warm welcome to the guests and participants. She expressed pride in Indonesia's role as co-proponent of the programme and highlighted the workshop's focus on peacebuilding pathways within ASEAN.

7. She underlined the importance of understanding ASEAN's own mechanisms for conflict prevention and peacebuilding, including key frameworks such as the ASEAN Charter and the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia. She pointed to challenges such as political sensitivities, national interests, and the principle of non-interference, that sometimes limit the effectiveness of these mechanisms, and called for a balance between sovereignty and timely conflict prevention.

8. She gave a brief overview of the agenda, noting that discussions on the following day would explore leveraging international frameworks such as the UN Charter and the Sustainable Development Goals ('SDGs') to complement ASEAN efforts, despite challenges in integration. On the final day, the programme would focus on the protection of human rights in conflict situations, underscoring the moral and strategic necessity of human rights protection for building trust and preventing cycles of violence. She concluded her remarks by thanking co-organisers, experts, participants, and partners, and conveyed her hope for a fruitful exchange that would strengthen ASEAN's peace and human rights initiatives.

9. **I Gusti Agung Wesaka Puja**, Executive Director at ASEAN-IPR, greeted the participants and welcomed their enthusiasm for discussing peace and human rights, highlighting the inseparable connection between the two. He referred to the *ASEAN Community Vision 2045*, noting the prominence of peace and human rights within it and their interconnectedness, particularly as reflected in the AICHR Thematic Study on the Right to Peace launched on 1 July 2025.

10. He stressed the need for an integrated approach to peacebuilding that balances human rights and security concerns. He referred to ongoing collaborations between ASEAN-IPR and AICHR, including regular engagement and joint workshops on peace, conflict prevention, and management, and recognised the importance of expanding cooperation on issues such as climate change and disinformation.

11. He expressed gratitude for the support from AICHR and partners, and affirmed ASEAN-IPR's commitment to contribute actively to the workshops and outcome documents. He acknowledged the presence of distinguished attendees and experts, and drew attention to the essential role of the participants in transforming the concepts of peace and human rights into practical pathways.

12. **Cristina Fernández Escorza**, Programme Coordination Specialist for ASEAN Women Peace and Security at UN Women, acknowledged the presence of the distinguished representatives, and emphasised the importance of gatherings such as these amid the challenges to peace faced by the region. She commended AICHR for fostering vital dialogue on peace, human rights, and conflict prevention, and thanked the Governments of Canada and the United Kingdom for their generous support.

13. She affirmed UN Women's commitment to advancing the Women, Peace and Security agenda, highlighting that sustainable peacebuilding is more effective when women participate meaningfully at all levels. She commended the timeliness of the workshops as ASEAN prepares to implement the *ASEAN Community Vision 2045*, which prioritises inclusive, rights-based approaches to peace and security.

14. She pointed out the uniqueness of the workshops, given the diverse range of expertise and multi-stakeholder perspectives involved, which are essential for formulating context-specific, rights-grounded solutions. She expressed hope that the exchanges would inspire new partnerships to advance peace, inclusion, human rights, and justice across the region, and affirmed UN Women's strong commitment to supporting ASEAN in this endeavour.

15. **Dr. Sarah Teitt**, Director at the Asia-Pacific Centre for the Responsibility to Protect, University of Queensland, expressed her pleasure in partnering on the workshop series addressing the intersection of conflict and human rights in ASEAN. She identified the critical challenge of strengthening ASEAN's conflict prevention and peacebuilding efforts by integrating human rights protection. She emphasised that conflict and human rights are deeply intertwined, with violations often generating tensions and violence, while conflict exacerbates suffering and regional instability.

16. She acknowledged ASEAN's human rights mandate under the ASEAN Charter, as well as the roles of AICHR and ASEAN-IPR, but pointed to an existing gap between political security priorities and rights-based protection, with early warning systems remaining underutilised. She maintained that sustainable peace depends on the protection of human rights, and called for human rights analysis to be embedded in preventive diplomacy, inclusive peace processes, and the safeguarding of all rights regardless of identity.

17. In concluding, she encouraged bold and concrete reforms, partnerships, and policies to enhance ASEAN's capacity for conflict prevention, peacebuilding, and rights protection, emphasising that these choices will shape ASEAN's credibility and effectiveness in the region.

Outlook Address: The Future of Regional Peace and Peacebuilding in ASEAN

18. **H.E. Ambassador Sarah Al Bakri Devadason**, Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to ASEAN ('CPR'), shared her reflections on the future of regional peace and peacebuilding in ASEAN, which she described as a timeless and urgent issue that must be addressed to maintain its long-term viability. She traced the pursuit of peace in ASEAN back to 1967, noting that, over half a century later, the region has constructed a peaceful architecture, enduring both successes and setbacks through mutual respect and understanding, and providing prosperity for its people. She pointed to the role of regional architecture, regional forums, conflict resolution, and expert assistance, expressing the view that the ASEAN Charter calls for maintaining and enhancing peace, security, and stability, as well as to strengthen human rights and fundamental freedoms.

19. She observed that Southeast Asia faces intricate and uncertain challenges, including domestic conflicts, crime, climate change, disputes, and non-traditional security threats. The principles of unity and non-interference are increasingly put to the test, particularly now when concerns over economic conditions, employment prospects, family displacement, and broader prosperity underscore the need for stability and safety. The establishment of mechanisms such as AICHR, guided by the ASEAN Charter and the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration, will promote peacebuilding in ASEAN, ensuring stability and settlement.

20. She noted that AICHR has been promoting conflict prevention, human rights education, and community engagement for 15 years, integrating human rights analysis into early warning systems and peace negotiations. Referring to Article 38 of the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration, she stressed its affirmation of peace, security, stability, neutrality, and freedom for the peoples of ASEAN. She urged AMS to foster friendship and cooperation in the interest of peace. She indicated that the workshop would highlight the need for purpose and courage in attaining long-term peace, and reinforced the importance of ASEAN Charter ideals and investing in institutions to anticipate difficulties, promote respect, and build trust.

Sharing on ASEAN's response to Cyclone Nargis

21. **Dr. William Sabandar**, former Special Envoy of the Secretary-General of ASEAN for Post-Nargis Recovery in Myanmar, recounted his experience responding to Cyclone Nargis amid the civil war in Myanmar. In light of the Myanmar Government's refusal to allow international aid for victims, the French Foreign Minister submitted a proposal to the UN Security Council aimed at protecting the people of Myanmar. This led to a Special Emergency Foreign Minister Meeting in Singapore on 19 May 2008, to establish an ASEAN-led coordination mechanism under the leadership of the ASEAN Secretary-General.

22. He described how a team was formed to work on developing the operationalisation of support on the ground and a coordination system with the Tripartite Core Group, which necessitated a diplomatic shield and resource mobilisation, and involved the Myanmar Government, NGOs, and the corporate sector. All projects were delivered, monitored, and reported through the Recovery Information and Accountability System ('RIAS'), with reporting to both the ASEAN system and the international community.

23. He highlighted that the two-year rehabilitation programme for Cyclone Nargis victims fostered a sense of community among AMS, and was practical and relevant because it addressed community needs and created trust through interaction. Important lessons were drawn from earlier relief efforts in Aceh, Indonesia following the 2004 tsunami, which took place against the backdrop of conflict between the Indonesian Government and the Free Aceh Movement (Gerakan Aceh Merdeka, 'GAM'). The process of humanitarian assistance contributed to post-disaster recovery and helped bring peace to the region, culminating in the Helsinki peace agreement.

24. He concluded by stressing the significance of fostering regional prosperity and the need for robust, collaborative support through a penta-helix approach to foster trust and strengthen

regional security. He added that, through such humanitarian efforts, ASEAN has grown closer and more reliable as a result.

Recap of Workshop 1: Building Peace — From Conflict Prevention to Sustainable Peace

25. **H.E. Edmund Bon Tai Soon**, AICHR Chair 2025 and Representative of Malaysia to AICHR, opened his remarks by drawing attention to ASEAN's focus on strengthening institutions and processes to be more resilient, innovative, and decisive in addressing global and regional challenges. He underscored that addressing human rights is fundamental rather than optional, and noted that the workshop convened experts, civil society, and development partners to explore how human rights and peace are intertwined in ASEAN's future. The first workshop, held in Malaysia in July 2025, showcased the expertise of various peace and human rights experts. Along with that, there was also a discussion on Article 38 of the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration and the Thematic Study on the Right to Peace, highlighting the intersection of conflict, peace, and human rights. Justice, inclusion, and protection of rights for all was emphasised, as well as the role of women.

26. He noted that although the first workshop generated a wide range of ideas and perspectives from participants, conflict prevention and sustainable peace were sufficiently covered. Participants identified authoritarianism, political instability, climate change, and security concerns as the main threats to peace. Additionally, they examined ASEAN mobilisation, including key actors, leading to a commitment to develop a framework linking human rights and peace. Building on these results, the second, third, and fourth workshops are now being held in Indonesia. He expressed hope that the workshops would provide inclusive and safe spaces for open discussion and outside-the-box thinking, and encouraged participants to take an active role in the case study-based simulation sessions.

Session 4: Reflecting on ASEAN's Experiences on Conflict Resolution

27. The moderator, **H.E. Eugene Tan Kheng Boon**, Representative of Singapore to AICHR, highlighted that ASEAN itself is a conflict management mechanism, established in 1967 to foster peace and security among its original five members. Over six decades, ASEAN has developed multiple mechanisms — such as the ASEAN Regional Forum and AICHR — that play significant roles in maintaining regional strategic stability.

28. He noted that while ASEAN's peace mechanism is at a crossroads regarding neutrality and relevance, the organisation's track record demonstrates substantial state practice in both formal and informal conflict resolution processes. Examples he cited included the resolution of the Cambodian conflict; ongoing dialogues on the South China Sea; third-party adjudications through international courts; and peacekeeping missions, such as those in Timor-Leste.

29. He stressed that political will is crucial in ensuring disputes do not undermine ASEAN community-building efforts. At the same time, he pointed out that evolving regional dynamics may require strengthening the existing framework beyond traditional approaches.

30. In concluding, he recalled a quote describing warfare as the “final, merciless arbiter” in disputes, underscoring ASEAN’s core aim of preventing warfare and violence among AMS and external parties. He linked peace and stability directly to the protection of human rights and good governance as being foundational for regional economic growth. He then introduced the first session speaker, Michael Frank Alar, drawing attention to his extensive experience in peace work across Asia, particularly in Mindanao, in the Philippines.

31. **Michael Frank Alar**, Facilitator at the Mindanao Peacebuilding Institute, greeted the participants in multiple languages, acknowledging the linguistic diversity of the Philippines and ASEAN. He emphasised that conflicts often arise from a failure to recognise and respect diversity. He explained that the Mindanao dialogue processes involve multiple levels and types of dialogue, not just formal political negotiations. He described the importance of dialogue as a formal process of learning rather than one focused on persuasion or immediate resolution.

32. He provided a historical overview of the Mindanao conflict, mapping out key stakeholders and major events, including the legacy of colonisation, land tensions between Christian and Muslim communities, and the rise of armed groups such as the Moro National Liberation Front and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front. He described the complexity of the conflict and pointed to the political dialogue efforts between the Government of the Philippines and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, particularly the shift from demands for independence towards a common ground of greater autonomy.

33. Drawing on conflict resolution frameworks, he illustrated the multiple layers of dialogue and peacebuilding efforts, including ceasefire agreements and community-level initiatives involving cooperation between armed forces on both sides. He underlined that these dialogue processes operate across different tracks and involve various actors, from political leaders to civil society, and noted that peacebuilding in Mindanao is multifaceted and ongoing. He suggested undertaking an online search using the keywords “case study for the Philippines on the role of your people in peace negotiation” to find the study that he referred to.

34. **Dr. Eakpant Pindavanija**, Lecturer and Researcher at the Social Research Institute, Chulalongkorn University, discussed the concept of democratic peace, drawing on a study initiated amid Thailand’s prolonged political conflicts, including those in its deep south. The study sought to identify new frameworks for conflict resolution by emphasising a democratic society and public participation in peacebuilding to reduce violence and human rights abuses. He highlighted the importance of addressing social attitudes shaped by everyday life and media, which influence conflict dynamics.

35. He pointed to the decline of democratic environments in Thailand and other ASEAN countries, linking this trend to increased violence. He distinguished domestic democratic peacebuilding from international democratic peace, tracing its roots to Immanuel Kant. According to him, democracies tend to avoid inter-state wars, as they prioritise people’s

welfare and human rights, reduce state-sponsored violence, and allow freedom of criticism and discourse.

36. He connected democratic peace principles with liberal peacebuilding mechanisms including international security cooperation, mediation, development, and governance under the rule of law. He stressed that democratic states avoid conflict escalation by maintaining stability and managing social emotions such as fear, anger, and hostility, through cognitive processes.

37. He elaborated on how democratic peace theory applies to, or challenges, authoritarian societies, using Thailand's experience under military junta rule as an illustrative example. The theory underscores the importance of promoting deliberative democracy by enabling open dialogue among conflicting parties, while addressing poverty, inequality, and humiliation caused by exclusion from power and resources.

38. He concluded by emphasising the role of cognitive processes in peacebuilding, indicating that conflict attitudes are shaped by societal experiences and trauma. He noted that creating safe spaces for dialogue and acceptance of disagreement is essential to fostering peace and healing. This approach encourages the transformation of collective norms and social behaviours towards non-violence.

39. **Januario Brites**, Head of the Department for Conflict Resolution at the National Directorate for Community Conflict Prevention of the Ministry of Interior of Timor-Leste, shared insights from Timor-Leste's experience with conflict resolution, reflecting on the country's history of conflict and the ongoing challenges its people face with violence and trauma. He emphasised the importance of fighting corruption, discrimination, and violence, particularly against women. The National Directorate for Community Conflict Prevention plays a proactive role, with a strong presence in the field working directly with communities to prevent conflict. Established by government decree, it coordinates with various institutions to analyse causes of conflict, mediate disputes, and promote gender equality and human rights.

40. He detailed the National Directorate's mission to strengthen national stability through information analysis, partnership-building, community capacity-building, and tailored prevention strategies. The key strategies include enhancing data systems, conducting research, and expanding prevention services. The National Directorate has trained hundreds of mediators nationwide, focusing on gender-responsive conflict prevention and resolution, supported by active collaboration with non-governmental organisations and UN Women.

41. He outlined the National Directorate's broad network, including municipal coordinators who work with local authorities, police, and community leaders to monitor and address conflicts. It mediates a variety of disputes, including family, business, natural resource, and interpersonal cases. It also conducts specialised training with an emphasis on gender equality, and has developed manuals and roadmaps promoting gender-sensitive mediation.

42. He concluded by reaffirming the National Directorate's ongoing commitment to peace, stability, social harmony, and national development through active conflict prevention and mediation efforts at the community level.

43. **H.E. Eugene Tan Kheng Boon** expressed appreciation to Januario Brites for sharing Timor-Leste's comprehensive governmental and societal approach to conflict resolution, which highlights Timor-Leste's National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security. He noted the National Directorate's unique focus on community engagement, including its allocation of 75 per cent of its time to grassroots initiatives.

44. He reflected on the broad spectrum of inter-state and intra-state conflicts covered in the session, and how AMS have employed various approaches to conflict resolution. He linked the day of the workshop to the significant national days of three ASEAN countries — Singapore, Indonesia, and Malaysia — and recalled the historical context of strained relations, particularly tensions between Singapore and Indonesia during Indonesia's 1960s Confrontation campaign.

45. He underscored how political will and the acknowledgement of historical grievances have been crucial to ASEAN's growth and stability. He concluded by quoting Lee Kuan Yew, Singapore's founding Prime Minister, emphasising that peace has been the foundational basis of ASEAN's existence, and continues to be its guiding principle.

Session 5A: ASEAN Mechanisms on Conflict Prevention, Management, and Resolution (I)

46. The moderator, **H.E. U Nyunt Swe**, Representative of Myanmar to AICHR, highlighted that the session would examine existing ASEAN mechanisms for conflict prevention, management, and resolution, and would also discuss the opportunities and challenges for strengthening these mechanisms.

47. The first panellist, **I Gusti Agung Wesaka Puja**, stated that the 1967 Bangkok Declaration acts as a foundational instrument that upholds the rule of law and justice in the region. There have been a number of peace initiatives in ASEAN, such as the peace processes in Cambodia, Aceh, and between Indonesia and Timor-Leste. Guidelines for fostering peace in the ASEAN region are set out in the 2009 Cha-Am Hua Hin Declaration. The initiatives included establishing offices, undertaking conciliation, developing dispute resolution procedures, improving think tanks, and encouraging gender mainstreaming.

48. He added that the *ASEAN Community Vision 2045* indicates that the community engages in all aspects of life, including conflict prevention, which is outlined in Strategic Goals 1 and 5. The prevalence of peace issues in the region led to the establishment of ASEAN-IPR in response to the lack of regional mechanisms to support conflict management and resolution, although optimal implementation of these mechanisms remains a challenge. He concluded with the analogy that "a camel is a horse designed by the committee".

49. **Lt. Col. Sulaiman bin Sawat**, Principal Assistant Secretary in the Policy and Strategic Planning Division, Ministry of Defence Malaysia, discussed the establishment of the ASEAN

Defence Senior Officials' Meeting ('ADSOM'), describing it as a friendly forum for dialogue and cooperation to address regional challenges. It consists of working groups, one of which addresses the unique challenges faced by women in conflict and post-conflict settings, ensuring their voices are heard and valued. Several approaches have been adopted for conflict prevention, including an early warning system, joint exercises and information-sharing, quiet diplomacy, and engagement with academics and civil society.

50. He observed that ASEAN's efforts have produced tangible outcomes, including the successful prevention of inter-state war among AMS and the establishment of peaceful mechanisms such as the ASEAN Charter, the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia, the ASEAN Regional Forum, and ASEAN-IPR. Dialogue initiatives have also been successful in decreasing tensions prior to open conflict, including in Cambodia and during Timor-Leste's independence process.

51. He elaborated that these accomplishments faced several challenges, including the principle of non-interference, consensus-based decision-making, and limited enforcement capacity. In addition, external pressures from the USA and China have at times compelled AMS to take sides. However, there are still several opportunities open to ASEAN to exercise regional peer influence and moral diplomacy, leverage soft power, provide development assistance, and transform external pressures into catalysts for greater regional cohesion.

52. **Dr. Suphatmet Yunyasit**, Member of the ASEAN Women for Peace Registry and Lecturer and Program Chairperson at the Institute of Human Rights and Peace Studies, Mahidol University, explained existing conflict prevention mechanisms in ASEAN and best practices, while promoting inclusiveness, particularly the involvement of women. According to her, the correct term is not 'conflict resolution', as this implies suppressing conflict. She suggested that 'conflict transformation' is more appropriate as it represents the process of moving from conflict-habituated systems towards peace systems.

53. She noted that other panellists had referred to several existing mechanisms within ASEAN, including the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia, the ASEAN Regional Forum, the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting, and the early warning system. Understanding the context of the mechanism and associated risks is essential for monitoring, communication, and response. Nonetheless, there are still obvious gaps, particularly structural concerns where ASEAN appears sluggish in taking action because of internal disputes, unresolved overlapping maritime conflict, and cross-border issues. She also highlighted that operational difficulties persist due to an underdeveloped early warning system, resulting in limited involvement within the ASEAN community, alongside political challenges.

