We reaffirmed the importance of maintaining and promoting peace, security, stability, safety and freedom of navigation in and overflight above the South China Sea and recognised the benefits of having the South China Sea as a sea of peace, stability and prosperity. We underscored the importance of the full and effective implementation of the 2002 Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) in its entirety. We warmly welcomed the improving cooperation between ASEAN and China and were encouraged by the official commencement of the substantive negotiations towards the early conclusion of an effective Code of Conduct in the South China Sea (COC) on a mutually-agreed timeline. We welcomed practical measures that could reduce tensions, and the risks of accidents, misunderstandings and miscalculation, such as the successful testing of the ASEAN Member States and China MFA-to-MFA hotline to manage maritime emergencies in the South China Sea, and the operationalisation of the Joint Statement on the Application of the Code for Unplanned Encounters at Sea (CUES) in the South China Sea adopted on 7 September 2016. We discussed the matters relating to the South China Sea and took note of the concerns expressed by some Leaders on the land reclamations and activities in the area, which have eroded trust and confidence, increased tensions and may undermine peace, security and stability in the region. We 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 UNCLOS. We emphasised the importance of non-militarisation and self-restraint in the conduct of all activities by claimants and all other states, including those mentioned in the DOC that could further complicate the situation and escalate tensions in the South China Sea.