South China Sea

121. We remain seriously concerned over recent and ongoing developments and took note of the concerns expressed by some Leaders on the land reclamations and escalation of activities in the area, which have eroded trust and confidence, increased tensions and may undermine peace, security and stability in the region.

122. We reaffirmed the importance of maintaining and promoting peace, security, stability, safety and freedom of navigation in and over - flight above the South China Sea.

123. We further reaffirmed the need to enhance mutual trust and confidence, exercise self-restraint in the conduct of activities and avoid actions that may further complicate the situation, and pursue peaceful resolution of disputes in accordance with international law, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

124. We emphasised the importance of non-militarisation and self-restraint in the conduct of all activities, including land reclamation that could further complicate the situation and escalate tensions in the South China Sea.

125. We underscored the importance of the full and effective implementation of the DOC in its entirety, and while noting the momentum and new phase of consultations, urged all parties to work expeditiously for the early adoption of an effective Code of Conduct (COC), including through increasing the frequency of ASEAN-China Senior Officials‟ Meetings and Joint Working Group Meetings on the Implementation of the DOC.

126. We highlighted the urgency to intensify efforts to achieve further substantive progress in the implementation of the DOC in its entirety as well as substantive negotiations for the early conclusion of the COC including the outline and timeline of the COC.

127. Pursuant to the full and effective implementation of the DOC in its entirety, and pending the early adoption of an effective COC, we stressed the importance of undertaking confidence building and preventive measures to enhance, among others, trust and confidence amongst parties.

128. We welcomed the adoption of the Joint Statement of the Foreign Ministers of ASEAN Member States and China on the Full and Effective Implementation of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea and also welcomed the Joint Statement on the Application of the Code for Unplanned Encounters at Sea (CUES) in the South China Sea and the Guidelines for Hotline Communications among Senior Officials of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of ASEAN Member States and China in Response to Maritime Emergencies in the Implementation of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea which will be adopted by the 19th ASEAN-China Summit to Commemorate the 25th Anniversary of ASEAN- China Dialogue Relations.