54. She cited examples from the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe and also the African Union, which have been successful in conflict transformation processes. The former focuses on identifying triggers of violent conflict and examining relationships between majorities and minorities, democratic institutions, human rights, and the importance of free media in a peaceful society. The African Union, through its Peace and Security Council, has

established a continental early warning system that monitors early signs of violent conflict and works with sub-regional communities to assist member states in achieving peace.

55. She provided an overview of the ASEAN Women, Peace and Security agenda, pointing out that despite their significant impact, women have been largely excluded from conflict management processes. While developing a national action plan for women is the goal, challenges remain in integrating women's issues into the plan and engaging them in board meetings and related mechanisms.

56. **Irma Dewi Rismayati**, Director of Legal, Organization, and Cooperation at Indonesia's National Disaster Management Authority, noted that ASEAN has been recognised for its effectiveness in dealing with natural disasters such as earthquakes, typhoons, floods, and humanitarian emergencies, thereby contributing to regional peace and stability.

57. She explained that ASEAN established a regional, legally binding agreement known as the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response, to improve collective preparedness and response to natural disasters, with a link to regional development and responses. The Agreement operates through three Working Groups under the ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management: the Working Group on Prevention and Mitigation; the Working Group on Preparedness, Response, and Recovery; and the Working Group on Global Leadership. She added that the Agreement incorporates comprehensive human rights considerations, including protections for women, children, persons with disabilities, and the elderly. It also contains provisions relating to displacement, shelter, healthcare, and protection from exploitation during disasters.

58. She further explained that AMS have established legally binding agreements on conflict prevention, partner response, and recovery, with the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on disaster management ('AHA Centre') in Jakarta serving as a policymaking and coordinating body. She briefly described the 'One ASEAN One Response' declaration on responding to catastrophes both within and beyond the region. This framework puts in place a system that incorporates trust-building, regional stability, and human rights protection, with the aim of achieving a rapid, coordinated, inclusive, and sustainable response.

Question-and-Answer Session

59. **One participant** raised a question concerning the potential of conflict resolution, and how it might contribute to the realisation of the *ASEAN Community Vision 2045*.

60. **I Gusti Agung Wesaka Puja** replied that progress is still lacking despite ASEAN's 58 years of efforts in conflict prevention, with complex preventive solutions being led by the ASEAN Chair rather than existing mechanisms being maximised. He observed that while ASEAN has articulated numerous aspirational goals, disagreements among AMS hinder their realisation. Nonetheless, despite the limitations, ASEAN continues to work on a low-key approach with the goal of fostering unity and progressing in a common direction.

Session 5B: ASEAN Mechanisms on Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution (II)

61. The moderator, **Windi Arini Imam**, Country Director for Indonesia at the Raoul Wallenberg Institute of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law, indicated that the session aimed to deepen understanding of ASEAN's approaches to conflict prevention, management, and resolution, building upon earlier discussions involving ASEAN-IPR, ADSOM, the ASEAN Women for Peace Registry, and the ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management. The session would also look at how existing ASEAN mechanisms can address emerging peace and security challenges in the region, including those identified in the *ASEAN Community Vision 2045*, such as climate change.

62. Owing to time constraints, she explained that the session would take the form of an interactive conversation structured around three rounds of guiding questions. Each panellist would speak briefly, followed by engagement with the audience to consider the future roles that ASEAN mechanisms, including AICHR, might play.

63. She invited the first panellist to initiate the discussion by reflecting on notable achievements of ASEAN mechanisms in conflict prevention, management, and resolution.

64. **Dr. Termsak Chalermpananupap**, a Visiting Fellow at the Thailand Studies Programme, ISEAS – Yusof Ishak Institute, highlighted that while ASEAN has achieved notable humanitarian outcomes such as the provision of assistance to victims of Cyclone Nargis, its primary strength lies in functioning as a process-oriented mechanism for conflict prevention rather than engagement in direct conflict resolution.

65. He candidly expressed initial scepticism about ASEAN's capacity to manage conflicts, given the complex political situations in the region, including internal conflicts in Myanmar and the Papua region of Indonesia, as well as inter-state conflicts such as the border issues between Thailand and Cambodia and disputes in the South China Sea. He emphasised that ASEAN's mandate does not extend to managing such intricate political conflicts within or between countries.

66. He explained that instead, ASEAN's role is more narrowly focused on disputes relating to its own commitments, specifically those regarding adherence to ASEAN agreements and protocols, rather than broader political or territorial disputes. This distinction, he pointed out, defines both the scope and limitations of ASEAN's capabilities in conflict resolution within the region.

67. **Dr. Dinna Prapto Raharja**, Co-Founder of Synergy Policies and the former Representative of Indonesia to AICHR (2016–2018), presented a contrasting viewpoint, emphasising that conflicts within ASEAN are not confined to inter-state or state-to-state disputes but also arise from diverse interests at the people-to-people level. She described how conflicts can escalate from contestation and rivalry to open warfare, but can also exist in more subtle forms linked to economic and social interactions that often go beyond direct state control.

68. She noted the challenge ASEAN faces in focusing primarily on state mechanisms for conflict resolution, while many conflicts stem from issues not fully regulated or governed by states. Using economic cooperation as an example, ASEAN's transformation into a rules-based organisation under the ASEAN Charter has increased integration and regulatory complexity. She observed that this integration can, ironically, provoke conflicts when states negotiate on behalf of various stakeholders, including business interests. She added that when market mechanisms involve state intervention, sovereignty and national pride can be threatened.

69. She highlighted that, despite these complexities, ASEAN has made notable achievements in minimising conflicts through mechanisms such as ASEAN-China cooperation frameworks and regional platforms such as the East Asia Summit. She also acknowledged the successes within the ASEAN Political-Security Community pillar, including joint dialogues on human rights, human trafficking, and transboundary challenges such as hate speech.

70. She stressed that the scope of ASEAN's conflict prevention and resolution extends beyond traditional definitions of conflict and encompasses a broad range of issues and actors. She remarked that although new geopolitical challenges continue to emerge globally, these do not diminish ASEAN's past contributions to conflict prevention and mitigation.

71. **Lilianne Fan**, Mediator with the Southeast Asian Women Peace Mediators, highlighted that ASEAN's significant achievements in peace and conflict issues often stem more from the political will and agency of individual AMS, especially those holding the position of ASEAN Chair, rather than from formal ASEAN institutional mechanisms. She pointed to positive and innovative approaches taken by countries such as Malaysia (the current Chair of ASEAN) and Indonesia (a former Chair of ASEAN), which have played proactive roles in complex regional conflicts through shuttle diplomacy, mediation, and creative monitoring solutions.

72. She emphasised that peace processes like the Mindanao peace process and the Aceh peace process were not mediated directly through ASEAN mechanisms but benefitted from the involvement and leadership of AMS. These efforts often included monitoring teams with members from multiple ASEAN countries, demonstrating cooperative regional engagement beyond formal ASEAN structures.

73. She pointed to the groundbreaking Commission of Truth and Friendship Indonesia – Timor-Leste as a remarkable example of political will for reconciliation and for overcoming painful historical conflicts. This initiative shows the importance of truth and reconciliation mechanisms for breaking cycles of violence — an area where ASEAN currently lacks a formal mechanism but has valuable precedents demonstrated by AMS.

74. She underscored that while ASEAN mechanisms themselves may be limited or sporadic, the political will and innovative conflict management efforts by AMS serve as crucial drivers of peace, conflict prevention, and resolution in the region.

75. **Dr. Tri Nuke Pudjiastuti**, Research Professor at the Research Center for Politics, National Research and Innovation Agency of Indonesia, and Member of the Asia Dialogue on Forced Migration, highlighted the significant vulnerabilities faced by refugees and asylum

seekers in the ASEAN region and emphasised the significant risks they face, particularly given the lack of an agreed-upon regional protection framework. She pointed out that ASEAN hosts hundreds of thousands of refugees and migrants, but protection mechanisms remain inadequate.

76. She acknowledged that there have been some ASEAN achievements in the human rights field, such as the establishment of AICHR and the adoption of human rights declarations, but noted challenges in implementation. ASEAN policies and frameworks addressing migrant worker protections and combatting trafficking in persons were also recognised as strengths.

77. She praised collaborative efforts in search and rescue operations, involving entities like the AHA Centre and national agencies, and underscored the difficulties in the practical implementation of these efforts to truly protect vulnerable populations. She placed particular emphasis on the protections for women and children under ASEAN frameworks, including the ACWC and related declarations.

78. She also emphasised ASEAN's engagement with civil society in developing regulations, but noted that tensions arise when civil society critiques implementation. She acknowledged ASEAN's growing expertise in disaster management following major crises such as cyclones, but stressed the need for further attention to translating this expertise into effective mechanisms.

79. **Windi Arini Imam**, the moderator, noted that political will, implementation, and the broader geopolitical situation are major challenges. For the next round of discussion, she urged the panellists to delve further into the limitations and challenges of ASEAN mechanisms, as well as future opportunities and possible pathways forward.

80. **Dr. Termsak Chalermphanupap** emphasised that ASEAN's strength lies in its process and mechanisms for promoting dialogue and cooperation among AMS. He pointed out that ASEAN provides a valuable platform for AMS to learn to engage in dialogue through numerous meetings, and mentioned that over 1,000 meetings have provided learning opportunities.

81. He outlined the following key points:

- a) Challenge of public expectation and misperception: There is often a misunderstanding about what ASEAN can realistically achieve. He used a metaphor shared by Ambassador Bilahari Kausikan, a former Singaporean diplomat, likening ASEAN to a cow that should not be expected to become a horse or a tiger. This metaphor illustrates ASEAN's nature as a cooperative process rather than an entity equipped for direct conflict prevention or resolution.
- b) Role of ASEAN in conflict management: While ASEAN mechanisms themselves may not resolve conflicts directly, they facilitate dialogue and cooperation that contribute to conflict management. Successful agreements in the region, such as those in Timor-Leste and Mindanao, were influenced by ASEAN's cooperative

language and dialogue practices but were not direct products of ASEAN mechanisms.

- c) Clarification on ASEAN instruments: Some important treaties like the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia and the Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone are not strictly ASEAN instruments but stand independently, with broad participation beyond ASEAN members.
- d) Balancing non-interference with shared responsibility: An important principle embedded in the ASEAN Charter is the balance between non-interference and collective responsibility. This principle emphasises that while non-interference is a core norm, ASEAN members share a commitment and collective responsibility to enhance regional peace, security, and prosperity. Therefore, members cannot simply invoke non-interference to ignore their responsibilities in conflict prevention and resolution.

82. His remarks underscored the importance of understanding ASEAN as a unique regional entity focused on dialogue and cooperation, and highlighted the challenges of public perception and the opportunities arising from shared commitment and collective responsibility.

83. **Dr. Dinna Prapto Raharja** painted a picture of a complex and nuanced reality in her response regarding the limitations and challenges faced by ASEAN mechanisms. She addressed the misconception that ASEAN lacks ambition, pointing out that the organisation consistently chooses bold and purposeful themes each year, such as ‘Cohesive and Responsive ASEAN’ in 2020 during Viet Nam’s tenure as Chair, or Cambodia’s ‘ASEAN Act’, which stands for Action Together, Addressing Challenges Together. These themes reflect a substantive desire among AMS to not only discuss issues but to also take collective action.

84. She observed that a major hurdle is the cumbersome bureaucratic structure within ASEAN. Since the adoption of the ASEAN Charter, the involvement of numerous ministries across different countries, coupled with varying rotation schedules for committees and chairs, complicates and slows down decision-making processes. This fragmentation within the bureaucracy often leads ASEAN mechanisms to focus more on translating grand visions into lengthy plans, training sessions, and promotional activities rather than rapid and decisive action. In this context, she noted that it is typically only the ASEAN Foreign Ministers’ Meetings that have the capacity to act swiftly when necessary.

85. She also drew attention to the persistent geopolitical challenges ASEAN faces. Despite a history of resisting outside domination and exploitation, ASEAN’s cooperation with external countries remains significantly higher than intra-ASEAN trade and collaboration. This reflects the ongoing influence of external geopolitical factors on ASEAN’s internal dynamics, presenting a further challenge to the region’s collective cohesion.

86. Addressing opportunities and the way forward, she emphasised the importance of reducing bureaucratic obstacles and making ASEAN mechanisms more agile and responsive. She advocated greater engagement with Track 2 diplomacy mechanisms such as

non-governmental dialogues and informal channels, which are underutilised but essential for more dynamic interaction. This suggestion aligns with the *ASEAN Community Vision 2045* to become a resilient, innovative, dynamic, and people-centred organisation. Being people-centred, she asserted, requires the ability to respond quickly to rapidly changing situations.

87. She discussed the utility of platforms such as the African Union's Panel of the Wise, but cautioned against turning such forums into rigid, closed bureaucratic processes that limit access and dialogue. Instead, she proposed a more fluid and flexible approach, encouraging free and frank discussions under the Chatham House Rule, which enables participants to speak openly without fear of repercussions. She envisioned roundtable settings without national flags, focusing on substantive dialogue rather than procedural formalities. According to her, such openness would promote stronger regional understanding and cooperation.

88. **Lilianne Fan** reflected in detail on the limitations, challenges, and opportunities within ASEAN mechanisms for conflict prevention and resolution. She pointed out that many of ASEAN's strengths stem not from its mechanisms but from the proactive actions of individual AMS or during their tenure as ASEAN Chair. This dependence on the political will of a rotating Chair creates discontinuity, particularly since conflicts are complex, deep-rooted, and protracted, requiring long-term engagement beyond the short-term nature of each Chair's tenure.

89. She emphasised the difficulty in maintaining momentum in conflict resolution as the leadership changes, making the lack of institutional robustness a significant constraint. She also highlighted how ASEAN's current framework has limited engagement with non-state armed actors, which is critical in mediation efforts. Drawing on her experience in Aceh and current Myanmar engagements, she outlined the challenges of balancing engagement with armed groups without granting them legitimacy, while trying to facilitate dialogue and promote peace.

90. She noted the progress made through informal or complementary mechanisms, such as the Southeast Asian Women Peace Mediators, which provide safe spaces for dialogue where formal ASEAN mechanisms fall short. Another major limitation she identified was the lack of a clear protection mechanism for civilians affected by conflict. Unlike ASEAN's well-established disaster response system (e.g. the AHA Centre), there is no institutional framework empowered to negotiate humanitarian access or deliver aid impartially in conflict zones.

91. For future opportunities, she suggested that ASEAN build capacity and develop clear mandates focused on civilian protection in conflict areas. While conflicts take a long time to resolve, ASEAN could play a crucial role in minimising civilian suffering by enabling impartial aid delivery and ensuring access to basic services amid ongoing conflicts.

92. She concluded her remarks with the observation that expanding institutional continuity, improving engagement with non-state actors, and creating mechanisms for civilian protection are critical next steps for ASEAN in enhancing its conflict prevention and resolution efforts.

93. In her response on the limitations and challenges of ASEAN mechanisms on conflict prevention, management, and resolution, **Dr. Tri Nuke Pudjiastuti** pointed out the significant gap in terminology and conceptual clarity concerning forced migration within ASEAN frameworks. She observed that ASEAN documents lack explicit recognition of refugees and asylum seekers, focusing narrowly instead on irregular migrants, trafficking, and smuggling. This limitation creates a challenge because it leaves refugees and asylum seekers vulnerable, often falling prey to smugglers and traffickers, while ASEAN's concern appears limited only to trafficking and smuggling issues.

94. She underscored the difficulty of balancing national sovereignty and security interests with humanitarian concerns, and noted that ASEAN lacks a common regional approach or guarantees on forced migration and human rights due to differing national priorities among AMS. She emphasised that the principles of state sovereignty and non-interference hinder the development of enforceable mechanisms, clear mandates, and procedures essential for effective regional cooperation.

95. In terms of opportunities and ways forward, she proposed two broad categories of recommendations: changes to the existing ASEAN structure, and the creation of new, long-term structures. In the short-to-medium term, she suggested integrating forced migration issues, including those affecting refugees and asylum seekers, into the *ASEAN Community Vision 2045* framework to foster inclusivity and a people-centred approach in ASEAN policies.

96. For longer-term solutions, she recommended establishing a dedicated ministerial dialogue on forced migration in order to give this issue higher political priority and coherence. She also advocated the creation of an ASEAN declaration that covers all forms of forced migration broadly and sets out governance frameworks. She stressed the need for an ASEAN multi-stakeholder forum on forced migration, leveraging ASEAN's existing multi-stakeholder approach to enhance cooperation and responsiveness.

97. Her overall perspective placed emphasis on the urgency of filling critical gaps in terminology, institutional frameworks, and regional cooperation mechanisms; and on advocating both incremental improvements within existing frameworks as well as bold new structures to better address forced migration challenges in ASEAN.

98. The moderator posed a question to the panellists concerning ASEAN's evolving vision. She referred to Dr. Termsak Chalermpananupap's point that while ASEAN was originally established with certain intentions, public expectations have evolved to call for it to be more progressive, agile, and assertive. She sought insight into how these potentially differing expectations could be reconciled as ASEAN moves forward with its new vision.

99. **Dr. Termsak Chalermpananupap** responded by outlining the importance of realism, coupled with optimism, in understanding ASEAN's nature and potential. He acknowledged that ASEAN cannot compel AMS to act against their will, given its founding principles of equality, consultation, and consensus. These principles, while limiting in some respects, have been key to sustaining ASEAN's unity for 58 years.

100. He advocated a pragmatic approach that recognises ASEAN's limitations but maintains hope in the ability of AMS to cooperate for the common good. He noted the progress in ASEAN's community-building efforts, particularly in improving understanding and cooperation on human rights. Success in these areas will reduce conflicts, help manage differences constructively, and enable AMS to coexist and collaborate more effectively. This blend of realism and 'woke' optimism reflects a positive but grounded perspective on ASEAN's evolving role as it aims to be more progressive, agile, and assertive while respecting its core values.

101. **The moderator** framed her next question by building on Dr. Termsak Chalermpananupap's earlier point about ASEAN's institutional realities. She recalled that promoting human rights cooperation was suggested as a viable way to navigate ASEAN's challenges. She sought practical insights by questioning how this can realistically be achieved, given ASEAN's lack of authority to compel AMS to act against their will. Specifically, she invited Dr. Dinna Prapto Raharja, with her experience as a former Representative of Indonesia to AICHR, to explore how such cooperation on human rights could be advanced within these constraints.

102. **Dr. Dinna Prapto Raharja** responded by underscoring the complex realities of international politics and the need for adaptability. She acknowledged the longstanding challenges ASEAN faces, including the increasing trend of bilateralism, whereby countries prefer individual engagements over regional cooperation, which undermines ASEAN unity. She observed that recent leadership approaches have sometimes deepened divisions by pushing exclusive agendas, thereby weakening collective efforts.

103. She stressed that ASEAN, as a mature organisation of 58 years' standing, must believe in its capacity to evolve. Change is inevitable, and ASEAN needs to rejuvenate its mechanisms to remain relevant and effective. She suggested concrete steps, such as increasing the frequency and inclusiveness of dialogues within mechanisms such as AICHR. According to her, listening more attentively to diverse stakeholders, including civil society and experts, can enhance responsiveness and resilience.

104. She called for renewed energy within ASEAN through open dialogue, inclusivity, and a willingness to adjust traditional approaches to regional cooperation. This approach could foster stronger human rights cooperation despite the inherent limitations of ASEAN's consensus-based model.

105. **Lilianne Fan** expressed a tendency towards a realistic rather than fully optimistic view about ASEAN's progress. She highlighted the need for ASEAN and AMS to move beyond seeing conflict and peacebuilding purely as foreign policy issues, and to recognise the deep interconnections between regional security and internal national security concerns. According to her, issues such as conflict, forced displacement, refugees, transnational crime, and border security are all interrelated and should be addressed holistically rather than in isolated silos.

