



## Chairman's Statement of the 43rd ASEAN Summit

**ASEAN Heads of State/Government unanimously endorse  
ASEAN IIDC and the Movement for Shared Civilizational Values**

*“I hope that the ASEAN Intercultural and Interreligious Dialogue Conference will contribute to the broadening and deepening of mutual understanding and will become a solid foundation upon which ASEAN can rise as a global epicentrum of harmony and growth”*

*~ H.E. Joko Widodo, President of the Republic of Indonesia*

*“[We] invite governments and civil society institutions to help project ASEAN's cultural and religious soft power globally, through the Movement for Shared Civilizational Values, which seeks to preserve and strengthen a rules-based international order founded upon universal ethics and humanitarian values”*

*~ ASEAN IIDC Jakarta Declaration*

JAKARTA, Indonesia — On 5 – 7 September 2023, the Heads of State/Government of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations gathered in Jakarta, Indonesia, for the 43rd ASEAN Summit under the Chairmanship of the Republic of Indonesia, with the theme “ASEAN Matters: Epicentrum of Growth.” The *Chairman's Statement of the 43rd ASEAN Summit* explicitly endorsed the ASEAN Intercultural and Interreligious Dialogue Conference (IIDC) and its outcomes.

Almost precisely one month earlier, senior religious and cultural figures from across Southeast Asia convened with the leadership of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), the Government of Indonesia, and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations to chart a course for the region's re-emergence as a cohesive, vital, and proactive civilizational sphere.

These developments offer a striking demonstration of broad institutional, popular, and governmental backing for a strategy pioneered by NU leaders and the [Center for Shared Civilizational Values](#) (CSCV), known as the “[Ashoka Approach](#).”

The [Chairman's Statement of the 43rd ASEAN Summit](#) reads, in part:

1. We, the Heads of State/Government of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), gathered in Jakarta, Indonesia, on 5 September 2023 for the 43rd ASEAN Summit under the Chairmanship of the Republic of Indonesia, with the theme “ASEAN Matters: Epicentrum of Growth.” The Summit was chaired by H.E. Joko Widodo, President of the Republic of Indonesia, and convened in accordance with the ASEAN Charter.
122. We reaffirmed the importance of fostering the values of an inclusive, sustainable, resilient, dynamic, and harmonious ASEAN Community through

Center for Shared Civilizational Values

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facilitating a greater understanding of shared civilisational values derived from the ASEAN region's culture and religions, and commended the convening of the ASEAN Intercultural and Interreligious Dialogue Conference 2023 with the theme 'ASEAN Shared Civilizational Values: Building an Epicentrum of Harmony to Foster Peace, Security, and Economic Prosperity,' in Jakarta on 7 August 2023, and recognised the values of its outcomes.

This endorsement constitutes a notable success for the administration of His Excellency Joko Widodo, President of the Republic of Indonesia, and underscores the extent to which Nahdlatul Ulama's [international strategy](#) is complementary to, and aligned with, Indonesia's national interests.

Nahdlatul Ulama has developed this strategy in conjunction with the [Center for Shared Civilizational Values](#) and [Bayt ar-Rahmah li ad-Da'wa al-Islamiyyah Rahmatan li al-'Alamin](#) — non-profit organizations based in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, which senior NU leaders, including [KH. A. Mustofa Bisri](#) and [KH. Yahya Cholil Staquf](#), established in order to expand Nahdlatul Ulama operations worldwide.

Addressing the ASEAN IIDC in August, President Widodo said:

I am convinced that ASEAN is capable of becoming a catalyst for peace, a 'caring and sharing community,' not merely an epicentrum of growth, but an epicentrum of harmony that maintains regional stability and fosters peace worldwide. In keeping with this vision, I warmly welcome the constructive role being played by religious and cultural leaders throughout ASEAN who are participating in the ASEAN Intercultural and Interreligious Dialogue Conference 2023 — a strategic initiative of Nahdlatul Ulama and the Republic of Indonesia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Senior Indonesian Government officials worked closely with NU and CSCV in the design and execution of the ASEAN IIDC, with high-level MFA personnel serving in an advisory and diplomatic capacity to ensure that the Conference and its final communiqué, the *ASEAN IIDC Jakarta Declaration*, received unanimous support from ASEAN Member States.

Read the full [ASEAN IIDC Jakarta Declaration](#).