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**SOUTHEAST ASIAN LEADERS DISCUSS MIDEAST WAR AS ASEAN CHAIR URGES PASSAGE VIA HORMUZ, CESSATION OF HOSTILITIES**

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Riyaz ul Khaliq

*Across our region and beyond, nations continue to navigate 'increasingly complex global environment,' Philippine President Marcos tells ASEAN summit.*

Leaders of Southeast Asian nations gathered in the Philippines on Friday to discuss challenges arising from the US-Israel war with Iran, as the host nation renewed calls for an end to hostilities in the Middle East and the safe, unimpeded passage of vessels through the Strait of Hormuz.

We stand together today to demonstrate ASEAN's capacity to respond with unity, with wisdom, with resolve, at a time when our region is once again faced with profound uncertainty, Philippine President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. told leaders from the region, calling for unity and resolve to meet the challenges posed to the region.

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