106. She pointed out that the current artificial separation between conflict resolution and issues like refugee protection or border management weakens ASEAN's effectiveness. Many

ASEAN countries lack adequate legal frameworks for recognising asylum seekers, often incorrectly treating them as undocumented migrants, which leads to harmful deportations in violation of international legal principles, including non-refoulement.

107. She affirmed the importance of integrating protection for civilians and refugees into broader discussions on conflict and security. While solving conflicts is an immense challenge that no regional body can claim to master, ASEAN can still play a valuable role by strengthening protection mechanisms, monitoring situations, and supporting mediation efforts. She recommended joint efforts that ensure border security goes hand in hand with safeguarding vulnerable populations.

108. **Dr. Tri Nuke Pudjiastuti** expressed an optimistic outlook on ASEAN's potential progress. She indicated that meaningful change should begin with ASEAN sectoral bodies, such as the Senior Officials Meeting on Social Welfare and Development and AICHR. These smaller mechanisms should work collaboratively to develop and implement effective human rights protections, particularly for vulnerable populations such as forcibly displaced persons, refugees, and asylum seekers.

109. She advocated practical steps towards inclusivity at the sectoral level, drawing on successful modalities and experiences in human rights implementation. She acknowledged the challenge of political will at the national government level, since ASEAN sectoral bodies consist of representatives from AMS. However, she remains hopeful that through persistent efforts and collective experience, national governments will be encouraged to develop stronger commitments to human rights, ultimately driving ASEAN's human rights mechanisms forward.

Session 6A (Breakout Group Case Study): The SuperNations

110. Participants conducted a simulation using a case study titled 'The SuperNations'. They were divided into 10 groups: SuperNations, Albestin, ARG, Bukaya, Chindler, CSO, Cyclone Survivors, International Observer, PPP, and Sansha. Participants were asked to remain in character according to their assigned roles within the groups. The key issue in the Session 6 simulation was mechanisms for conflict prevention and resolution.

111. The scenario underlying the simulation involved three neighbouring countries — Albestin, Bukaya, and Chindler — that form a regional union known as the 'SuperNations'. They are situated in a remote and climatically harsh region near Antarkk. While they have long enjoyed close economic and political ties, recent developments have put the SuperNations under strain. Through years of dialogue and exchange of good practices with ASEAN and ASEAN organs, sectoral bodies, entities, and centres, the SuperNations has come to admire ASEAN. In 2022, it officially adopted the SuperNations Charter, modelled on the ASEAN Charter, and agreed to be governed by it. It also signed a Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Antarkk, similar to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia.

112. A crisis arose in November 2023, when political tensions in Albestin escalated into armed conflict, with rival factions vying for control. The LLL, a Dani party, was challenged by the PPP over human rights violations and abuse of power. The conflict resulted in widespread violence, particularly against women and girls, and worsening humanitarian conditions, including food insecurity, lack of medical access, and high child mortality. The Sansha, one of the minority groups, were affected and fled Albestin, seeking refuge in peaceful Bukaya, located between Albestin and Chindler.

113. Bukaya initially welcomed the Sansha, but the large influx strained resources and sparked tensions within the host community, particularly affecting women and girls, who faced heightened risks of gender-based violence. The PPP, which controlled the Albestin-Bukaya border, supported transnational criminal activities such as drug trafficking and arms smuggling, allowing gangs to establish online scamming centres due to a lack of law enforcement. Bukaya's diplomatic efforts in Albestin continued without resolution. A cyclone in February 2025 killed thousands and displaced many more, further complicating the situation.

Session 6B (Breakout Group Case Study): The SuperNations Simulation Round 1

114. **Michael Frank Alar**, the facilitator, asked participants to set aside their own perspectives and fully assume the roles in the simulation. In this exercise, he took on the role of Special High-Level Problem Solver on Albestin's Crisis. He instructed the groups to discuss their respective roles and identify their respective objectives.

115. Each group appointed one representative to participate at the 'Main Dialogue' table. The outcomes were as follows:

- a) **PPP** demanded the support of the legitimate government representatives to restore legitimacy in the country. They asserted that the current representatives lacked legitimacy, and demanded their removal.
- b) **Cyclone Survivors** insisted that all parties follow the joint shuttle agreement, particularly the universal declaration, and address the code in the community.
- c) **The Human Rights Commission** stressed the need to protect the rights of all persons, regardless of whether they support rebel movements or humanitarian causes, and to pursue outcomes that respect human rights and humanitarian principles.
- d) **SuperNations** affirmed that it would uphold its principles and adhere to its established methods without interference. It emphasised the importance of consensus, careful consideration of stakeholders' views in decision-making processes, and the need for truthful reporting to enable effective support.

- e) **Albestin** underscored the need for calm and rationality in addressing the crisis, asserting its legitimacy as the representative of the people, and reaffirming its sovereignty and territorial integrity.
- f) **Sansha** representatives acknowledged their position as victims, while expressing solidarity with their fellow citizens and their right to return safely. They expressed gratitude to the Bukaya Government and people for their support, while emphasising that the perspectives of conflict victims must be central to future discussions.
- g) **Bukaya** urged all parties to take action against violence and discrimination, highlighting peace and social cohesion as key guiding principles, and called for collective dialogue to identify solutions.
- h) **ARG** declared its intention to take decisive action, including through the use of force. It stated that it would stop at nothing until the Sansha were recognised within Albestin and reintegrated into the state.
- i) **Chindler** encouraged recognition of its efforts in capturing warring factions and terrorists. It indicated it would not provide a complete strategy but would rely on international law, prioritising border protection, national security, sovereignty, and non-interference, drawing lessons from the ASEAN Charter.
- j) **CSO** representatives urged that attention be paid to all — especially women, children, and youth — and emphasised peace and harmony. They highlighted the importance of the voices of survivors and stakeholders, and strengthening implementation and collaboration, and supporting substantive equality. They called for peace and reconciliation, and stressed the need for immediate assistance for cyclone survivors.

Session 6C: Reflection and Feedback

116. In this session, each group discussed two sets of questions:

- a) How can the crisis in Albestin be addressed? What processes should be undertaken, and who should be involved? Are there experiences in the ASEAN region that the SuperNations could draw upon, or existing mechanisms they could build on?
- b) How can such processes or measures be made inclusive, and address the concerns of all state and non-state parties, as well as of other stakeholders, including victims, displaced populations, and vulnerable groups such as women and youth?

117. The results of the discussion were presented in a ‘fishbowl’ discussion format.

- a) **Cyclone Survivors** expressed disagreement with the ceasefire, calling for priority to be placed on humanitarian assistance because thousands of people died in the cyclone.
- b) **Sansha** representatives voiced their disapproval that existing mechanisms rarely involve refugees. Only one organisation — the Human Rights Commission — has engaged with them. They stressed that, despite refugees being among the groups most directly affected by the crisis, their exclusion from these processes remained deeply troubling.
- c) **CSO** highlighted its grassroots origins and its role in collecting data, documenting evidence and victim counts, and mapping areas in urgent need of support. However, CSO faces obstacles in delivering assistance due to the conflict among the three countries and border restrictions. CSO has been unable to proceed despite support from international observers, and it stressed the need for immediate dialogue among leaders to ensure the prompt distribution of aid.
- d) **ARG**, as a member state of SuperNations, pointed out that Bukaya, a neighbouring country, was also affected by the crisis and should be included in discussions to find a solution.
- e) **PPP** underscored that addressing the crisis requires the participation of all stakeholders in Albestin, as well as neighbouring nations.
- f) **Albestin** proposed that the first step should be to call for a ceasefire to enable humanitarian access, followed by mediated dialogue in a neutral, secure setting behind closed doors to identify solutions.
- g) **Bukaya** stressed that enduring conflict cannot be resolved amid mutual distrust and enmity, and highlighted the need to build trust and confidence between the people and all stakeholders, united by the common goal of achieving peace.
- h) **Chindler** pointed out that the principle of non-interference can hinder humanitarian intervention, suggesting that this principle may need to be reconsidered in humanitarian crises.
- i) **SuperNations** emphasised the need for adequate resources to ensure that mediation efforts are credible, sustainable, and acceptable to all parties.
- j) **The Human Rights Commission** requested facilitation for dialogue between conflicting parties and affected communities, aimed at inclusivity and accuracy in the provision of information. It proposed providing verified data, with the involvement of all stakeholders, including member states and affected communities, in validating the accuracy and timeliness of the information.

118. **The facilitator** invited additional reflections. **PPP** noted that if an area lacks resources, it would require international assistance, and that international intervention is needed to address the longstanding coup in the region, and to ensure visibility for peacebuilding efforts. It emphasised the importance of creating a safe space for everyone to feel included and equal, particularly for returnees.

119. **Sansha** representatives stated that they were considering forming a monitoring group comprising multiple stakeholders to address the concerns arising from the crisis, support the peacebuilding process, and utilise international resources effectively.

120. **The facilitator** indicated that the case study simulation would continue in Session 9 of Workshop 3 and Session 12 of Workshop 4.

121. The following is a summary of the key lessons from Workshop 2:

- a) ASEAN already has several mechanisms that are relevant to peace, but they are fragmented and lack structured coordination.
- b) Peace-related work exists across humanitarian, disaster, and diplomatic channels, even if it is not labelled as ‘peacebuilding’.
- c) There is a need for a more structured and coherent approach across ASEAN bodies.
- d) Institutional continuity is weak, and dependent on the ASEAN Chair.
- e) Cross-pillar coordination remains weak. The ASEAN Political-Security Community alone is insufficient; stronger engagement across the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community and the ASEAN Economic Community are necessary.

Workshop 3: Leveraging International Frameworks and Approaches

14 August 2025
Jakarta, Indonesia

Recap of Workshop 2: ASEAN Mechanisms for Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding

1. **H.E. Edmund Bon Tai Soon**, AICHR Chair 2025 and Representative of Malaysia to AICHR, opened the third workshop with a recap of the second workshop, which had taken place the day before. He noted that the second workshop provided an overview of how ASEAN's experience in dealing with various conflicts has led to initiatives to identify areas for improvement. The simulations provided unique insights and helped participants better understand conflict situations and appropriate responses. He explained that the third workshop would examine how to leverage international frameworks and approaches, discuss ASEAN's mechanisms in light of current and future scenarios, and continue with case study simulations. He encouraged open discussion and active participation.

'ASEAN Vision 2045: ASEAN Mechanisms Then, Now and in the Future' — In Conversation with Professor Dr. Dewi Fortuna Anwar

2. In her opening remarks, **Professor Dr. Dewi Fortuna Anwar**, Research Professor at the Research Centre for Politics, National Research and Innovation Agency of Indonesia, emphasised ASEAN's role in peacebuilding and conflict resolution. She provided a comprehensive historical overview of ASEAN's formation, focusing on conflict management and security dynamics in Southeast Asia. Noting examples of conflicts in Aceh, Papua, Timor-Leste, and Myanmar, she suggested that such conflicts had shaped ASEAN. According to her, however, ASEAN's approach to conflict management is likened to "diffusing conflicts rather than resolving them" and often "sweeping them under the carpet".

3. In addition to discussing the evolution of ASEAN values, she noted how the original ASEAN Charter draft included stronger provisions for human rights and democracy that were later weakened. She therefore promoted improvements to ASEAN mechanisms such as AICHR, emphasising that to be truly effective they require genuine authority beyond common promotion activities. She recommended a flexible, results-driven approach to conflict resolution rather than rigid adherence to specific methods.

4. In particular, she discussed the role of the International Court of Justice in resolving bilateral disputes within ASEAN countries. She mentioned the Sipadan-Ligitan dispute between Indonesia and Malaysia: Indonesia wanted to take it to the ASEAN High Council, but Malaysia was reluctant, as it had border issues with multiple ASEAN countries. Both countries eventually agreed to take the dispute to the International Court of Justice instead. In contrast, in the dispute between Cambodia and Thailand regarding the Preah Vihear temple, Cambodia went to the International Court of Justice unilaterally, resulting in Thailand not recognising the International Court of Justice's ruling. The International Court of Justice is therefore only

effective for resolving bilateral disputes when both parties mutually agree to use it and commit to accepting the outcome.

5. She mentioned three primary threats in the ASEAN region. The first threat is internal, and concerns challenges within AMS that relate to national resilience. She cited the example of the 1998 financial crisis, which led to regime collapse in Indonesia. The second is external threats that involve concerns about broader dimensions, requiring ASEAN members to work together when facing such challenges. The third one is a threat that occurs between AMS. She briefly mentioned the *ASEAN Community Vision 2045* as reflecting a desire to strengthen human rights, and concluded her presentation with a reminder that war and peace are not givens, but rather social constructs.

Question-and-Answer Session

6. **H.E. Edmund Bon Tai Soon**, the moderator, posed the first question, inquiring about the role of the ASEAN Chair in de-escalating tensions, the need for other modalities beyond goodwill for the region, and the role of the International Court of Justice in addressing regional tensions.

7. **Professor Dr. Dewi Fortuna Anwar** responded that the ASEAN Charter emphasises democracy, human rights, constitutional governance, respect for territorial integrity, and non-interference. Each AMS naturally has its own foreign policy, and ASEAN also has the ASEAN Political-Security Community, which ensures that the region's countries coexist peacefully. The ASEAN Political-Security Community provides guidance on internal actions; however, since most human rights violations are state-led, enforcement mechanisms should therefore be in place. If an inter-state dispute arises, the ASEAN Chair plays a crucial role, and resolution can be achieved through bilateral mechanisms, such as a joint commission.

8. However, the involvement of the ASEAN Secretary-General is limited, in accordance with Article 23.2 of the ASEAN Charter, particularly in the context of the Thailand-Cambodia border dispute, as the current ASEAN Secretary-General is from Cambodia, which has created a trust barrier in Thailand. Therefore, it is necessary to prioritise universal principles that can be reinforced by the ASEAN Chair at the ASEAN Summit, ensuring that these principles are upheld by ASEAN.

9. **The moderator** subsequently inquired about the current situation in Myanmar and Papua, and how ASEAN may approach this issue in the future.

10. **Professor Dr. Dewi Fortuna Anwar** explained that there was a military presence in Papua, while Human Rights Watch was actively addressing the rights issue, criticising the Government, and facilitating public expression. Hasan Wirajuda, the Indonesian Foreign Minister, shared information on what was happening in Papua with ASEAN, which refused to mention the conflict in Indonesia. He also shared what happened in Ambon, Aceh, and Poso, prompting other ASEAN countries to disclose their own internal issues, provided that these

issues did not affect other ASEAN countries. Cambodia and Thailand's issues, as well as the Rohingya situation, are ASEAN concerns that require increased attention and humanitarian intervention, with AICHR contributing to efforts to find solutions.

11. **A participant** asked how ASEAN and Indonesia might facilitate the process of resolving the conflict between Thailand and Cambodia.

12. **Professor Dr. Dewi Fortuna Anwar** responded that ASEAN faces a challenging situation due to geopolitics and economic factors. To address external pressures, it is crucial to maintain internal cohesion and strengthen resilience to prevent undue external influence. Improving ASEAN capacity alone is not enough, as a multifaceted approach is necessary. Thailand and Cambodia are willing to invoke the ASEAN High Council, which requires submitting a written request to the ASEAN Chair; this process could potentially test the mechanism's integrity.

13. **A second participant** commented that human rights must be protected before they can be promoted. The participant also noted that ASEAN does not yet have a mediation process; hence, capacity-building by the ASEAN Secretariat is required to support such a mechanism. The participant added that ASEAN should "open Pandora's box" and revise the ASEAN Charter.

14. **Professor Dr. Dewi Fortuna Anwar** responded that promotion is crucial for raising awareness about human rights and protecting them. However, a lack of awareness can lead to potential regression and backsliding. To prevent this, it is essential to take risks and stand up for human rights. Civil society, the media, and the international community should be involved to prevent backsliding and ensure progress.

15. **A third participant** commented on the ASEAN High Council, noting that any case submitted to it must be approved by all AMS. He observed that pursuing direct negotiations with Cambodia is the best way to achieve a resolution. He expressed optimism about ASEAN and highlighted that, first and foremost, AMS must collaborate in order to strengthen ASEAN. ASEAN has been effective for 58 years, despite challenges such as the conflict between Thailand and Cambodia. He remained hopeful that ASEAN has the strength to unite.

Session 7: International Norms and Frameworks on Conflict Prevention and Resolution

16. **Professor Maria Lourdes Veneracion**, Associate Professor at the Department of Political Science, Ateneo de Manila University, spoke on the crucial topic of international norms and frameworks centred on conflict prevention and resolution, with a special emphasis on the gender dimension, particularly women's issues. She underscored how indispensable it is for women to be fully included — not just symbolically but meaningfully — in decision-making processes relating to conflict resolution and peacebuilding. Her presentation was a strong call to recognise women's leadership as essential for achieving sustainable and holistic peace.

17. She elaborated on three significant international frameworks that shape this agenda. First, the Women, Peace and Security agenda, which was launched by UN Security Council Resolution 1325 in 2000, advocates the involvement of women at all levels of decision-making, the integration of gender perspectives in peace accords, and the protection of women in conflict zones. It has evolved with additional resolutions that enhance women's leadership and apply gender analysis strategically, and that even link the agenda to counterterrorism efforts.

18. She presented her perspective on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women ('CEDAW'), particularly its General Recommendation 30. She noted that this framework supports women's equal participation in both formal and informal peace processes and highlights their role in early warning systems to prevent gender-based violence, while also addressing the gendered consequences of arms transfers.

19. The third framework she mentioned focuses on gender-sensitive transitional justice, which links transitional justice mechanisms, such as truth and reconciliation processes, to efforts to prevent the recurrence of conflict. It emphasises women's rights to justice, reparation, and institutional reform with a gender lens in societies recovering from conflict.

20. She also shared insights on the status of National Action Plans on Women, Peace and Security across ASEAN countries, noting that while the Philippines, Indonesia, and Viet Nam have adopted such plans, other countries such as Thailand are still in the process of developing their respective plans.

21. The next panellist, **Dr. Noel M. Morada**, a C2F Research Professor at the Nelson Mandela Center, Chulalongkorn University, highlighted his teaching role in peace and conflict transformation, and his extensive experience with the Asia Pacific Centre for the Responsibility to Protect.

22. He framed his presentation around a central question: why do conflicts and wars occur? He explored various international relations theories, including realism, which views states as power-driven and competitive; and neo-realism, which adds the perspective of hierarchy and anarchy in the international system. He explained that anarchy — a lack of a supreme authority — leads to conflicts since states act primarily in their own interests.

23. He addressed how conflicts can be managed, citing post-World War II efforts to establish institutions, rules, and cooperation frameworks aimed at reducing wars. He elaborated on liberal and neoliberal perspectives that promote economic interdependence to foster peace. Constructivists also see anarchy as shaped by state behaviour and believe institutions and shared values can help manage conflicts.

24. He emphasised the importance of international norms in constraining detrimental state behaviour to maintain peace and security. However, he raised challenges regarding enforcement of and compliance with these norms, referring to debates within the English

School of international relations that distinguish between solidarist security communities (such as the European Union) that promote supranational rules, and pluralist communities (such as ASEAN) that prioritise sovereignty and non-interference.

25. He focused especially on the Responsibility to Protect ('R2P') principle, which was endorsed at the UN World Summit in 2005 and redefines sovereignty as a responsibility to protect populations from atrocity crimes such as genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity, and ethnic cleansing. He highlighted that R2P encompasses not only citizens but also immigrants, refugees, and stateless people, and is grounded in multiple international conventions, including the Genocide Convention and the Geneva Conventions.

