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Deputy Speaker of the Federation Council Konstantin Kosachev's draft remarks at the Plenary Session of the 43th AIPA General Assembly
Moving Together Toward an Sustainable, Inclusive and Resilient ASEAN

(Projected time – 5 minutes)

Phnom Penh, Kingdom of Cambodia

November 21, 2022

Colleagues,

At the outset, I would like to thank our friends from the Kingdom of Cambodia for their warm hospitality, this friendly atmosphere and for the perfect arrangements for today's meeting.

1. Russia keeps a close eye on the efforts by our partners in Southeast Asia to promote integration. This is no easy task, and they have been quite successful at it. This year, ASEAN marks 55 years since its founding. We are delighted to have this opportunity to convey our greetings on this anniversary to ASEAN and all its members in person.

The fact that the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership came into force in early 2022 is quite symbolic. This creates an effective legal framework for liberalizing trade while taking into consideration the specific nature of every economy, and will definitely improve the quality of life and wellbeing for the people.

2. Russian parliamentarians have always viewed Asian nations as good neighbors and reliable colleagues. We welcome any initiative designed to step up cooperation in this region. Moreover, promoting inclusivity and working together resonates with the general spirit of our time, which calls for **building a multipolar world order with a prospering Asia-Pacific Region as one of its pillars.** This is an irreversible historical process. All we can do is influence the pace **at which the world moves towards an architecture that would be fairer and more open,** leaving no place for economic pressure, political blackmail, or sanctions.

3. It goes without saying that some forces, used as they are to ruling over the destinies of the world all by themselves, enslaving other nations and living off their resources, refuse to accept these shifts. Today, these global forces face a system-wide crisis. However, instead of **openly acknowledging this, they are seeking to make other nations suffer from this crisis.** This is why they seek to revive neo-colonial ideas and incite strife.

Their goal is to **turn Asia-Pacific with its commitment to peace and cooperation into an arena of confrontation between those whom they view as democracies and those, whom they groundlessly accuse of being authoritarian countries.** Russia firmly opposes this approach, which is based on a bloc-against-bloc mentality and strives to enable the hegemons of the past to retain their power.

We highly appreciate the possibility to share our position with the parliamentary community at multilateral events where ASEAN members are represented, most recently the Parliamentary 20 in Indonesia and the 30th Annual Meeting of the APPF in Thailand.

4. Today's world suffers from a deficit of patience, restraint and commitment to compromise. However, ASEAN has been consistent and dedicated in promoting these very principles in its work. Thus, **we believe that parliamentarians must work together to strengthen dialogue mechanisms which have proven their effectiveness over decades.**

In doing so you can always count on Russia's support. For more than 30 years, Russia and ASEAN have been united in their shared commitment to pragmatic and equal cooperation. In 2023, we will mark the fifth anniversary of our strategic partnership. By developing our relations with ASEAN and its member states we reaffirm our commitment to mutually beneficial cooperation, are ready to share our experience and make plans for the future.

Further efforts to step up contacts between ASEAN, the Eurasian Economic Union and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization hold a lot of promise. We believe that this will pave the way to delivering on the three pillars set forth in ASEAN Community Vision 2025. In addition, we believe that multilateral cooperation between integration structures and its prospects must be factored into the community vision after 2025, too.

It is our belief that promoting this kind of connectivity is key to creating the Great Eurasian Partnership as a space of trust, dialogue and cooperation enabling our countries to combine their immense capabilities, giving our people better security and prosperity.

After all, as in a Cambodian saying, a bunch of sticks cannot be broken – Changkes mouy bach kach min bak.