



**AEM TROIKA OPEN-ENDED DIALOGUE WITH UK TRADE MINISTER  
26 August 2020, Video Conference Meeting**

**JOINT MEDIA STATEMENT**

1. We share deep concern over the COVID-19 pandemic, which has affected the lives of people as well as economies around the world. Our thoughts are with all those who have lost loved ones and are suffering from the long-term effects of the pandemic. We recognise the heroic efforts of healthcare and essential workers around the world.
2. The pandemic has triggered an unprecedented global health and economic crisis. Mitigating its economic impact requires solidarity and collaboration. We are committed to working together to: (i) sustain and deepen the close economic ties between ASEAN and the UK; (ii) mitigate the economic impact of COVID-19; (iii) strengthen economic resilience; and (iv) pursue sustainable economic growth that keeps markets open and transparent.
3. We welcome the longstanding economic relationship between ASEAN and the UK. Since the inception of ASEAN over half a century ago, our economic relationship has grown deeper and broader. Bilateral trade in goods and services stands close to £42bn. We are determined to build on this partnership and explore opportunities for collaboration that support job creation and connectivity.
4. We reaffirm our commitment to free trade within the international rules-based system, noting that this is vital to economic recovery and future growth. We share the desire to ensure that the WTO is forward looking, reformed, and fit to tackle 21<sup>st</sup> century trade challenges. We look forward to working together to make progress on these matters ahead of the 12<sup>th</sup> WTO Ministerial Conference.
5. The pandemic has exposed the vulnerability of supply chains, particularly for essential goods, including food, medicines, medical devices and equipment, and other related products. As recognised by the Hanoi Plan of Action on Strengthening ASEAN Economic Cooperation and Supply Chain Connectivity in Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic, strengthening supply chain connectivity, including diversification, is key to a resilient economic recovery that safeguards against future shocks. We will work together to strengthen ASEAN-UK supply chains by assessing the resilience of trade between ASEAN and UK firms and identifying ways to further strengthen these supply chains.
6. We are committed to ensuring that digital innovation is a central pillar of our recovery from COVID-19. As recognised by ASEAN Leaders during the 36<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit, digital innovation is key to mitigating the economic impact of COVID-19. The UK will deepen its digital partnership with ASEAN through its Digital Trade Network and by funding a new UK-ASEAN Digital Business

Challenge, exploring how tech Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) can deliver solutions to tough business challenges.

7. We underline the significant contribution of public-private sector partnership, both in responding to COVID-19 and driving future growth. We recognise the important work of the ASEAN Business Advisory Council (ABAC), supported by the Joint Business Councils, including the UK-ASEAN Business Council. The UK will continue to work closely with ABAC to design a private sector-led regional digital trade connectivity roadmap, complementing the ASEAN Single Window programme and other ASEAN trade facilitation programmes which can lead to a more facilitative trade within ASEAN and beyond.
8. We agree that the current economic climate presents an opportunity to build a greener and more sustainable global economy, in line with the objectives of the Paris Agreement in advance of COP26 next year. The UK is committed to supporting ASEAN with a science-based clean recovery that will create employment in the industries of the future while addressing public health challenges. This includes providing technical assistance to develop green financial systems and energy efficiency across the region through the £15m Prosperity Fund ASEAN Low Carbon Energy Programme and £12m global Green Recovery Challenge Fund.
9. We emphasise that the Masterplan on ASEAN Connectivity 2025 provides the ASEAN-led framework for much of our cooperation. To this end, the £19m UK Prosperity Fund ASEAN Economic Reform Programme, launched with Secretary General Dato Lim Jock Hoi in London in January 2019, has a number of strands in line with the objectives in the Masterplan on ASEAN Connectivity 2025, particularly on digital innovation, seamless logistics and regulatory excellence. The UK will collaborate with ASEAN to deliver resilient and complex infrastructure projects that boost connectivity in the region.
10. We look forward to continued cooperation to ensure that the ASEAN and UK support each other as we recover from this pandemic.

**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. **H.E. Agus Suparmanto**, Minister of Trade, Indonesia
4. **H.E. Mrs. Khemmani Pholsena**, Minister of Industry and Commerce, Lao PDR
5. **H.E. Datuk Lim Ban Hong**, Deputy Minister of International Trade and Industry, Malaysia (representing H.E. Dato' Seri Mohamed Azmin Ali, Senior Minister and Minister of International Trade and Industry, Malaysia)
6. **Mr. Than Aung Kyaw**, Director General, Foreign Economic Relations Department, Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations, Myanmar (representing H.E. Thaung Tun, Union Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations, Myanmar)
7. **H.E. Ramon M. Lopez**, Secretary of Trade and Industry, Philippines
8. **H.E. Chan Chun Sing**, Minister for Trade and Industry, Singapore
9. **H.E. Dr. Sansern Samalapa**, Vice Minister for Commerce, Thailand (representing H.E. Jurin Laksanawisit, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Commerce, Thailand)
10. **The Rt Hon Elizabeth Truss MP**, Secretary of State for International Trade and President of the Board of Trade, the United Kingdom
11. **H.E. Tran Tuan Anh**, Minister of Industry and Trade, Viet Nam
12. **H.E. Dato Lim Jock Hoi**, Secretary-General of ASEAN