26. He noted that R2P does not conflict with ASEAN principles and mentioned a high-level advisory panel report advocating for mainstreaming R2P in ASEAN, aligning with regional norms. He cautioned that rising populism and political challenges, such as 'Trumpism', threaten the implementation of R2P, and cited ongoing crises such as the genocide and ethnic cleansing in Gaza as tests of the international commitment to protect populations.

27. In concluding, he pointed out the particular challenges for Southeast Asia in promoting international norms due to ASEAN's adherence to pluralist values of sovereignty and non-interference, limited integration, and top-down governance structures. These factors complicate the effective adoption and implementation of R2P and human rights norms in the region.

28. **Dr. Muhadi Sugiono**, Senior Lecturer at the Department of International Relations, University of Gadjah Mada, Yogyakarta, delivered a thoughtful presentation on the promotion of conflict prevention, primarily emphasising its heightened importance after the Cold War. He explained that while there was initial optimism that peace and security would prevail post-Cold War, reality proved otherwise, with a proliferation of smaller-scale, intra-state conflicts rather than large inter-state wars. This shift underscored the need for stronger conflict prevention efforts.

29. He elaborated on how the UN and regional bodies like ASEAN have embraced the concept of a culture of conflict prevention, underscoring prevention as preferable to reactionary crisis management. The UN Secretary-General's recent emphasis on investing in prevention rather than solely responding to crises reinforced this approach within what is termed the peace continuum — from prevention and conflict resolution to peacekeeping, peacebuilding, and sustainable development.

30. He highlighted key international legal frameworks supporting conflict prevention, including human rights law, international humanitarian law, and norms against aggression that prohibit forceful violations of state sovereignty. He also touched on the controversial R2P doctrine, which mandates state responsibility to shield populations from mass atrocities, with potential international intervention if states fail — this remains a sensitive and debated issue, especially within ASEAN.

31. Regarding practical mechanisms, he pointed to the UN Security Council's role in authorising peacekeeping, political missions, and early warning systems. Regional organisations such as the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe and ASEAN have adopted treaties and declarations promoting peace, including the Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone. The importance of civil society and non-governmental organisations for fostering dialogue, human rights, and peaceful solutions was also emphasised.

32. He concluded his remarks by illustrating real-world applications of conflict prevention, such as arms control and disarmament treaties, targeted sanctions against violators of peace or human rights, and preventive diplomacy efforts like Indonesia's mediation in regional disputes. While acknowledging positive strides, he stressed the ongoing need for greater practical implementation of conflict prevention strategies within Southeast Asia to effectively manage and mitigate conflicts both within and between states.

Question-and-Answer Session

33. **A participant** posed a question about the current consensus on mainstreaming the controversial R2P concept within ASEAN. She asked what would trigger R2P, if there was a threshold for its activation, and how it fits into the *ASEAN Community Vision 2045* strategic plan, which aims to strengthen human rights and preventive conflict resolution mechanisms. She also inquired about rules or procedures for decision-making in cases where consensus is not reached, such as the possibility of using a supermajority, and whether AICHR could be tasked with setting clear benchmarks and objective criteria for triggering R2P.

34. In response, **Dr. Noel Morada** shared insights from the African Union's experience, and explained that before 2000, Africa had a strict non-interference policy similar to ASEAN's principle of non-interference. Due to repeated humanitarian crises, however, the African Union shifted to a principle of non-indifference, as set out in Article 4(h) of its Constitutive Act, allowing intervention without state consent in cases of genocide, war crimes, or crimes against humanity. He emphasised that R2P is not a Western invention, but rather evolved partly from African experiences and international humanitarian disasters. He suggested that ASEAN could learn from Africa but noted ASEAN must seriously commit to international norms, including R2P, to avoid a similar crisis trajectory.

35. **A second participant** asked about the implementation status of the 2017 ASEAN Declaration on Culture of Prevention for a Peaceful, Inclusive, Resilient, Healthy and Harmonious Society. He observed that despite the launch of the declaration eight years ago with great fanfare, there seemed to be little visible progress or formal inclusion in the statements or decisions of ASEAN leaders.

36. **Dr. Noel M. Morada** acknowledged this concern, noting that ASEAN adopted a work plan for a culture of prevention only in 2022, with initiatives that include youth engagement to address hate speech and extremism. However, he questioned how well these different

mechanisms across ASEAN's pillars mesh together to mainstream prevention efforts effectively. He expressed frustration that interaction between ASEAN foreign ministers and civil society has been truncated since 2012, creating a gap between official diplomacy (Track 1) and grassroots engagement (Track 3), which limits progress on a culture of prevention.

37. A **third participant** echoed the importance of R2P raised by Professor Dr. Dewi Fortuna Anwar, and commented on Cambodia's unique position. Cambodia was one of the few ASEAN countries to actively appoint a national R2P focal point following the 2010 World Summit on R2P, with Dr. Noel M. Morada's support. The participant emphasised that R2P primarily concerns the state's responsibility to protect its people (Pillar 1) and capacity-building with international help (Pillar 2), rather than intervention (Pillar 3), which should remain a last resort.

38. He urged ASEAN to move beyond excessive diplomatic caution and critically question fundamental actions, highlighting that if Pillars 1 and 2 are effectively implemented, there would be no reason to fear intervention. He voiced dissatisfaction that ASEAN is overly diplomatic to the point of inaction, despite broad support for R2P at the international level. He asked Dr. Noel M. Morada how powerful states could be held accountable under R2P, particularly in relation to the roles of states like the USA and China.

39. In response, **Dr. Noel M. Morada** elaborated on the challenges posed by international politics, citing how past efforts were undermined by shifts in political leadership, such as during the Trump administration in the USA. He pointed out that major powers may at times contest international norms, complicating enforcement and accountability under R2P.

40. He stressed the need for ASEAN to establish clear operational benchmarks and practical procedures to move beyond diplomatic statements, towards effective action. He reiterated that the concept of R2P hinges first and foremost on state responsibility, and intervention should only occur when states fail this duty. He encouraged ASEAN to build national action plans, early warning systems, and mechanisms for multi-sectoral cooperation to advance pragmatic implementation of R2P.

Sharing of Lessons and Challenges on Conflict Resolution and Peacebuilding in ASEAN

41. **Azril Abd Aziz**, Deputy Director General of the ASEAN Political-Security Community Division at the ASEAN-Malaysia National Secretariat, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Malaysia, observed that while ASEAN has progressed to become the second most advanced regional organisation in the world after the European Union, it continues to face challenges in addressing both inter-state and intra-state conflicts, with the situation in Myanmar being the most prevalent on the ASEAN agenda.

42. He identified political will and trust as two key elements that are necessary for both conflict resolution and peacebuilding. Political will is essential, as peacebuilding may be accomplished even in the absence of trust if there is a will and sufficient commitment to

proceed. Meanwhile, trust is important and needs to be earned and maintained. These two key elements must go hand in hand for peacebuilding processes to be effective. He noted that peace processes are costly, underscoring the need for AMS to commit to providing the necessary resources, including funding, personnel, security arrangements, and safe spaces — both formal and informal — for dialogue.

43. **Lilianne Fan**, Mediator with the Southeast Asian Women Peace Mediators, echoed the emphasis on trust as a key concept. She described trust as “the currency of dialogue”, and raised the question of who acts as the “central bank” that ensures trust is built and sustained within ASEAN processes. She explained that mediation between two conflicting parties requires humility to build trust, as well as balanced listening and an understanding of differing perspectives. The mediator must also design robust and assertive structures for dialogue, be sensitive, and be aware of power imbalances. She noted that this approach was successfully implemented in dispute resolution efforts in Aceh following the tsunami in 2004.

Case Study on Aceh Conflict Resolution

44. **Dr. Delsey Ronnie**, Head of Mission, Philippines, and Regional Representative for Asia, Nonviolent Peaceforce, shared insights on the Aceh peace process, emphasising its distinctive features and key success factors in conflict resolution and peacebuilding. He noted that the entire formal negotiations lasted only seven months, culminating in the Helsinki peace agreement, with substantial progress compared to other peace processes such as in Bangsamoro. One remarkable achievement was the swift implementation of an amnesty programme for former combatants, completed within just 14 days, alongside the deployment of a civilian European Union monitoring mission in collaboration with ASEAN, marking the European Union’s first such mission outside Europe.

45. He highlighted that while the negotiation period was brief, the pre-negotiation or Track 2 diplomacy phase spanned about one-and-a-half years, underscoring that the groundwork before formal talks often takes more time than the talks themselves. He also pointed out that the Helsinki peace agreement was not Aceh’s first attempt at peace, as there had been two previous failed attempts supported by other humanitarian organisations, which collapsed partly due to external factors, including the global war on terror and the resumption of military operations.

46. He examined factors affecting the success or failure of peace processes, pointing to three critical conditions: the emergence of a new government with a fresh perspective, shifts in how parties perceive each other as enemies, and a cost-benefit analysis by the parties that favours dialogue over continued conflict. He cautioned that not all parties entering peace talks intend to make or honour agreements, as some may use talks to gain international leverage, without any genuine commitment.

47. He further outlined the key factors that influence the success of negotiations, including the willingness, motivation, and optimism of the parties. He stressed the importance of party

cohesiveness, so that decisions made during talks align with military follow-through and political support, emphasising that success in peace talks must coincide with gains on the battlefield and in parliament. Other determinants include the negotiation strategy, influence of third-party mediators, clarity of the issues, and a shared platform — such as autonomy in Aceh’s case — which helped avoid the earlier deadlock between the demands of independence and autonomy.

48. He noted that, in terms of implementation, peace agreements often falter if provisions regarding mechanisms lack clarity, leading to differing interpretations of terms such as ‘election’ or ‘all-inclusive dialogue’. Strong international support, clear political settlements, and sufficient state capacity also play crucial roles. For instance, the presence of robust third-party guarantors such as the International Monetary Fund, UN, and AMS helped ensure the success of peace processes.

Session 8: Insights on, and Intersections and Interlinkages between, International and ASEAN Mechanisms and Frameworks on Peacebuilding

49. **H.E. Professor Emeritus Dr. Amaryllis T. Torres**, Representative of the Philippines for Women’s Rights to the ACWC, moderated this session, which comprised three rounds. In the first round, she invited the panellists to reflect on the importance of maintaining international ties in attempts to promote peace, particularly within ASEAN.

50. **Dr. Makarim Wibisono**, Member of the 2014 High-Level Advisory Panel on the Responsibility to Protect in Southeast Asia (‘ASEAN-HLAP’), explained that peacebuilding seeks to prevent conflict, strengthen the capacity of countries to face problems of instability, and lay a foundation for lasting peace. He cited Pope John Paul II’s articulation of the four pillars of peace — truth, justice, love, and freedom. Peace involves five fundamental principles: equality, cooperation for mutual benefit, mutual non-aggression, respect for each other’s territorial integrity and sovereignty, and non-interference in each other’s internal affairs. In the ASEAN context, these principles are fundamental to maintaining peace between countries and preventing conflicts that arise from disrespect of territorial integrity and sovereignty.

51. **Ulziisuren Jamsran**, UN Women Country Representative and Liaison to ASEAN, highlighted the significant conceptual shift in peacebuilding approaches, from focusing on ‘conflict drivers’ to understanding ‘peace levers’. Frameworks such as the Women, Peace and Security agenda, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (‘CEDAW’), and other international mechanisms are designed to help facilitate this transition. This approach focuses on how to maintain peace, rather than looking for the sources of conflict. The necessity of changing the emphasis from methods to the conduct and mindset of donors and decision-makers is a crucial lesson in peace. She observed that additionally, resources are crucial, echoing earlier remarks by Lilianne Fan and Azril Abd Aziz.

52. **Professor Dr. Rosalie Arcala Hall**, Executive Director of the Centre for Integrative and Development Studies, University of the Philippines, noted that a peacebuilding strategy

must guarantee that violence does not recur once a conflict has been resolved, by putting in place mechanisms and activities that lessen the potential of repeated violence. She also added that humanitarian intervention and R2P are important in setting norms and standards on peacebuilding, with a particular focus on civilian protection and the role of states in protecting their populations.

53. The next panellist, **Rong Chhorng**, Secretary of State at the Ministry of Civil Service, and Member of the Royal Government of Cambodia Task Force on the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia (‘ECCC’)’s Residual Mechanism, participated online. He explained the role of the ECCC, which prioritises justice as a component for sustainable peace and accountability for mass atrocities, and addresses the root causes of conflict. It also focuses on victim participation by empowering survivors and restoring dignity through reparation and recognition. It combines Cambodian and international legal personnel to bridge local legitimacy with international norms — a so-called ‘hybrid model’. In addition, it emphasises education and remembrance for non-recurrence, preserving memory through documentation and outreach to prevent future atrocities.

54. He explained that in order to create global standards and norms for its legal system, Cambodia urged international partners to participate in the process. The Cambodian Government sought to invite the UN, as the country needed internationally accepted standards of justice, particularly as the 1979 trial following the Khmer Rouge rule was not widely accepted and was viewed as incomplete justice.

55. In the second round, the moderator invited the panellists to share their perspectives on the importance of international involvement, particularly by the UN, to support local peacebuilding efforts, and whether there is any other potential for engagement.

56. **Professor Dr. Rosalie Arcala Hall** commented that an integral process of peacebuilding is ensuring former combatants do not reorganise and engage in further violence. She mentioned that disarmament, demobilisation, and reintegration (‘DDR’) processes are typically carried out with UN efforts. In the Philippines, this was expanded to include disarming not only the formal combatants in the conflict but also all non-state armed groups in the community that may potentially contribute to the recurrence of conflict.

57. **Ulziisuren Jamsran** observed that traditional approaches do not yield effective outcomes, so new techniques of discussion are required in conflict situations. It is important to bring diverse voices to the table — including those of women, the elderly, youth, and persons with disabilities from affected areas — to allow decision-makers to hear directly from those populations.

58. **Dr. Makarim Wibisono** highlighted several key points regarding women’s participation in peace processes and ASEAN’s efforts to promote peace. He noted that ASEAN has the RPA-WPS, which is a five-year roadmap from 2023 to 2027 that promotes women’s participation in peace processes, conflict resolution, and peacebuilding. This plan aligns with

UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace, and security. He also pointed to the role of think tanks on conflict resolution, and ASEAN's efforts to build linkages with relevant institutions and organisations — for example, the Regional Symposium on Implementing Women, Peace and Security Agenda and the ASEAN-Australia Women, Peace and Security Dialogue — to promote peace and security in the region.

59. In the third round, **H.E. Professor Emeritus Dr. Amaryllis T. Torres** sought the panellists' insights on the current peace and conflict situations in ASEAN, as well as future actions that ASEAN should take.

60. **Rong Chhorng** emphasised that the ECCC had to limit its jurisdiction in order to respect state sovereignty. He highlighted that while international involvement and linkages are important for establishing norms and standards of justice, the peace process required limiting prosecution to only the most senior leaders and most responsible perpetrators, rather than pursuing individuals at all levels. This restriction was necessary to maintain peace and prevent former combatants from returning to conflict, demonstrating the delicate balance between justice and sovereignty in Cambodia's transitional justice process.

61. **Professor Dr. Rosalie Arcala Hall** highlighted the importance of civilian protection as an aspect of international humanitarian law that is already embedded in the practices of national militaries. She suggested that, when conducting operations, militaries should observe civilian protection parameters, including ensuring the safety of refugees and displaced populations. They should also provide access for humanitarian organisations to deliver aid through practical means such as humanitarian corridors, as well as by protecting population centres and logistics hubs.

62. **Ulziisuren Jamsran** observed that changing mindsets is important in order to evolve and create new conditions to sustain peacebuilding.

63. **Dr. Makarim Wibisono** pointed out the importance of engaging civil society to create a conducive climate for peacebuilding in ASEAN. Civil society can help overcome challenges and provide access to information, especially in situations where official access may be limited.

64. **H.E. Professor Emeritus Dr. Amaryllis T. Torres** concluded the session by summarising the insights of the four panellists. She noted that while they reiterated the value of established peacekeeping practices, they also emphasised the need to continue learning, accept specific conditions of conflicts in each country, change attitudes about accepted approaches, involve sectors beyond the military and state leaders, and listen to citizens of different ages, genders, and ethnicities.

Session 9A (Breakout Group Case Study): The SuperNations Simulation Round 2

65. **Michael Frank Alar**, Facilitator at the Mindanao Peacebuilding Institute, opened the second round of the SuperNations simulation with an energiser activity. As facilitator, he

reminded participants of the previous day's discussions and outcomes. A set of highlights was projected, which captured participants' reflections on a ceasefire, humanitarian aid, and conflict resolution. The key points were as follows:

- a) Ceasefire and humanitarian access: A pause in hostilities was deemed essential for the delivery of aid and to open space for dialogue.
- b) Relaxing non-interference: Parties should allow humanitarian interventions during crises.
- c) Confidence-building measures: Trust-building activities were identified as crucial for sustaining negotiations.
- d) Safe spaces for dialogue: Both formal and informal platforms were identified as necessary to foster meaningful discussions.
- e) Avoiding fragmentation: There is a need for coordinated regional bodies, because reliance on bilateral engagement alone risks producing a disjointed response.
- f) Inclusive platforms: Mediators, non-state actors, displaced persons, and neighbouring governments should all be represented in dialogue processes.
- g) Human rights monitoring: Stronger fact-finding and monitoring mechanisms are vital.
- h) The role of media: The media was recognised as a double-edged actor that can inform, yet also exacerbate tensions, requiring strategies to harness its role positively.

66. These reflections were presented as a springboard for the next round of group work. Some simulated 'breaking news' alerts were displayed, reporting that cyclone victims were urgently seeking humanitarian assistance. The alerts heightened the realism of the exercise, and reminded participants of the stakes involved.

67. A simulated press conference by the **SuperNations Secretary-General** was played. The official called on all conflicting parties to declare an immediate ceasefire, and announced that a SuperNations fact-finding mission would be deployed to each territory to assess conditions on the ground. The announcement underscored the overarching goal of the simulation: to move from isolated negotiations towards a coordinated, humanitarian-focused resolution. The participants were reminded of the Conflict Map and John Paul Lederach's Pyramid of Peacebuilding Actors, which had been introduced during an earlier session.

Session 9B (Breakout Group Case Study): The SuperNations Simulation Round 3

68. The third round of the SuperNations simulation commenced with the facilitator, **Michael Frank Alar**, emphasising a strategic shift from the previously uncoordinated, unilateral approaches of the first two rounds, towards a structured, regional collaboration guided by the SuperNations bodies. The Secretary-General tasked these bodies with conducting consultations to develop inclusive and acceptable processes that encourage stakeholder participation in addressing the Albestin crisis, focusing on process design rather than final solutions. The teams were instructed to remain at their respective tables, awaiting engagement from the SuperNations representatives, who would seek input directly from them.

69. As the consultation phase unfolded, the facilitator pointed to dynamic developments observed on the ground. The next phase involved a ‘fishbowl’ format, in which the SuperNations’ deliberations were broadcast live to all attendees, simulating a televised international summit. The central question became clear: based on real-time consultations with key stakeholders, what type of negotiation process should the SuperNations bodies design?

70. **The Secretary-General** requested a briefing from the **SuperNations negotiator**, who shared insights gained from discussions with the representative Government of Albestin. The Government expressed a strong willingness to engage in peace talks under Track 1 diplomacy, provided that a neutral venue could be secured and a strict ceasefire maintained.

