



**THE FIRST AEM-HONG KONG, CHINA CONSULTATIONS
6 August 2016, Vientiane, Lao PDR**

JOINT MEDIA STATEMENT

1. Economic Ministers from the ten ASEAN Member States and the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development of Hong Kong, China (HKC) (“the Ministers”) met on 6 August 2016 in Vientiane, Lao PDR for the First AEM-HKC Consultations. The Consultations were co-chaired by H.E. Mrs Khemmani Pholsena, Minister of Industry and Commerce of Lao PDR and Mr Gregory So Kam-leung, Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development of HKC.
2. HKC commended the establishment of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) in 2015 as a major milestone in progressing the region’s integration and bringing this to greater heights, and considered the prospective conclusion of the ASEAN-HKC Free Trade Agreement (AHKFTA) in 2016 to be another major development in the same direction. The Ministers welcomed the new AEC Blueprint 2025, which envisages an AEC by 2025 that is highly integrated and cohesive; competitive, innovative and dynamic; with enhanced connectivity and sectoral cooperation; a more resilient, inclusive, and people-oriented, people-centred community; and integrated with the global economy.
3. The Ministers were pleased to note the performance of ASEAN-HKC bilateral trade and investment in 2015. According to ASEAN statistics, total merchandise trade between ASEAN and HKC reached USD 90 billion, and Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) flows from HKC amounted to USD 3.4 billion.
4. The Ministers noted that a free trade agreement between ASEAN and HKC would strengthen the close economic ties between the two sides. The ASEAN Ministers also expressed their appreciation to HKC for its commitment to undertake economic and technical cooperation programme to support the implementation of the ASEAN-HKC Free Trade Agreement (AHKFTA) upon its entry into force.
5. The Ministers welcomed the steady progress of the negotiations and look forward to the timely conclusion of a mutually beneficial AHKFTA by 2016. With broader liberalisation and deeper integration, the AHKFTA would help generate more business opportunities and stimulate further economic growth in the region.

LIST OF MINISTERS

1. **H.E Dato Paduka Lim Jock Hoi**, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Brunei Darussalam (representing the Hon. Pehin Dato Lim Jock Seng, Minister at the Prime Minister's Office and Second Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Brunei Darussalam);
2. **H.E Pan Sorasak**, Minister of Commerce, Cambodia;
3. **Mr Gregory So Kam-leung**, Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Hong Kong, China;
4. **Mr Iman Pambagyo**, Director General of International Trade Negotiations, Ministry of Trade, Indonesia (representing H.E. Enggartiasto Lukita, Minister of Trade, Indonesia);
5. **H.E. Mrs Khemmani Pholsena**, Minister of Industry and Commerce, Lao PDR;
6. **H.E. Dato' Sri Mustapa Mohamed**, Minister of International Trade and Industry, Malaysia;
7. **H.E. Kyaw Win**, Union Minister of Planning and Finance, Myanmar;
8. **H.E. Ramon M. Lopez**, Secretary of Trade and Industry, the Philippines;
9. **Mr Loh Khum Yean**, Permanent Secretary for Trade and Industry, Singapore (representing H.E. Lim Hng Kiang, Minister for Trade and Industry (Trade), Singapore);
10. **H.E. Apiradi Tantraporn**, Minister of Commerce, Thailand;
11. **H.E. Nguyen Cam Tu**, Deputy Minister of Industry and Trade, Viet Nam (representing H.E. Tran Tuan Anh, Minister of Industry and Trade, Viet Nam);
12. **H.E. Le Luong Minh**, Secretary-General of ASEAN.