



**THE FOURTH AEM-HONG KONG, CHINA CONSULTATIONS
28 August 2020, Video Conference Meeting**

JOINT MEDIA STATEMENT

1. Economic Ministers from the ten ASEAN Member States (“AMS”) and Hong Kong, China (“HKC”) (“the Ministers”) met virtually on 28 August 2020 for the Fourth ASEAN Economic Ministers-HKC Consultations (AEM-HKC Consultations). The Consultations were co-chaired by H.E. Tran Tuan Anh, Minister of Industry and Trade, Viet Nam, and Mr Edward Yau Tang-wah, Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development of HKC.

2. The Ministers noted that according to preliminary ASEAN data, the total bilateral merchandise trade reached USD 111.0 billion in 2019 or 3.9 per cent of ASEAN’s total trade. In 2019, HKC was the 6th largest trading partner for ASEAN. Meanwhile, total foreign direct investment (FDI) flows from HKC to ASEAN amounted to USD 11.3 billion or 7.0 per cent of ASEAN’s total FDI in the same year.

3. The Ministers expressed deep concern over the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, which has affected the lives of peoples as well as economies around the world. The Ministers acknowledged the importance of having collective action and international cooperation in the economic recovery process. The Ministers recognised the critical role of the rules-based multilateral trading system and the importance of free and open trade and investment in sustaining efforts for a post-COVID 19 environment and agreed to work together for a stronger multilateral trading system especially in areas of mutual interest. To this end, the Ministers agreed to enhance economic relations between ASEAN and HKC, including through utilisation of the ASEAN-HKC Free Trade Agreement (AHKFTA) and the ASEAN-HKC Investment Agreement (AHKIA).

4. The Ministers noted that the AHKFTA and the AHKIA have entered into force for HKC and eight AMS, and would enter into force on 20 October 2020 for Brunei Darussalam. The Ministers urged the remaining AMS to exert efforts for the timely ratification of the AHKFTA and AHKIA to enable its entry into force as soon as possible. The Ministers also looked forward to the full implementation of both agreements by end of 2020 to deliver a strong message illustrating our concerted efforts in pursuing free and open trade and investment.

5. The Ministers expressed appreciation for HKC’s contribution of HKD 25 million over five years for the ECOTECH Work Programme which commenced operation from 1 January 2020. The Ministers noted the progress of implementation of the first batch of the ECOTECH Work Programme under AHKFTA and preparations for the establishment of the ECOTECH Support Unit and looked

forward to the implementation of the approved projects proposals under the ECOTECH Work Programme.

LIST OF MINISTERS

1. **H.E. Dato Dr. Amin Liew Abdullah**, Minister at the Prime Minister's Office and Minister of Finance and Economy II, Brunei Darussalam;
2. **H.E. Pan Sorasak**, Minister of Commerce, Cambodia;
3. **Mr. Edward Yau Tang-wah**, Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Hong Kong, China;
4. **Mr. Iman Pambagyo**, Director General of International Trade Negotiation, Ministry of Trade, Indonesia (representing H.E. Agus Suparmanto Minister of Trade, Indonesia);
5. **H.E. Mrs. Khemmani Pholsena**, Minister of Industry and Commerce, Lao PDR;
6. **H.E. Datuk Lim Ban Hong**, Deputy Minister of International Trade and Industry, Malaysia (representing Dato' Seri Mohamed Azmin Ali, Minister of International Trade and Industry, Malaysia);
7. **Mr. Aung Naing Oo**, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations, Myanmar (representing H.E. Thaung Tun, Union Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations, Myanmar);
8. **H.E. Ramon M. Lopez**, Secretary of Trade and Industry, Philippines;
9. **H.E. Chan Chun Sing**, Minister for Trade and Industry, Singapore;
10. **H.E. Dr. Sansern Samalapa**, Vice Minister for Commerce, Thailand (representing H.E. Jurin Laksanawisit, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Commerce, Thailand);
11. **H.E. Tran Tuan Anh**, Minister of Industry and Trade, Viet Nam; and
12. **H.E. Dato Lim Jock Hoi**, Secretary-General of ASEAN.