71. A critical condition raised was that armed opposition groups must lay down their weapons during negotiations to uphold the ceasefire, although **Albestin** clarified that this would not necessarily constitute full disarmament, but rather temporary storage. Albestin also insisted on centralised and official communication via the SuperNations spokesperson, rejecting fragmented or external messaging. In addition, it demanded a defined timeline for negotiations, rejecting open-ended processes. Participation would be self-funded, although the logistical arrangements for venue hospitality remained unclear.

72. When questioned whether Albestin itself would disarm, **the negotiator** indicated that Albestin’s commitment was to uphold the ceasefire — namely, to refrain from offensive operations — but not necessarily to surrender their arms. It was reiterated that formal disarmament would only occur after a peace agreement was formally signed, underscoring the significance of the ceasefire as a foundational step.

73. The discussion then turned to Chindler and Bukaya. **Chindler** expressed openness to negotiations but demanded a payment of one million dollars per quarter, without clearly specifying its intended use. It indicated a willingness to first engage with Bukaya, citing strong bilateral relations but refused direct contact with Albestin, insisting on interacting solely through the SuperNations mediator framework.

74. **Bukaya** welcomed dialogue centred on a ceasefire, and expressed support for discussions on progressive disarmament, although no details were specified. It emphasised the need for a coordinated tripartite meeting involving SuperNations, Albestin, and Bukaya, while noting that Chindler has not engaged directly with Bukaya and that communication had been conducted exclusively through the SuperNations mediator framework.

75. Further consultation with **CSO** revealed strong frustration towards the SuperNations' perceived responsiveness and insufficient presence on the ground. CSO urged for more timely and human rights-oriented responses, highlighting deep discontent with both the pace and transparency of current engagement.

Session 9C: Reflection and Feedback

76. During this session, participants were invited to reflect — in their personal capacities rather than their assigned roles — on what processes should be established to address the Albestin crisis, and which actors ought to be involved.

77. **A participant** emphasised that any response must be a multi-layered, patient, and compassionate dialogue conducted in good faith and grounded in respect for the dignity of all parties. He advocated for inclusive negotiations in a neutral country, involving all legitimate stakeholders, international observers, and impartial mediators with demonstrated experience. A special envoy and, where appropriate, regional organisations should facilitate subtle diplomacy, while a clear roadmap and realistic timeframes would help prevent endless negotiations. He deemed confidentiality and limited media exposure to be essential to fostering trust and confidence-building measures.

78. **A second participant** highlighted the primacy of trust-building and the danger of excluding any stakeholder, noting that such omission can unintentionally prolong conflict. Building on this, a group proposed setting up a special task force to quickly map the conflict, identify all relevant actors, and establish an information clearinghouse prior to ceasefire talks. This task force would involve the original government, regional bodies, and the SuperNations themselves, to ensure comprehensive situational awareness and to lay the groundwork for subsequent dialogue.

79. The following is a summary of the key lessons from Workshop 3:

- a) ASEAN lacks a structured early warning and early response system.
- b) Human rights indicators can serve as early warning signals of conflict risks.
- c) Preventive approaches must be timely, context-sensitive, and rights-based.
- d) There is a need for non-intrusive, ASEAN-consistent information-sharing mechanisms.

Workshop 4: Protecting Human Rights of All in Conflict Situations

15 August 2025
Jakarta, Indonesia

Recap of Workshop 3: Leveraging International Frameworks and Approaches

1. **H.E. Edmund Bon Tai Soon**, AICHR Chair 2025 and Representative of Malaysia to AICHR, provided an overview of the third workshop, which was held the previous day. He summarised how participants examined international frameworks and approaches to peacebuilding and conflict prevention, discussed developments in conflict prevention and resolution norms, considered challenges faced by ASEAN diplomats and colleagues, and gained insights from case studies on the Aceh conflict resolution.
2. He then outlined the fourth workshop, which would focus on addressing human rights, specifically protecting the rights of all individuals in conflict situations. It would also feature interviews with survivors and victims, and gather perspectives from non-governmental organisations and CSOs regarding vulnerable and marginalised groups.

Sharing of Research on Human Rights and Violence in Conflict Situations

3. **Mahi Ramakrishnan**, an independent researcher on forced migration, explained that she has been conducting research on conflict-related sexual violence, collaborating with researchers to speak with survivors in Chiang Mai and Mae Sot, Thailand, over the past year. She recounted how she recorded an interview with a woman who had experienced conflict related sexual violence in Mae Sot, which helped participants to comprehend the significant impact that conflict has on women and children. She highlighted the recent debate on women's rights and expressed concern about the number of women and children facing violations amid the ongoing efforts to attain democracy. She expressed hope for greater collaboration, particularly in disseminating research to facilitate mapping of locations and create an early warning system for survivors.

Session 10: Risk Mapping and Early Responses

4. This session, moderated by **H.E. Sreang Chenda**, Alternate Representative of Cambodia to AICHR, was aimed at exploring the human rights of people and communities most at risk during times of conflict, and practical early responses.
5. **Dr. Lina A. Alexandra**, Head of the Department of International Relations at the Centre for Strategic and International Studies ('CSIS'), Indonesia, presented the Collective Violence Early Warning ('CVEW') Dataset, which aggregates local newspapers in order to track horizontal and vertical conflicts across Indonesia's 38 provinces. This initiative is similar to the National Violence Database developed in 2015. It uses an early warning mechanism and tools to prevent and mitigate the escalation of violations or conflicts, and to protect

communities, particularly vulnerable groups. She explained that this is a long-term and evolving development because, in Indonesia, many signs of potential conflict are often ignored and not monitored sufficiently. CSIS has also developed another dashboard to monitor trends in hate speech targeting vulnerable minorities, such as religious groups and Papuans, in Indonesia on the social media platform X. However, maintaining the dashboard is difficult due to the platform's barrier system and the ambiguous definition of hate speech.

6. **Ambassador Pou Sothirak**, Distinguished Senior Advisor to the Cambodian Center for Regional Studies, shared his view on the general aspects of conflict prevention, emphasising Cambodia's legal commitment to human rights. The country's endorsement of the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration marked a progressive step towards peace and remains a top priority in its national development plans. Despite this commitment, Cambodia continues to face challenges due to structural deficiencies, including weak institutional checks and balances, and limited capacity in promoting human security, rights protection, and good governance.

7. He noted that specific progress has been made in addressing the needs of women and children. Since 2012, Cambodia has taken concrete steps to prevent discrimination, provide legal protection, promote gender equality, and ensure child protection. Supported by development partners, the Ministry of Women's Affairs developed the country's first National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security. This plan addresses key issues such as transnational trafficking and climate-related risks, highlighting Cambodia's growing focus on regional stability through a human security and gender-sensitive lens.

8. Cambodia also ratified a treaty and set up the Khmer Rouge Tribunal to address genocide and war crimes, supported by a 2013 domestic law. The tribunal concluded in 2022 after costing US\$337 million and decades of struggle. While it marked progress, challenges remain in measuring its impact on justice and reconciliation, as well as in preventing future atrocities. Cambodia's experience could guide international efforts aimed at preventing mass atrocities. Despite decades of unresolved tensions and casualties, regional accountability and justice remain limited, as illustrated recently by the Cambodia-Thailand border dispute. Cambodia appointed a national focal point on atrocity prevention in 2017 and is positioned to serve as a regional hub for education and training in conflict prevention within ASEAN.

9. **Ambassador Pou Sothirak** commended Malaysia's role, as ASEAN Chair, in promoting a ceasefire between Cambodia and Thailand, and expressed hope that ASEAN would achieve lasting conflict resolution, guided by the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia. He noted that ASEAN's response to human rights crises has been criticised as slow and ineffective, largely due to its strict adherence to the principles of non-intervention and sovereignty.

10. He added that ASEAN should adopt proactive measures by developing local knowledge on conflict risk factors in partnership with think tanks and academic institutions. Establishing early warning systems, conducting policy-based research, and disseminating findings through

seminars and workshops were identified as key steps towards prevention. National governments, including parliaments, must strengthen institutional capacity, implement existing policies swiftly, and enact new laws to protect vulnerable populations. One controversial proposed measure is the establishment of an ASEAN human rights court to address gaps in enforcement. In addition, regular national risk assessments and inclusive dialogues involving civil society and international partners are recommended to build greater awareness and resilience.

11. **Dr. Moe Thuzar**, Senior Fellow and Coordinator at the Myanmar Studies Programme, ISEAS – Yusof Ishak Institute, noted the growing expectations placed on ASEAN to play a bigger role in conflict response and peacebuilding. Speaking as one of Singapore’s representatives to the ASEAN Women for Peace Registry, she shared practical ideas to improve ASEAN’s conflict prevention efforts, focusing on risk-mapping and early response. There are three key considerations behind these efforts: the urgent need for a practical, system-wide conflict response framework; the ongoing tension between ASEAN’s state-centred approach and the need for support at the grassroots level; and the complex link between economic and political factors in conflicts, which means economic solutions alone are not sufficient.

12. She noted that while ASEAN has been successful in managing natural disasters, it still lacks robust systems for preventing conflicts. She questioned if current risk-mapping approaches genuinely prevent conflicts or merely assess needs. Drawing from responses to crises like Cyclone Nargis and the COVID-19 pandemic, she pointed out that regional cooperation works best when countries prioritise collective well-being above rigid interpretations of sovereignty. Nevertheless, early intervention in conflicts remains challenging because it requires the consent of the affected country.

13. She proposed a three-part framework for improving risk-mapping and early response: preconditions such as political will; principles that focus on context, data, local knowledge, ownership, and gender sensitivity; and protection through ASEAN’s strengths in humanitarian aid and mediation to help communities recover. She concluded by recommending that ASEAN develop practical tools, such as guidelines and standard procedures, to operationalise conflict prevention efforts. She pointed out that starting small — with information-sharing and engagement with multiple stakeholders, for example — can help build a strong foundation for more extensive regional efforts. She stressed that ASEAN citizens and regional cooperation are central to shaping peace and security, and encouraged the use of past lessons and shared expertise to strengthen innovation and resilience.

14. **H.E. Yanti Kusumawardhani**, Indonesia’s Representative for Children’s Rights to the ACWC, observed that children are increasingly affected by conflict, with the number of grave violations against them tripling since 2010, and over 468 million children now living in conflict zones, a significant increase from more than 30 years ago. These situations threaten children’s physical security, cause resource deprivation, and harm their psychosocial well-being through violence, fear, and family separation. Children with disabilities, who make up one in ten

children globally, face even greater risks, including violence, exclusion, and limited access to services, with 16 per cent of global disabilities linked to armed conflict. Those who lack education or livelihood opportunities are particularly vulnerable to grave violations, including recruitment or re-recruitment by armed groups and exposure to gender-based violence, making their protection in early conflict response especially critical.

15. She described how children today face a “double conflict”, as they are affected not only by armed violence but also by the impacts of climate change and family-level crises. Climate-related disasters such as crop failures can lead to loss of livelihoods, placing families under economic stress and increasing the risk of child exploitation or neglect. In these situations, children often suffer the compounded effects of environmental instability and domestic conflict, rendering them even more vulnerable to harm, displacement, and violations of their rights. Early responses for women and children in conflict situations prioritise immediate protection, followed by essential services and community empowerment. Effective approaches blend immediate protection with long-term empowerment, treating women and children as active participants rather than passive victims. She highlighted that key recommendations to safeguard these children include upholding standards of conduct during conflict, holding perpetrators accountable, supporting children’s resilience and recovery, ensuring humanitarian access, and actively listening to children’s voices.

Question-and-Answer Session

16. **Adrianus Alla**, Director of Social Protection for Human-Made Disaster-Affected People at the Ministry of Social Affairs Indonesia, who was the representative from Indonesia for the Senior Officials Meeting on Social Welfare and Development, highlighted that Indonesia’s rich diversity is a valuable asset, but also presents challenges in the form of social conflicts arising from political, religious, and cultural differences. He explained that the Ministry of Social Affairs tackles these issues through a comprehensive strategy that includes emergency humanitarian aid, reintegration programmes for displaced persons, economic empowerment, and psychosocial support. For example, during the recent West Adonara conflict, the Ministry provided shelter, food, and trauma recovery assistance to affected populations. Additionally, the Ministry focuses on enhancing preparedness, prevention, and mitigation in conflict-prone areas through initiatives including Disaster-Prepared Villages, Social Granaries, youth education programmes such as Cadets Go to School, the promotion of social harmony and local wisdom, and the mobilisation of social volunteers. These efforts aim to build resilient and adaptable communities capable of facing future crises, including conflicts and disasters.

17. **A participant** posed a question on how early warning systems in Southeast Asia could be improved. Unreliable news sources currently make it difficult to verify important information, particularly police reports, thus presenting challenges. As a result, early warning and response efforts are occasionally hindered because of unreliable data.

18. The panellists highlighted the need to strengthen collaboration among CSIS Indonesia, Indonesia's Ministry of Social Affairs, ASEAN bodies such as the ACWC, and think tanks such as ASEAN-IPR, in order to boost data quality and coordination.

19. The panellists also emphasised the importance of building the skills of local teams at the district and provincial levels. Training local responders to conduct risk assessments is essential to ensuring that responses are practical and effective.

20. The panellists further noted the growing emphasis on qualitative assessments, particularly in sensitive areas such as child protection and migrant worker issues. Improved data-sharing and cross-checking among ASEAN institutions would help bridge gaps and ensure information is more reliable.

Session 11: Human Rights Responses and Humanitarian Negotiations and Access

21. The moderator, **H.E. Associate Professor Dr. Bhanubhatra Jittiang**, Representative of Thailand to AICHR, provided an overview of the issues under discussion. The panellists considered mechanisms and platforms for early warning and the protection of vulnerable individuals, as well as methods for measuring humanitarian access, negotiation, and progress.

22. **H.E. Severo Catura**, Representative of the Philippines to AICHR, referred to Professor Dr. Dewi Fortuna Anwar's observation that humanity must remain central, and that humanity is about recognising the well-being of people. He cited the disputes in the Philippines since World War II, including those involving the New People's Army, Moro National Liberation Front, and Moro Islamic Liberation Front, as examples illustrating both unity and conflict within the Philippines.

23. He outlined three important lessons from the Philippine experience: ensure a human-centred response, uphold the role of law, and pursue inclusiveness and dialogue. He added that humanitarian intervention is essential in conflict management — not merely as a tactical add-on, but as a core human rights obligation. The protection of civilians in vulnerable situations is paramount and, amid active conflict, humanitarian actors must be able to reach those in need.

24. He referred to the SuperNations simulation conducted during the second and third workshops, which demonstrated that hostility can still erupt during negotiations, thereby necessitating confidence-building measures. Negotiators must ensure that humanitarian actors are able to continue operating in the midst of conflict, and that strategies should recognise the capacities of other actors, including those of powerful communities. He suggested that where human lives are valued, intervention can be transformed from humanitarian responses into instruments of peace. He noted that advocacy can be accomplished through a variety of methods, including storytelling. He proposed that ASEAN could compile experiences from

peacemakers on the ground into a book, as such stories can inspire others and should be integrated into broader peacebuilding efforts.

25. During her online presentation, **Yuyun Wahyuningrum**, former Representative of Indonesia to AICHR (2019–2024), explained key lessons from the AICHR consultation using four approaches. The first centres on protecting life, security, and physical integrity, which includes protection against assault, trafficking, and threats, especially for women, children, migrants, and people with disabilities; the second focuses on ensuring access to basic necessities; the third addresses housing, land, property, and education rights; and the fourth concerns civil and political rights during crises.

26. She noted that significant challenges relating to implementation remain, including discrimination, exclusion, and violence against humanitarian workers and healthcare workers. She pointed out the need to strengthen the ASEAN cross-pillar humanitarian framework, enhance cooperation with ASEAN-IPR and the AHA Centre to incorporate a stronger human rights dimension, ensure that practical studies are conducted to fulfil human rights obligations, as well as cooperate with CSOs and faith-based actors.

27. **Putri Maha Lima**, Deputy Secretary General of the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (‘AIPA’), explained the important role of parliaments. AIPA serves as the centre of communication and information-sharing among Member Parliaments, and its main goals are promoting cooperation and understanding between them, as well as educating the Southeast Asian public about policies aimed at building an ASEAN community by 2025. AIPA’s members are operational actors such as humanitarian agencies influencing the policy environment. She elaborated that AIPA plays a role across the prevention spectrum — upstream, midstream, and downstream — through the early detection of tensions, raising of issues in parliamentary discussions, and channelling of community concerns to authorities.

28. She cited the engagement of the Chair of AIPA’s Caucus of Women Parliamentarians in facilitating faster humanitarian assistance following a flood in North Maluku, Indonesia in 2024, to illustrate how members of parliament are closest to their constituents. Parliaments are able to organise humanitarian aid, build collaborative relationships with pertinent ministries and agencies to identify and resolve issues, and hold governments accountable for their commitments, including those relating to human rights responses.

29. **Nan Sandar Kyaw**, Program Head at the Institute for Strategy and Policy – Myanmar (ISP-Myanmar), presented her research on the Myanmar situation. She stressed that in the context of human rights, an understanding of local conditions is vital. She observed that human rights violations stem from atrocities, conflict, and societal militarisation, and that these conditions are deeply entrenched.

30. Referring to a map she presented, she explained that the majority of cases in Myanmar are concentrated in the Rakhine region, frontline areas, and surrounding regions. Currently, there are 5,000 recruits in the central heartland, while ethnic armed organisations and local groups are recruiting smaller mobile units and soldiers in peripheral areas. Ninety-one areas

are affected, which has an impact on the rising conflict economy because these are mining districts whose output is exported to China. She highlighted that current coping strategies are ad hoc and not sustainable, underscoring the need for action to resolve the situation.

31. She added that research findings show that humanitarian-based de-escalation may be a pathway to achieving peace. China has led the way in pursuing economic incentive-based de-escalation strategies, which have had some success. However, public support for this strategy is disproportionate, which makes it less sustainable. Despite earlier hopes for a truce, conflicts continue, resulting in temporary ceasefires, highlighting the need for more decisive action beyond diplomatic intervention alone. She identified three key takeaways from the study: meaningful de-escalation requires state-level political intervention, territorial self-governance should be supported, and communities must remain central to policies and processes.

32. **Dr. Sarah Teitt**, Director at the Asia-Pacific Centre for the Responsibility to Protect, University of Queensland, delivered her presentation online. She outlined research examining actions that reduce the targeting of civilians during conflict and crises, and identifying entry points for evidence-based atrocity prevention in civilian protection initiatives. The research shows that patterns of civilian targeting are not constant, indicating that protection is possible even in active conflict. Factors such as leadership, external pressure, institutional capacity, monitoring systems, humanitarian access mechanisms, and community resilience can significantly influence civilian protection outcomes.

33. She added that humanitarian peacekeeping and accountability measures must be considered, as both armed and unarmed peacekeeping efforts can influence the operations of armed actors and reduce attacks against civilians. She emphasised that regional and international actors can alter the cost calculations of perpetrators through the monitoring and reporting of atrocity crimes. She referred to Yuyun Wahyuningrum's comment that public reporting and independent monitoring can deter violations, and noted that the research indeed demonstrated the importance of a wide range of actions and statements of concern in atrocity prevention.

34. She went on to outline the best guidance for ASEAN in civilian protection. She explained that regional and international fact-finding missions, as well as non-governmental organisations, can influence conflict practices through systematic evidence collection, while community-level protection capacities can reduce civilian targeting. She noted that the Philippines, Lao PDR, Brunei Darussalam, and Cambodia currently have civilian protection measures in place, whereas the rest of ASEAN does not. In concluding, she stressed the significance of creating a nationwide preventive strategy.

Question-and-Answer Session

35. **A participant** asked about how addressing humanitarian issues in Myanmar could be leveraged, drawing comparisons with countries such as the Philippines, where international assistance is often sought. She also mentioned the strong ASEAN Caucus during the early crisis, but questioned whether this is still a part of the Myanmar Caucus.

36. **A second participant** noted that AIPA plans to invite the AHA Centre to brief parliamentarians on the humanitarian situation in Myanmar, which could serve as an entry point to address the issue. AIPA also proposes the establishment of a new working group on human rights to strengthen engagement among parliamentarians. She acknowledged the lack of awareness and capacity among parliamentarians regarding human rights and humanitarian issues, and suggested that a multi-stakeholder dialogue be convened to increase their understanding.

37. **A third participant** commented that the Philippine peace process includes a joint monitoring team to ensure sustainable humanitarian access, address human rights violations, and propose alternative reporting channels. The Philippines hosts an Asia-Pacific regional workshop on international human rights law, where the workshop is being converted into a human rights centre aimed at reducing armed conflict and establishing effective normative frameworks for the region.

38. **A fourth participant** referred to a panel discussion regarding human rights in Myanmar, which emphasised the importance of non-interference in human rights, stressed the need to prioritise human dignity and the right to a decent standard of living, and advocated faster and more effective solutions with the support of ASEAN and the international community.

39. **A fifth participant** stated that AICHR plans to conduct interviews and fact-finding missions focusing on human rights in Myanmar. She expressed concern that conflicts and crises are not adequately reflected in the *ASEAN Community Vision 2045* Strategic Plan, and urged greater reflection and action on the issue. She observed that the lack of political will and imagination in dealing with conflicts is a significant challenge, and cited the *ASEAN Community Vision 2045* as a framework that lacks clear approaches for handling such crises.

40. **Dr. Sarah Teitt** responded by referring to a study examining responses to atrocity situations, which found that concerted efforts by various actors had a significant impact on prevention. This was due to the context in which the situation would have been significantly worse without such action. She pointed out that while the *ASEAN Community Vision 2045* does not address the region's severe civilian crises, global activism and collective efforts to improve these issues are significant.

41. She also shared her perspective on conflict resolution, emphasising the importance of building interconnected strands of truth, memory, and memorialisation. She highlighted the value of transitional justice, local trauma and healing initiatives, and formal court proceedings.

She stressed the importance of protection strategies aimed at preventing recurrence during crises, and advocated the incremental development of infrastructure for peace and protection.

42. The moderator concluded the session by outlining the key takeaways: the need for investment in human rights protection, the importance of reliable data, and the critical role of information across multiple dimensions. He observed that the success of these efforts depends on political will and a strong understanding of the prevailing situation.

Session 12A (Breakout Group Case Study): The SuperNations Simulation Round 4

43. Reflecting on the earlier stages of the case study, Round 4 of the simulation focused on the Albestin peace negotiations conducted with the support of SuperNations. The negotiations aimed to secure a ceasefire agreement between the PPP and Albestin, with the primary goal of creating a pathway towards substantive peace while prioritising the safety and well-being of civilians. **The lead negotiator for Albestin** acknowledged the ongoing challenges, including recent disasters, and emphasised the commitment to moving forward under the guidance of international partners focused on amity, cooperation, and humanitarian relief for victims and survivors.

44. The **PPP** delegation stressed that justice is a crucial component of lasting peace, and acknowledged the suffering endured during the conflict, particularly by the Sansha people. While expressing a willingness to engage in dialogue, the PPP representatives insisted that their concerns be heard and addressed seriously.

45. **Both parties** agreed to a fundamental ceasefire arrangement prohibiting attacks or provocations by armed forces on either side. They also mutually agreed to extend the ceasefire for 45 days, including the establishment of a humanitarian corridor and a monitoring team to ensure safe delivery of aid and monitor compliance.

Session 12B: Final Reflection and Recommendations

46. A few questions were posed during this session, and a brief summary of the points raised is set out below.

47. How can the evolving ideas be operationalised?

- a) Research, consultations, and a clear response mechanism are critical.
- b) Advisory notes should be prepared by a task force established from each key area or pillar, including representatives from various sectors.
- c) A clear structure, together with defined rules and processes, is necessary for the task force.

- d) ASEAN's existing mechanisms should be strengthened to better address human rights issues and disasters.
- e) Human rights are already incorporated within existing frameworks; the challenge lies in prioritising implementation.
- f) There should be greater emphasis on addressing vulnerable sectors within the operational plans.
- g) It is crucial to set realistic goals, timelines, and clear objectives.

48. How do we ensure that human rights protection informs, or is taken into account in, the operationalisation of these ideas?

- a) Government policies should be integrated effectively, implemented appropriately, and monitored consistently.
- b) Engagement with all parties or key stakeholders should be maintained throughout human rights protection processes, dialogues, and decision-making.

49. Which ideas should be explored during the fifth and sixth workshops?

- a) There remain many communication gaps between groups, which facilitators can help to mediate.
- b) CSOs should be more actively involved in discussions.
- c) Representatives from all sectors — including education, economics, and health — should participate, and their perspectives should be integrated into human rights policymaking.
- d) Further exploration is needed on how to navigate complex issues through the use of additional case studies.
- e) Task forces could be merged to address issues more comprehensively.
- f) Conflicts should be understood from both historical and lived perspectives in order to gain greater clarity.
- g) A multi-stakeholder approach should be emphasised to ensure the inclusion of diverse perspectives.
- h) Volunteers with experience in real conflict zones should be engaged to provide first-hand insights.

Closing Session: Summary and Charting the Way Ahead

50. **H.E. Edmund Bon Tai Soon** expressed appreciation to the participants for their active engagement throughout Workshops 2, 3, and 4 over the course of the three days. He underscored the significance of several scenarios in shaping ASEAN's crisis response. One highlight of the workshops was the case study simulations, which enabled participants to examine inclusive conflict resolution strategies, evaluate disputes, and offer early warning responses in complex circumstances. He noted that participants forged new connections, engaged in discussions on sensitive topics, and expressed an intention to continue these constructive conversations. He concluded that the series of three workshops demonstrated the value of bringing together a diverse group of specialists to strengthen conflict resolution efforts and advance the ASEAN vision.

51. The following is a summary of the key lessons from Workshop 4:

- a) Conflict responses must prioritise the protection of affected populations, particularly vulnerable groups.
- b) Gender-responsive and intersectional approaches are necessary.
- c) Protection should include humanitarian access, essential services, and safety from violence.
- d) ASEAN mechanisms can play a role, but coordination and clarity are lacking.

Workshop 5: Constructive Dialogues in Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding

23 October 2025

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Welcome Remarks

1. **H.E. Associate Professor Dr. Bhanubhatra Jittiang**, Representative of Thailand to AICHR, expressed his hope that the fifth workshop in the series would yield practical outcomes grounded in shared ASEAN values. He reminded participants that peace cannot be taken for granted, observing that it is not only the absence of conflict but the foundation that sustains all other aspects of society. He underlined that peace must be cultivated not only at the negotiation table but also in the hearts of people.

2. Highlighting that human rights are universal and indivisible, he emphasised that AICHR's work is never about taking sides but about safeguarding the humanity that binds everyone. Trust, he added, cannot be imposed but must grow naturally through dialogue. He thanked Malaysia as Chair of the series of workshops and concluded his opening remarks with a call to "give peace a chance", observing that when peace takes root, dignity flourishes.

3. **I Gusti Agung Wesaka Puja**, Executive Director at ASEAN-IPR, noted that the workshop formed part of a year-long series of AICHR initiatives exploring the intersections between conflict resolution, peacebuilding, and human rights in ASEAN. He stressed the importance of developing practical frameworks to prevent, transform, and resolve conflict by utilising existing ASEAN policies and mechanisms. This effort, he said, complements the *ASEAN Community Vision 2045* and its aspiration for a peaceful, resilient, and people-centred region. He highlighted that ASEAN-IPR serves as a knowledge hub and convener on peacebuilding and reconciliation, and observed that peace and human rights are deeply interconnected rather than parallel tracks. He urged participants to keep in mind three guiding principles — inclusivity, trust and transparency, and external collaboration — which ASEAN-IPR advances through research, training, and policy support. He commended AICHR, the organisers, and the participants, and called for coordinated efforts to chart a clear and practical roadmap for ASEAN's peace and human rights architecture.

4. **Beathe Øgård**, Second Secretary of the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Jakarta, welcomed the opportunity to explore the critical intersection between human rights and peace in ASEAN, noting that Norway has partnered with ASEAN on these issues since 2015, particularly in the areas of reconciliation and inclusive development. She observed that conflicts are on the rise globally, while international law and human rights face mounting pressure. She highlighted that Norway regards human rights as a key priority and recently set out its approach in a White Paper on peace and reconciliation. With experience in peace processes across the globe, Norway has supported ceasefires and dialogues, leveraging its ability to engage with all parties.

5. She drew attention to the importance of including women and minorities in peace processes, underlining Norway's strong commitment to international law, human rights, and long-term engagement. Building trust, she stressed, requires willingness to accept risks and openness to all parties. She affirmed Norway's readiness to work with AICHR to promote peace, trust, and dialogue, and described the workshop as an important opportunity to strengthen ASEAN's collective progress.

6. **Frank Okyere Osei**, Executive Office Technical Assistance Officer at the Auschwitz Institute for the Prevention of Genocide and Mass Atrocities, affirmed the Institute's pride in standing alongside AICHR and ASEAN in advancing peace and human rights. He underscored the conviction that peace is sustainable only when embedded in strong institutions and shaped by collaboration among governments, civil society, and other stakeholders. He emphasised that AICHR's workshop series offers an opportunity to move beyond analysis towards charting a forward-looking path, to do more collectively, and to respond effectively to emerging crises. He concluded by expressing hope that the discussions would contribute to shaping a durable regional peace architecture for years to come.

Recap of Workshops 1 to 4

7. **H.E. Edmund Bon Tai Soon**, AICHR Chair 2025 and Representative of Malaysia to AICHR, provided an overview of Workshops 1 to 4, which had been held in Kuala Lumpur and Jakarta in July and August 2025. He stressed the need for ASEAN to develop a more evidence-based, process-driven, and concerted approach to conflict prevention and peacebuilding. He highlighted the value of ASEAN's sectoral bodies — including AICHR, ASEAN-IPR, ACWC, and the ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management — while noting the challenge of ensuring coherence amid annual leadership rotation. He pointed to the need to establish a more consistent mechanism for mobility and coordination in addressing both intra- and inter-state conflicts, and to provide for the appointment of more permanent envoys.

8. He reinforced the value of the workshops as a platform to exchange views, gather insights, and develop a conceptual framework for ASEAN's future direction in peacebuilding. He recalled the key topics discussed during the earlier workshops:

- a) Workshop 1: Theories of peace and peacebuilding; mapping of peace actors; the importance of including civil society and grassroots peacebuilders, whose roles are often under-recognised; conflict dynamics and hotspots; key factors in resolving disputes to sustain durable peace; the role of intergovernmental diplomacy; and the integration of risk assessment in conflict analysis to identify key protection gaps.

- b) Workshops 2 and 3: ASEAN and international frameworks for conflict resolution, including gaps, challenges, and opportunities, with recommendations to reinforce ASEAN's approaches to conflict prevention.
- c) Workshop 4: The human rights of those most at risk, including testimonies from conflict survivors, and exploration of early response mechanisms.

9. He emphasised the need to make ASEAN's mechanisms and modalities more relevant, updated, and responsive, which calls for continuous adaptation to emerging challenges. He underlined that these mechanisms should be humanitarian, gender-responsive, and child-sensitive, while building confidence, enhancing accountability, and ensuring the protection of civilians. He noted that ASEAN pathways and modalities should be accessible to all stakeholders, and provide appropriate and effective remedies where necessary.

10. He stressed the importance of breaking taboos in discussing sensitive issues, strengthening cross-pillar coordination, and developing mechanisms that integrate human rights analysis with principles of consensus and non-interference. He expressed optimism that Workshops 5 and 6 would refine discussions into practical outcomes, and thanked ASEAN-IPR and Norway for their collaboration.

11. **Michael Frank Alar**, Facilitator at the Mindanao Peacebuilding Institute, reflected on the methodology of the workshop series, reintroducing John Paul Lederach's Pyramid of Peacebuilding Actors to illustrate how space narrows as actors move up towards negotiation and leadership levels. In previous workshops, he had guided participants through simulation exercises, including reflections on the role of negotiators in Aceh and Mindanao, and the contributions of civil society in addressing conflict and human rights violations.

12. He explained that in the final two workshops in the series, participants would apply a dynamic framework to review ASEAN's past responses to intra- and inter-state conflicts, examining who can take action in a range of contexts. He also facilitated energiser activities, including encouraging greetings in participants' native languages, to foster openness and shared learning.

Session 13: Track 1 Political Dialogues — Spotlight on Mindanao and Aceh

13. **Lilianne Fan**, Mediator with the Southeast Asian Women Peace Mediators, moderated the session.

14. Participating online, **Dr. Hamid Awaludin**, Head of International Relations at the Indonesian Red Cross and Chief Negotiator of the Indonesian Government, reflected on the Indonesian Government's pathway to the Helsinki peace agreement, situating it within the wider regional context of conflict resolution following communal violence in Ambon. He explained that the 2004 tsunami in Aceh became the decisive turning point: it was impossible to rebuild the province without peace, which pushed Jakarta to negotiate seriously with the

Free Aceh Movement. Finland played a facilitative role in engaging both sides, leading to international monitoring through the Aceh Monitoring Mission, with participation from the European Union and AMS.

15. He recalled that one of the most contentious issues was the demand for local political parties, which Jakarta initially resisted but eventually accepted, allowing Acehnese to form their own parties alongside national parties. He stressed that this compromise, accepted by the Parliament with minimal backlash after the tsunami, helped ensure the legitimacy and sustainability of the peace process.

16. **Munawar Liza Zainal**, Negotiator representing the Free Aceh Movement, traced its long and difficult path towards peace, beginning with earlier efforts under President Abdurrahman Wahid (known as Gus Dur), who allowed a space for dialogue through Law No. 18 of 2001 on special autonomy, as well as exploratory talks in Geneva. Those talks collapsed under President Megawati Soekarnoputri, who insisted that the conflict was a purely domestic matter and ended the Geneva track, while Free Aceh Movement negotiators faced arrest when attempting to attend meetings in Tokyo. Following the arrests, new negotiators emerged to continue the process.

17. He recalled that between 2001 and 2003, one of Free Aceh Movement's conditions was that Jakarta accept autonomy; however, both sides held different interpretations of what 'autonomy' meant. Jakarta claimed that certain administrative authority had been given to Aceh, while the Free Aceh Movement continued to push for a referendum and independence. Talks continued until 2003 but eventually came to a halt.

18. He elaborated that after the 2004 tsunami, a ceasefire was declared and negotiations resumed under President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and Vice President Jusuf Kalla. This time, the talks took place in Helsinki. The Free Aceh Movement shifted from insisting on independence or a referendum to negotiating for substantive self-governance, framed in terms of 'authority' rather than 'autonomy'. The principle of 'nothing is agreed until everything is agreed' guided the process.

19. He highlighted the importance of public socialisation with civil society groups; the inclusion of international monitors from the European Union, Norway, Sweden, and ASEAN, which helped build trust in the process; and post-agreement initiatives, such as peace and democracy schools, to transform combatants into civilians. He also underscored the importance of having a comprehensive monitoring mechanism in ensuring smooth implementation of the Helsinki peace agreement.

20. **Professor Miriam Coronel-Ferrer**, Co-Founder of the Southeast Asian Women Peace Mediators and Former Chief Negotiator of the Government of the Philippines, described the Government's protracted negotiations with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, spanning four Presidents and nearly seven decades of armed struggle. She outlined the two main tracks: ceasefire negotiations beginning under President Fidel V. Ramos in 1997, and substantive talks

under President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo that produced a memorandum of understanding later struck down by the Constitutional Court. Despite low public trust and widespread scepticism, President Benigno S. Aquino III took a political gamble by personally meeting the leadership of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front in 2011. This was an unprecedented move that signalled seriousness and built confidence despite harsh media criticism.

21. She underscored the need to build trust not only between parties but also with the broader public, as nationalist narratives often conflated secessionism with revolution. Contentious issues included framing the Bangsamoro as a ‘new political entity’; recognising Bangsamoro identity within Philippine citizenship; and designing inclusive structures that also acknowledged non-Muslims and Indigenous groups within the conflict, the Bangsamoro flag, and the power to classify land as public land. These compromises, together with committees established to address unresolved matters, ensured progress despite constitutional and political challenges.

22. **Mohagher Iqbal**, Chief Peace Negotiator for the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, recounted its decades-long struggle, noting that the peace talks with Manila represent one of the world’s longest-running peace negotiations. He emphasised the two phases of armed struggle and political dialogue aimed at addressing the historic grievances and aspirations of the Bangsamoro people. Trust-building, he pointed out, required difficult compromises, including acceptance of Filipino citizenship in exchange for recognition of an inclusive Bangsamoro identity. The peace process was hampered by recurrent violations and the Central Government’s tendency to assert control over Mindanao, but lessons emerged: agreements must be safeguarded by the principle of ‘nothing is agreed until everything is agreed’, and compromises must deliver both peace and justice.

23. He cited lessons from other peace processes, including the process in Northern Ireland, and underlined the need for practical deliverables to sustain political settlements. He stressed that ultimately, the process demonstrated that peace is achievable when both sides are willing to accept shared risks, pursue inclusivity, and remain committed to implementing agreements despite setbacks.

Question-and-Answer Session

24. In the question-and-answer session, the panellists reflected on issues of continuity, public support, and outstanding matters from the Aceh and Mindanao peace processes.

25. **Dr. Hamid Awaludin** explained that while the Aceh peace agreement included clear timelines — such as the release of political detainees within two weeks, and phased decommissioning of weapons alongside troop withdrawals — sustained engagement from the diplomatic community was vital to maintain momentum.

26. **Munawar Liza Zainal** added that the internationalisation of the Aceh process was uneven — progressing under some administrations but stalling under others — while domestic

regulations often complicated implementation. He pointed out that coordination between Aceh and Jakarta remained crucial, particularly in ensuring that commitments on decommissioning and governance proceeded in parallel with national-level actions.

27. **Professor Miriam Coronel-Ferrer** highlighted how public support for the Mindanao peace agreement directly influenced legislative follow-through, citing the setback following the 2015 violence, when lawmakers withheld backing. This forced negotiators to wait for a more conducive political climate under a different president before progress could resume.

28. **Mohagher Iqbal** underscored the layered and complex nature of implementation, stressing the need for third-party monitoring. He noted that while around 80 per cent of commitments had been fulfilled, the quality of delivery was uneven, with key mechanisms — such as a peace and reconciliation commission — still lacking.

29. Collectively, the panellists emphasised persistence, flexibility, and consistent engagement with both domestic constituencies and international partners as essential to overcoming implementation challenges.

Session 14: Energiser — Dialogue Among Truth, Mercy, Justice, and Peace

30. **Michael Frank Alar** facilitated the group energiser activity.

31. Participants explored the interconnections between ‘truth’, ‘mercy’, ‘justice’, and ‘peace’ by personifying and debating each concept. The Justice group stressed fairness, accountability, and remedies as essential foundations for the others, while the Mercy group underscored compassion and forgiveness as the starting point for healing. The Truth group highlighted the need for honesty, shared understanding, and transparency as prerequisites for reconciliation, while the Peace group framed peace as both the ultimate goal and an enabling condition for all other values. The discussion concluded that none of the concepts can stand alone; reconciliation requires them to operate as interdependent and mutually reinforcing elements.

Session 15: Track 2 Dialogues — Carving Out Spaces for CSO Participation in Peace Processes

32. **Windi Arini Imam**, Country Director for Indonesia at the Raoul Wallenberg Institute of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law, and Kartika Budhi Wijayanti, Project Management Officer at ASEAN-IPR, facilitated the session.

33. The ‘fishbowl’ discussion on civil society participation highlighted how CSOs have carved out space in peace processes through persistence, creativity, and the moral authority of human rights. Many participants recounted personal motivations rooted in loss or community suffering, which had driven them to seek a voice in negotiations.

34. Drawing on lived experiences from Aceh, Mindanao, Myanmar, and Papua, civil society actors emphasised that their entry points often emerged during moments of crisis — such as natural disasters or surges in violence — when governments and armed groups were more open to dialogue. Building capacity, forming networks, and demonstrating credibility through monitoring and evidence-based advocacy were identified as key strategies that enabled CSOs to overcome resistance and gain trust.

35. A recurring theme was the importance of broadening participation to include women, young persons, faith-based groups, Indigenous Peoples, and displaced communities. Examples cited included the women-led protests in Manila, grassroots peace networks in Mindanao, and Acehnese diaspora engagement in negotiations. Participants stressed that the legitimacy of peacebuilding efforts depends on inclusivity: without the voices of women and children, survivors of sexual violence, and Indigenous communities, agreements risk failing to represent those most affected by conflict. Civil society engagement, they noted, was not limited to the negotiating table; it extended to relief, rehabilitation, education, and transitional justice initiatives that sustain constituencies for peace.

36. The discussion also underscored how CSOs play a crucial role in bridging Tracks 1, 2, and 3 of peace processes. Civil society-led initiatives in ceasefire monitoring, truth and reconciliation commissions, and community-based protection frameworks were seen as important channels through which ordinary people influence formal processes. Participants described how trust is built not only institutionally but through personal relationships with champions inside governments or movements. International solidarity — from Malaysia's support for Acehnese students to the work of Indigenous Peoples' networks — was recognised as essential in reinforcing local initiatives and providing protective space.

37. Finally, participants acknowledged ongoing challenges, including entrenched taboos around issues such as conflict-related sexual violence, risks of co-option or marginalisation, and difficulties of sustaining momentum across leadership transitions. Calls were made to strengthen regional mechanisms under ASEAN, such as the ACWC and its work plans, and to ensure that protection, rehabilitation, and socio-economic justice remain integral to peacebuilding. The discussion concluded with reflections on the role of CSOs as indispensable bridges across diverse peacebuilding tracks, linking communities with state actors and ensuring that peace processes remain grounded in the lived experiences of those who are most affected.

38. **Michael Frank Alar** concluded Workshop 5 with a reflection and feedback exercise. Participants offered several suggestions on how ASEAN could address conflicts in the region:

- a) Continue deepening discussions on the prevention and resolution of both human-made and emerging environmental conflicts.
- b) Shift from a reactive stance to proactive crisis prevention, prioritising the protection of the most vulnerable groups.

- c) Support and strengthen the implementation of regional peace agreements through institutional, and possibly financial, assistance.
- d) Develop mechanisms to monitor peace agreements, with a particular focus on women, children, and other vulnerable groups.
- e) Formally institutionalise the role of mediator and/or venue for peace negotiations among conflicting groups in the region.
- f) Ensure that AMS assume greater responsibility for the protection and welfare of internally displaced persons, with targeted regional interventions.
- g) Establish an ASEAN monitoring system and deploy missions in situations of conflict and human rights violations in the region.
- h) Operationalise existing human rights commitments to enable early warning and monitoring of human rights violations.
- i) Provide dialogue spaces for communities directly affected by conflicts, such as those impacted by the Cambodia-Thailand border tensions.
- j) Create more inclusive platforms that bring in a wider range of stakeholders and offer safe spaces for dialogue, recognising risks faced by peacebuilders.
- k) Ensure accessible documentation of ASEAN peace processes, particularly lessons on navigating political dialogue processes.
- l) Explore a more active role for ASEAN in addressing intra-state conflicts.
- m) Transform the relationship between civil society and governments by addressing the trust gap and empowering CSOs to contribute meaningfully to Track 2 and Track 3 processes.

39. The following is a summary of the key lessons from Workshop 5:

- a) Dialogue and trust-building are central to ASEAN's approach to peace.
- b) ASEAN relies heavily on informal and non-intrusive engagement (quiet diplomacy) modalities.
- c) Multi-track engagement (Tracks 1, 1.5, and 2) is essential for effective peace processes, as Track 1 alone is insufficient, while Tracks 1.5 and 2 often enable dialogue and sustain engagement.

- d) Regional and informal networks play a critical role in facilitating communication and confidence-building.

Workshop 6: Roadmapping the Future of ASEAN's Peace, Peacebuilding, Conflict Prevention, and Management Initiatives

24 October 2025
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Welcome Remarks

1. **H.E. Anita A. Wahid**, Representative of Indonesia to AICHR, opened Workshop 6 by emphasising the importance of prevention and management initiatives that enable ASEAN to remain responsive and cohesive in the current geopolitical landscape. She noted the evolving challenges facing the region, including transnational disputes, misinformation, and propaganda. She emphasised the need to strengthen institutional linkages between conflict prevention and peacebuilding.
2. She called for a shift from reactive crisis management to proactive peacebuilding that integrates gender and youth perspectives. She urged the development of actionable programmes that translate ASEAN's shared commitments into practical steps for peace and human rights in the region.

How ASEAN Responded to Conflict and Crisis Situations

3. **Dr. Moe Thuzar**, Senior Fellow and Coordinator at the Myanmar Studies Programme, ISEAS – Yusof Ishak Institute, delivered her presentation online. She provided an overview of ASEAN's evolving approaches to responding to conflict and crisis situations across the region, drawing from her ongoing research mapping collective statements, interventions, and experiences.
4. She outlined the conventional wisdom that guided ASEAN's early years, whereby Southeast Asian states were highly protective of sovereignty, regarded non-interference as inviolable, and preferred informal, non-confrontational methods of managing disputes internally so as to avoid destabilising regional cooperation.
5. She highlighted that emerging realities, however, have prompted a reinterpretation of the ASEAN way and the principle of consensus, leading to more critical engagement with the domestic affairs of AMS. In recent years, ASEAN has justified certain forms of intervention when regional security is at stake, viewing humanitarian assistance as a legitimate first point of entry.

6. She noted that increasing reference to, and emphasis on, regional norms and principles, such as those enshrined in the ASEAN Charter, have focused on ASEAN Centrality and the importance of compliance. She underscored the importance of acceptance by the concerned country or government of mediation and monitoring mechanisms, as well as inclusive consultations involving a broader range of domestic stakeholders beyond traditional diplomatic channels. In this regard, she observed that ASEAN has begun to involve non-Track 1 actors.

7. In addition, she noted that ASEAN has, at times, adopted bold and more interventionist measures, particularly in response to regional economic, social, and environmental crises. These included the 1997 Asian financial crisis, the 1997–1998 transboundary haze crisis, the 2003 severe acute respiratory syndrome (‘SARS’) outbreak, the 2004 avian influenza outbreaks, and the COVID-19 pandemic.

8. ASEAN has also demonstrated regional diplomacy and mediation through bilateral consultations and regional reporting or monitoring mechanisms. When collective responses were limited, individual AMS often played key roles, usually at the request of the country concerned and, at times, as part of broader international responses, including involvement in UN peace operations such as the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (‘UNTAC’) and the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (‘UNTAET’), alongside participation in the Aceh and Mindanao peace processes.

9. Dr. Moe Thuzar noted that humanitarian assistance has remained central to ASEAN’s engagement, and cited the following examples:

- a) 2004: the Aceh tsunami led to the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response.
- b) 2008: Cyclone Nargis laid the groundwork for the establishment of the AHA Centre and a tripartite response mechanism.
- c) 2013: Typhoon Haiyan served as the first test of the AHA Centre’s operational capacity.
- d) 2016–2017 and post-2021: the Rohingya crisis and political crisis in Myanmar, respectively.

10. Drawing from ASEAN’s historical experiences, she emphasised the importance of understanding present responses through a longer-term perspective. She observed that, since 2008, there has been greater emphasis on ASEAN Centrality, compliance, and the meaning of collective responsibility.

11. Tracing ASEAN’s timeline of crisis response, Dr. Moe Thuzar cited several milestones, including:

- a) 1978: Viet Nam's invasion of Cambodia, which eventually led to the Jakarta Informal Meetings that brought together various stakeholders in dialogues that contributed to the signing of Paris Peace Agreements in 1991.
- b) 1997: The Cambodian political crisis prompted ASEAN to defer Cambodia's projected accession to ASEAN and form the ASEAN Troika to monitor the situation and consult with Cambodian leaders.
- c) 1999: Violence in Timor-Leste following the 1975 Indonesian occupation, during which ASEAN played a limited yet constructive role, with Thailand, Philippines, Malaysia, and Singapore participating in the UNTAET operations.
- d) 2004: ASEAN supported and actively participated in the humanitarian response to the Aceh tsunami.
- e) 2007–2008: In Myanmar, the Saffron Revolution and Cyclone Nargis allowed access for the international humanitarian community.
- f) 2011: As ASEAN Chair, Indonesia attempted to mediate bilateral tensions between Thailand and Cambodia over the Preah Vihear temple.
- g) 2016–2017: ASEAN addressed the Rohingya refugee crisis by providing humanitarian assistance.
- h) 2021: ASEAN responded to the military coup in Myanmar by convening a meeting of leaders to discuss the crisis.

12. Dr. Moe Thuzar concluded her presentation by identifying key success factors, namely leadership, openness to intervention, sustained engagement, and ownership. She also reflected on persistent obstacles, including national sensitivities, political asymmetry, and limited enforcement mechanisms. She observed that the tension between national interests and regional commitments continues to shape ASEAN's credibility and effectiveness. She elaborated that the challenge ahead lies in transforming ASEAN Centrality from a principle of projection and unity into one of active, inclusive, and consultative problem-solving rooted in the collective regional responsibility.

Question-and-Answer Session

13. The moderator, **Michael Frank Alar**, Facilitator at the Mindanao Peacebuilding Institute, invited questions from the floor.

14. **The first participant** to speak questioned the continuing influence exerted by major global powers on AMS. He also noted the absence of references to human rights in the presentation slides, which, in his view, reflects ASEAN's tendency to overlook human rights considerations. He asked about the relationship between ASEAN's responses to conflict and its commitment to human rights.

15. **A second participant** reiterated Myanmar's longstanding position on the Rohingya issue, stating that Myanmar does not recognise the term 'Rohingya', as it has no historical basis within Myanmar's context.

16. **A third participant** asked whether Dr. Moe Thuzar's research would extend beyond the ASEAN region, and specifically sought ASEAN's perspective on humanitarian principles in relation to the Gaza conflict.

17. Responding to the first participant, **Dr. Moe Thuzar** acknowledged the point regarding the influence of major powers and noted that this perspective would be incorporated into her ongoing research. She emphasised that although ASEAN can never be fully insulated from external influences, it has nonetheless demonstrated its own agency in shaping the regional landscape and managing crises.

18. She explained that ASEAN's responses to crises have often involved collaboration with international partners, particularly in cases such as the crises in Cambodia and Timor-Leste. For instance, Japan played a role in mediation and facilitation during the 1999 political crisis in Cambodia, which eventually led to a settlement. She acknowledged that her presentation did not sufficiently highlight these geopolitical dimensions, and apologised for not incorporating the observation earlier.

19. In response to the third participant's question, she noted that, while ASEAN has historically been cautious regarding human rights, particularly due to the sensitivity of AMS concerning sovereignty and refugee movements, it has gradually adopted broader and softer entry points in addressing these matters. This includes an increasing emphasis on humanitarian assistance as an acceptable mode of engagement.

20. She added that such an approach is emerging in ASEAN's response to Myanmar, where the delivery of humanitarian assistance has become a practical entry point for addressing both humanitarian and human rights concerns. Although her current research does not examine ASEAN's perspective on humanitarian principles in relation to the Gaza conflict, she acknowledged the growing use of humanitarian assistance as a framework through which ASEAN engages with sensitive human rights issues within the region.

21. **A fourth participant** drew attention to the nexus between human rights and conflict, and asked how these dynamics have shaped ASEAN's responses to crises. She inquired into the extent to which international human rights norms are embedded within ASEAN, noting that

human rights discourse in the region remains contested, particularly in relation to torture, socio-economic rights, and political rights.

22. She further questioned how ASEAN could respond more proactively to crises given the varying levels of democratic transition among AMS, some of which continue to operate under authoritarian systems or incomplete democratic consolidation. Additionally, she asked how these internal dynamics affect ASEAN's collective responses to human rights and conflict, and the extent to which international norms influence ASEAN's approach.

23. **A fifth participant** asked whether Dr. Moe Thuzar's research would include a stronger focus on Track 3 actors, particularly in exploring how civil society engagement could complement ASEAN's efforts. She referred to Article 2(2)(e) of the ASEAN Charter concerning the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of AMS, and suggested that incorporating Track 3 perspectives could provide insights into how non-state actors contribute to ASEAN's work on conflict prevention and human rights.

24. **Dr. Moe Thuzar** highlighted that the establishment of AICHR itself demonstrates that the influence of human rights norms within ASEAN. She noted that AICHR represents ASEAN's human rights mechanism, which had been operational for decades before ASEAN took steps to institutionalise it. She observed that only in recent years has ASEAN begun drawing stronger connections between human rights, peace, and conflict, whereas earlier approaches tended to focus on regional-level issues rather than specific intra-state situations.

25. She further noted that perceptible shifts are now taking place. While ASEAN continues to emphasise a rules-based approach, particularly in matters involving major global powers, such as the South China Sea issue, tensions between national and regional interests remain. She added that those involved in implementing the ASEAN Charter must approach it pragmatically, recognising that its effectiveness depends on the ability of AMS to translate its principles into action.

26. In response to the fifth participant's question on Track 3 actors, she observed that Track 3 engagement is an emerging area within ASEAN's broader regional framework. She added that ASEAN has begun to recognise the importance of involving civil society and non-state actors in dialogue and peacebuilding processes, although such participation remains gradual and limited.

Session 16: Track 1.5 Dialogues — Consolidation for Peace ('COP') in Mindanao and Aceh

27. The moderator, **Michael Frank Alar**, posed a number of questions for the panellists to address:

- a) What are you curious about in terms of Track 1.5 in the context of the Aceh and Mindanao peace processes?

- b) How effective is Track 1.5, and what are the best practices for Track 1.5?
- c) How can the reluctance or hesitation to engage between Track 1 and Track 1.5 actors be overcome?
- d) To what extent should Track 1.5 remain steadfast or flexible in light of geopolitical circumstances?
- e) How do reliance on external funding and shrinking funding space affect ongoing peace initiatives involving Track 2 and Track 3 actors?
- f) How can the extremely different perceptions held by actors engaged across the various tracks be bridged?

28. **Professor Dr. Kamarulzaman bin Askandar**, Coordinator for Research and Education for Peace at Universiti Sains Malaysia ('REPUSM'), shared insights from his experience in the Consolidation for Peace ('COP') programme, an initiative under REPUSM. He explained that the COP emerged from long-term engagement in Southeast Asia's conflict areas — Aceh, Mindanao, and southern Thailand — with the aim of transforming both relationships and structures that perpetuate violence. He stressed that sustainable peace requires reshaping how actors perceive and interact with one another, while cultivating new ways of thinking about conflict resolution. This, he added, also applies to REPUSM itself, which must continually evolve through self-transformation.

29. He explained that the entry point for COP was primarily through academia and CSOs, representing Track 2 and Track 3 actors. Over time, the programme expanded to include engagement with Track 1 actors, thereby linking informal and formal peace processes.

30. He emphasised the importance of choosing appropriate partners who are genuinely committed to finding practical solutions and able to contribute resources and expertise. COP was built upon strong local partnerships because solutions must emerge from within conflict-affected communities. He noted that the resolution "must be from the soil of the conflict".

31. The COP's strategy combined dialogues, seminars, workshops, and strategic planning sessions, typically beginning with a seminar to identify emerging trends and challenges, followed by dialogues that enabled participants to share experiences, explore perspectives, and build trust. These iterative engagements formed part of a broader process aimed at supporting transformative peacebuilding through learning, reflection, and action.

32. Professor Dr. Kamarulzaman bin Askandar also emphasised the importance of selecting participants capable of making a meaningful impact in conflict situations. He shared that, during the Aceh programme, consolidation efforts were challenging because the Indonesian

Government was reluctant to engage with representatives of the Free Aceh Movement outside the formal process. To support the process, COP facilitated consultations among the Acehnese community in Malaysia, bringing together negotiators from the Free Aceh Movement and local representatives to discuss the way forward.

33. He added that in Mindanao, the situation was similarly difficult at the outset but, over time, COP succeeded in involving government representatives as well. The team engaged with CSOs, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, and the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process ('OPAPP') through private discussions in both Mindanao and Manila. These informal conversations helped foster mutual understanding and trust among key stakeholders.

34. He pointed out that security considerations are important in selecting venues. The COP's work was supported by broader initiatives such as the Southeast Asian Conflict Studies Network and a series of COP programmes (COP1–COP6). Building upon early efforts in the 1990s to map peace actors across Southeast Asia, COP brought together people from various conflict regions to learn from experts and each other, thereby developing a shared understanding through a common language of peace. In addition, side programmes led by participants from conflict areas helped strengthen learning and local ownership. By COP4, the focus had shifted towards engaging leaders of revolutionary movements to discuss how peace could be organised, while COP5 included local politicians, in recognition of their vital role in sustaining peace efforts.

35. Responding to a question from the moderator on whether Track 1.5 diplomacy could be further developed within ASEAN to address intra-state conflicts, he noted that attempts to mainstream such approaches through ASEAN-IPR faced resistance from some AMS wary of rocking the boat. Nevertheless, the initiative demonstrated how academia and civil society can effectively convene inclusive peace platforms where official diplomacy is constrained.

36. When asked by the moderator regarding the impact of bringing together Track 1 and Track 2 actors, panellist **Associate Professor Dr. Ayesah Uy Abubakar**, Lecturer, Albukhary International University and Member, ASEAN Women for Peace Registry (Malaysia Representative) described COP as a deliberately low-profile platform, as the implementation of peace processes is still ongoing and partners must accept this approach.

37. Reflecting on key lessons from the COP process, she elaborated that COP operates as a space for negotiation, requiring organisers to manage discussions diplomatically, facilitate brainstorming, and create a safe and inclusive environment for all participants, including marginalised groups and women.

38. Women's participation, she emphasised, should not merely involve filling quotas but rather identifying and empowering women capable of playing meaningful leadership roles in peacebuilding from the outset. COP also seeks to identify and nurture potential champions of the peace process, equipping them with knowledge, confidence, and sustained engagement through dialogue and problem-solving.

39. She described the COP's 'three-brain' model — insider, regional, and international — which guides facilitators in understanding the local, donor, and international contexts, thereby enabling them to act effectively as insider-mediators.

40. She explained that COP embodies a form of hybrid peacebuilding that draws upon ASEAN's principle of centrality and adapts lessons from conflict and peace studies. Through this approach, COP has evolved its own understanding of conflict transformation.

41. She highlighted the importance of rapporteur work and the preparation of executive summaries, noting that these are highly influential. Rapporteurs must accurately capture the essence of discussions and action points. Effective rapporteuring helps amplify the impact of COP sessions beyond the meetings themselves. Rapporteurs are encouraged to immerse themselves in the process and to "go into the territory and learn as you continue to do it".

42. She also reflected on COP's partnership with the Japan International Cooperation Agency ('JICA'), noting that it is not merely a donor-recipient relationship but an equitable partnership built on mutual learning and respect. Both parties have grown together through shared challenges and experiences.

43. Finally, she underscored the importance of strategic planning and preparedness through an exit strategy that enables others to assume ownership of the work and continue the process. Successful peacebuilding, she concluded, depends upon building trust and empowering new leaders to emerge and grow.

Question-and-Answer Session

44. **Michael Frank Alar**, the moderator, invited questions from the floor.

45. **The first participant** asked how mediators can address the vastly different perceptions held by stakeholders engaged in Track 1 and Track 2 processes. Track 1 participants frequently view Track 2 actors as obstacles to their objectives, and at times as troublemakers. Track 1 actors, often associated with holders of power, have at times abused that power, creating intimidation and violence that affect civil society actors engaged in Track 2. Meanwhile, Track 2 participants, having "been bitten by the snake", are unable to fully trust Track 1 actors, having learned a lesson from prior experiences of violence and coercion. Track 1 actors are thus often perceived as perpetrators, while Track 2 actors are sometimes viewed as adversarial.

46. **Professor Dr. Kamarulzaman bin Askandar** responded by explaining that in southern Thailand, all COP activities deliberately exclude government representatives, as their presence would not be conducive to open discussion. Government actors often seek information about attendees and take note of participants, thereby posing significant safety and

security risks. Invitations are therefore issued discreetly to avoid endangering Track 2 and Track 3 participants. In some cases, intelligence personnel near Penang, Malaysia and along the border are aware of who is attending, necessitating additional caution. He cited an incident during a COP programme when a grassroots organisation participant was targeted and shot upon returning to Thailand. For security reasons, government actors are therefore not yet invited to the programme. By contrast, in other conflict areas such as Mindanao, the inclusion of government representatives does not pose similar risks.

47. **A second participant** remarked that the work of Track 3 CSOs should not be overlooked, and consideration should be given to whether the rigidity of the tracks is conducive to meaningful engagement.

48. **Associate Professor Dr. Ayesah Uy Abubakar** observed that peacebuilding actors, including CSOs, constitute the backbone of COP. For example, although meetings follow structured schedules, flexibility is allowed, including overtime sessions, to ensure that participants are able to express themselves fully. The atmosphere of the discussion is maintained in a healthy and constructive manner. In some cases, tensions are managed carefully, rather than ignored, through informal activities such as shared dinners, to ease interactions and create a more conducive environment for discussion the following day. Organisers, she stressed, must remain flexible and emotionally attentive, recognising that the programme serves the interests of all participants, rather than merely the priorities of the organisers. This approach fosters trust in COP because participants feel they are an integral part of the process.

49. **Professor Dr. Kamarulzaman bin Askandar** addressed the issue of whether ASEAN could explore Track 1.5 as a platform for addressing conflicts, particularly inter-state conflicts in the region, commenting that ASEAN must demonstrate the necessary political will. He shared that previous proposals to ASEAN-IPR, itself a Track 1.5 initiative, were unsuccessful due to a lack of political will and of honesty to discuss the truth. He cautioned that without transforming the way discussions are structured and conducted, meaningful engagement through Track 1.5 is unlikely to materialise.

50. **Associate Professor Dr. Ayesah Uy Abubakar** expressed optimism that there is some room to explore Track 1.5 approaches within ASEAN-IPR. Through initiatives such as COP, smaller AMS have become more open to limited government participation. For example, representatives from the Philippines and Malaysia have permitted COP activities to proceed. While this does not amount to formal approval, it provides a valuable opportunity. She urged AMS to allow CSOs to participate in Track 1.5 processes, noting that such involvement would ultimately serve the government's own interest.

Session 17: Mapping Actors and Processes — How Could ASEAN Respond to Conflict Situations More Effectively?

51. **ASEAN-IPR and the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue** facilitated this interactive session, which divided participants into two working groups to map ASEAN's existing peace actors and processes, and to propose strategies for strengthening regional responses to both inter-state and intra-state conflicts. The discussions underscored ASEAN's unique architecture, its reliance on consensus and quiet diplomacy, and the urgent need to evolve these practices into more proactive, preventive, and human rights-centred mechanisms.

52. The first group examined responses to inter-state conflicts, noting that Track 1 actors — including government leaders, senior officials, the ASEAN Chair, and AICHR — remain central to formal conflict resolution, while Track 1.5 entities such as ASEAN-IPR can bridge official and informal tracks. Participants stressed that communities and civil society groups should be systematically integrated into early warning and response mechanisms, thereby providing ground-level intelligence and facilitating trust-building.

53. Proposals included activating senior-level retreats and Troika consultations at the early stages of disputes; strengthening the role of the ASEAN Secretary-General in addressing human rights concerns; and deploying monitoring teams before, rather than after, conflicts escalate. A recurring recommendation was the establishment of a standing ASEAN peace envoy or permanent office for preventive diplomacy that would transcend annual chair cycles. Participants also called for a broader mandate for ASEAN's dispute settlement mechanism to encompass peace and security issues.

54. The second group focused on intra-state conflicts and the challenges of taking action without infringing on sovereignty. Participants proposed reframing ASEAN's principle of non-interference into one of 'non-indifference', reflecting a collective responsibility to uphold peace and human rights. They mapped a broad constellation of actors, including AICHR, ASEAN-IPR, AHA Centre, national human rights institutions, CSOs, research institutions, and humanitarian networks, whose collaboration could be institutionalised through regular dialogues, information-sharing, and joint monitoring.

55. Proposals included establishing a regional pool of mediators and experts, formalising the participation of CSOs in ASEAN bodies, and developing integrated early warning and data-sharing systems linking sectoral bodies such as AICHR, ASEAN-IPR, AHA Centre, and ACWC. Participants also suggested reviewing the ASEAN Charter and related mechanisms to allow more flexible decision-making, including voluntary veto restraint, and called for AICHR to issue public recommendations or statements as part of a regional human rights protection protocol.

56. Across both groups, participants emphasised the need to make peace and human rights a standing ASEAN agenda item, anchored in the 2017 ASEAN Declaration on Culture of Prevention for a Peaceful, Inclusive, Resilient, Healthy and Harmonious Society. They agreed that ASEAN must shift from reactive responses towards a culture of proactive prevention and inclusive participation, enabling multi-sectoral and multi-track coordination.

57. The session concluded with a shared recognition that durable peace in Southeast Asia requires institutional innovation in which Track 1 diplomacy, Track 2 expertise, and Track 3 community engagement operate not in silos but as components of a coherent, responsive, and human rights-based regional system.

Closing Session: Summary and Charting the Way Ahead

58. **H.E. Edmund Bon Tai Soon**, AICHR Chair 2025 and Representative of Malaysia to AICHR, closed the regional training programme by thanking the facilitators, organisers, and partners, including the Auschwitz Institute for the Prevention of Genocide and Mass Atrocities, and Norway. He reflected that while discussions within AICHR are often robust, they remain grounded in shared values that now enable the region to engage with issues once considered too sensitive.

59. He announced that a summary report of all six workshops would inform the development of a regional framework on conflict prevention and peacebuilding, which would remain a top AICHR priority in 2026. He welcomed Timor-Leste's participation as ASEAN's newest Member State.

60. AICHR Representatives and Alternate Representatives expressed appreciation for the workshop series, commending its stimulating and forward-looking spirit. **H.E. Ambassador Nguyen Trung Thanh**, Representative of Viet Nam to AICHR, cautioned that ASEAN must act decisively amid shifting global dynamics, warning that if the region does not take ownership of its peace agenda, others will. **H.E. U Nyunt Swe** and **H.E. Associate Professor Dr. Bhanubhatra Jittiang**, the Representatives of Myanmar and Thailand to AICHR, respectively, commended participants for producing actionable outcomes. **H.E. Sreang Chenda**, Cambodia's Alternate Representative to AICHR, reminded the participants not to take peace for granted, and congratulated Malaysia for its successful tenure as ASEAN Chair.

61. The session concluded with a shared hope that ASEAN would continue to translate these dialogues into tangible progress for the peoples of the region.

62. The following is a summary of the key lessons from Workshop 6:

- a) Conflicts are highly dynamic and require varied entry points and actors. There is no one-size-fits-all approach. Responses must be flexible and context-specific.
- b) Effective responses require coordination across multiple ASEAN actors and sectors.

- c) Peace efforts must extend beyond diplomacy and mediation to include a humanitarian response, service delivery, and protection (including addressing issues relating to health, food, displacement, and livelihoods).
- d) There is a need for a structured but flexible framework. Participants called for guidance — not a rigid mechanism — and a flexible ‘toolbox’ approach.

ANNEX A

**SPEAKING NOTES FOR OPENING REMARKS DELIVERED BY THE CHAIR
OF THE ASEAN INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS
(AICHR) AND REPRESENTATIVE OF MALAYSIA TO AICHR, H.E. EDMUND
BON TAI SOON, AT THE AICHR REGIONAL TRAINING PROGRAMME
ON HUMAN RIGHTS — WORKSHOPS ON INTERSECTION BETWEEN
CONFLICT AND HUMAN RIGHTS: PATHWAYS AND APPROACHES TO PEACE
IN ASEAN (WORKSHOP 1: “BUILDING PEACE — FROM CONFLICT
PREVENTION TO SUSTAINABLE PEACE”)**

**2 JULY 2025
KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA**

Excellency Tan Sri Othman Hashim, Special Envoy of the ASEAN Chair on Myanmar,

Raja Intan Nor Zareen binti Raja Khairul Anuar, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Malaysia,

Excellency Ambassador I Gusti Agung Wesaka Puja, Executive Director, ASEAN Institute for Peace and Reconciliation (‘ASEAN-IPR’),

Ambassador Tiffany McDonald, Head of Mission, Australian Mission to ASEAN (who is joining us online),

Ms Cristina Fernández Escorza, Programme Coordination Specialist, ASEAN-Women Peace and Security, United Nations Women (‘UN Women’),

Ms Joanna Mansfield, Team Leader, International Engagement, Australian Human Rights Commission (‘AHRC’),

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen.

Salam sejahtera and good morning.

Why is the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (‘AICHR’) running these six workshops?

ASEAN has long played a pivotal role in the region’s conflict prevention, conflict management, and peacebuilding efforts. Guided by its founding principles of non-interference, consensus-based decision-making, and respect for sovereignty, ASEAN has historically emphasised informal dialogue, consensus-building, and quiet diplomacy while refraining from direct intervention in member states’ internal affairs. These approaches have been evident in cross-border conflict management within the region.

The ASEAN Political-Security Community ('APSC'), as one of the three pillars of the ASEAN Community, aims to enhance regional peace, stability, and security through dialogue and cooperation. In practice, we have seen the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on disaster management ('AHA Centre') play a crucial role in responding to humanitarian crises and natural disasters, further reinforcing ASEAN's commitment to regional resilience and cooperation.

However, ASEAN is now navigating a rapidly evolving geopolitical landscape, which presents new and complex challenges. Criticisms of its non-interference policy, decision-making constraints due to consensus requirements, and the need to balance sovereignty with humanitarian and human rights considerations demand a more responsive and adaptive approach to peacebuilding.

To address these challenges and enhance ASEAN's peacebuilding capacity, AICHR is advancing a transformative initiative comprising a series of six iterative and interlinked workshops. These workshops will deliberate on possible ASEAN pathways to, and conceptual frameworks for, peace, conflict prevention, and management that are comprehensive and actionable. The workshops are designed to provide structured platforms for discussion, foster meaningful dialogue, and ensure thorough documentation for historical records and institutional memory.

Notably, the workshops will chart a course on peace and peacebuilding that is ASEAN-led and ASEAN-owned, using a whole-of-ASEAN approach. This is a core part of AICHR's work to generate a common position on human rights matters of interest in ASEAN.

The AICHR Terms of Reference as the ASEAN human rights Charter body allow it to seek and obtain information from ASEAN Member States on human rights, and to develop strategies on human rights. We are acting pursuant to these functions and mandates.

This initiative is designed to complement the vital and valuable work of ASEAN organs, bodies, and entities involved in these efforts, including the Committee of Permanent Representatives ('CPR'), ASEAN Institute for Peace and Reconciliation ('ASEAN-IPR'), AHA Centre, ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management ('ACDM'), ASEAN Committee on Women ('ACW'), ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children ('ACWC'), ASEAN Women for Peace Registry ('AWPR'), ASEAN Disaster Resilience Platform ('ADRP'), ASEAN Disaster Resilience Forum ('ADRF'), ASEAN Defence Senior Officials' Meeting ('ADSOM'), Working Group on Counter-Terrorism ('WG-CT') of the Senior Officials Meeting on Transnational Crimes ('SOMTC'), and Southeast Asian Women Peace Mediators, among others.

These bodies and entities are relevant and key drivers and stakeholders in the ecosystem of peace, peacebuilding, and resilience within ASEAN.

I am also glad to inform you that ASEAN-IPR has agreed to cooperate with AICHR on these workshops through their technical support and expertise. This represents a first and a new step in the right direction in AICHR's engagements with ASEAN-IPR.

Today is the first of a six-part series, which focuses on building peace from conflict prevention to sustainable peace. It will serve as a foundation for AICHR's broader initiative while also implementing the relevant action lines of the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on Women, Peace and Security 2022.

Today, we hope to explore peace and peacebuilding theories and their application in past regional conflicts; examine a range of outcomes and lessons learned from various peace processes; identify factors on conflict prevention, resolution, and recovery sustaining lasting and sustainable peace; and map conflict dynamics, hotspots, and peace actors at local, national, and international levels.

These workshops are led by Malaysia, with Thailand and Indonesia as co-proponents. I wish also to thank my colleagues at AICHR, particularly Representatives from Singapore, Lao PDR and Viet Nam, for their invaluable support.

Much appreciation to the team led by Malaysia's AICHR Assistants — Toh Nyon Nyin, Nurul Aliaa Azman, Valen Khor, and Nurkamelia Ghazali — for putting together this programme, and the staff from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Malaysia for their invaluable support.

I look forward to the rich discussions, ideas, and collaborative exchanges that will take place over the course of today's programme, hoping that it will be the first step in laying the groundwork for an ASEAN peace framework rooted in human rights and built through regional ownership, partnership, and mutual trust.

Terima kasih.

ANNEX B

FEEDBACK FROM BREAKOUT SESSION ON HORIZON SCANNING AND MAPPING OF ASEAN PEACE ACTORS

Group 1: Climate change/insecurity			
	Actors	Context	Processes
National	• National governments • Environmental agencies • Universities • Religious/spiritual leaders • Businesses • CSOs • Climate finance actors • Community climate advocates • Politicians • Cities/mayors • Households • Community-based groups	• Over-industrialisation • Climate-induced displacement • Eco-friendly climate technology • Environmental degradation	• Local/city action plans • National Action Plans • Capacity-building • Planned relocation • Legislative process • Advocacy • Renewable energy transition • Just transition • Policy entrepreneurs • Special protection measures • Technical support • Organised community action • Faith-based responses
Regional	• ASEAN Economic Community • Women • Media • ASEAN climate change ambassador • ASEAN Senior Officials on Environment (‘ASOEN’) • AICHR • AHA Centre	• Resource scarcity • ASEAN Vision 2025–2045 • Green economy	• ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution • ASEAN workshops • RPA-WPS • Mediation of conflicts • Taxonomy • Knowledge-sharing • Research on climate justice
International	• Donald Trump • Transnational corporations • Diplomats	• Sustainable Development Goals • UN	• Updated Nationally Determined Contributions • UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights

Group 1: Climate change/insecurity			
	Actors	Context	Processes
	• Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change • UN Global Compact		• Cross-border green projects • Loss and damage • Climate accountability

Group 2: Political instability or authoritarianism			
	Actors	Context	Processes
National	• Militia/military • States/governments • Monarchy • Politicians • Corporate sector • Academia • CSOs • National human rights institutions • Right-wing groups • Migrant workers • Media	• Dominance of the military • Social and economic conditions • Civil war • Drought • Ethnic conflicts • Income inequality • Increased development • Digital divide	• Peaceful assembly • Democratisation • Reform of political institutions • Peaceful or non-violent demonstrations • Local champions • Dialogues • Interfaith dialogues, including between people of differing political views • Monitoring • Peace negotiations
Regional	• ASEAN mechanisms • Organised crime gangs • ASEAN Political-Security Community • Scammers • Religious actors and institutions	• Human rights violations • ASEAN • Forced migration • Transnational mining • Limited policy coherence, and implementation challenges, at the country level • Transnational and organised crime • Development	• Ceasefire agreements • Grassroots initiatives • Ensuring the fulfilment of rights • Boycotts • Advocacy/lobbying • Social media/TikTok • Free and fair elections • Mediator outside the circle • Stakeholder roundtable discussions • Negotiations • Campaigns
International	• China/Xi Jinping • US/Donald Trump • UN	• Not necessarily reflective of people's needs	• Research • Written correspondence • International agreements and commitments

Group 2: Political instability or authoritarianism			
	Actors	Context	Processes
	• EU/Middle East leaders/Israel • Social influencers • Veto power countries • International non-governmental organisations • Social media	• Sustainable Development Goals • Refugees • Artificial intelligence ('AI')	• Socialising information • International collaboration • Tribunals • International fora

Group 3: Impunity			
	Actors	Context	Processes
National	• States/governments • National human rights institutions • Anti-corruption bodies • Ministries of Justice • Courts • Monarchy • Youth • Whistleblowers • Paramilitary • Women • Traditional leaders • Academic researchers • Schools • Indigenous Peoples • Peace academy/scholars • CSOs • Media • Enlightened religious leaders	• Commitment from national governments • Political will and leadership • Exploitation of extractive industries • Social movements/protests • Political instability • Armed conflict • Corruption • Ethnic conflict • Delayed justice • Legal impunity • Breakdown of social norms • National security • Lack of rule of law • Human rights/UN frameworks • Displacement • Inclusive political processes	• Good governance processes • Transitional justice • Capacity-building • Peace tables • Monitoring networks • Selectivity of ASEAN rules and values • Indigenous Peoples' knowledge and systems • Moral and civic education • Judicial reform • Peace education • Judicial guarantees • Legal reforms • Diverse media
Regional	• AICHR • ASEAN • ACWC • Transnational and organised crime	• Transboundary business • Business and human rights • Corruption	• Regional mechanism on monitoring impunity • Victim protection • ACWC • RPA-EVAWC

Group 3: Impunity			
	Actors	Context	Processes
	• Regional caucuses/ CSOs	• Erosion of rule of law reduces public trust • Territorial disputes • Transnational crime • Human trafficking	• ASEAN Charter • RPA-WPS • Subsidiarity • Coordination with national efforts • Collaboration across ASEAN pillars and sectoral bodies • Establishment of regional human rights remedies
International	• UN • Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights ('OHCHR') • Role of the USA • Non-governmental organisations • International Criminal Court • International Court of Justice • Big business	• International trade wars • Corruption • Economic inequality • Superpower rivalry • Monopolies	• International Criminal Court • Rule of law • UN treaty bodies • International pressure and advocacy • UN Special Procedures • Partnerships • Funding modalities • Legitimacy • Business and human rights • Universal Periodic Review ('UPR') mechanism • International aid