



**THE SIXTH AEM – ROK CONSULTATION
15 August 2009, Bangkok, Thailand**

JOINT MEDIA STATEMENT

1. The Sixth Consultation between the ASEAN Economic Ministers (AEM) and the Minister for Trade of the Republic of Korea was held in Bangkok, Thailand on 15 August 2009. The Consultation was co-chaired by H.E. Mrs. Porntiva Nakasai, Minister of Commerce of Thailand and H.E. Mr. Kim Jong-Hoon, Minister for Trade of the Republic of Korea.

2. In this annual Consultation, the Ministers reviewed the bilateral economic and trade cooperation activities implemented under the Framework Agreement on Comprehensive Economic Partnership among the Governments of ASEAN Member States and the Republic of Korea, particularly the implementation of the Agreement on Trade in Goods, the Agreement on Trade in Services, the Agreement on Investment, and other economic cooperation activities.

3. The Ministers were pleased to note that, despite the global economic crisis, according to ASEAN statistics, trade relations between ASEAN and Korea were still growing robustly in 2008. Total trade between ASEAN and Korea in 2008 grew 23.4 percent compared to 9.5 percent in 2007, reaching the level of USD 75.5 billion from USD 61.2 billion in 2007. Exports of ASEAN to Korea increased from USD 29.5 billion in 2007 to USD 34.9 billion in 2008, or a growth of 18.5 percent. Imports of ASEAN from Korea grew by 27.9 percent, from USD 31.7 billion in 2007 to USD 40.5 billion in 2008. ASEAN was the third largest trading partner of Korea in 2008 and conversely, Korea was the 5th largest trading partner of ASEAN.

Implementation of the Agreement on Trade in Goods (TIG)

4. The Ministers were pleased to note that all Parties have issued legal enactments for tariff reduction for the year 2009. They also encouraged all Parties to issue the legal enactments for tariff reduction for 2010 on time before the end of 2009. The Ministers looked forward to an early ratification by Thailand and Korea of the Protocol on the Accession of Thailand to the Agreement on Trade in Goods so that the private sector of both countries could enjoy the full benefits offered by the Agreement.

5. In the area of cooperation on sanitary and phyto-sanitary (SPS) measures and technical barriers to trade (TBT), the Ministers noted that several seminar and training activities have been conducted by Korea in 2008, with the participation from all ASEAN Member States. The Ministers appreciated the establishment of the ASEAN – Korea network on livestock product safety management, and the exchange of information on technical regulations and standards in the area of electrical and electronics as well as weathering technology on industrial materials. The Ministers noted that the ASEAN-Korea Working Group on SPS/TBT is currently developing its Work Programme based on the ASEAN-Korea Cooperation on SPS and the ASEAN-Korea Cooperation on the Standards and Conformity Assessment matrices.

Implementation of the Agreement on Trade in Services

6. The Ministers welcomed the entry into force of the ASEAN-Korea Trade in Services Agreement on 1 May 2009 following its ratification by Korea and most of ASEAN Member States and the ratification by Thailand of the Protocol on the Accession of Thailand to the ASEAN-Korea Agreement on Trade in Services. The Ministers expected that the process of domestic procedures for the ratification of the Agreement in the remaining ASEAN Member States and also the process for

ratification by Korea of the Protocol on the Accession of Thailand to the Agreement would be completed soon so that services providers in all Parties could reap the benefits brought about by the Agreement.

ASEAN-Korea Agreement on Investment

7. The Ministers reiterated the significance of the signing of the ASEAN-Korea Agreement on Investment at the sidelines of the ASEAN-Korea Commemorative Summit on 2 June 2009 in Jeju Island, Korea, which not only made the ASEAN-Korea FTA complete, but also helps create a more conducive investment environment to facilitate further strengthening of the investment flows within the region. Noting that Korea and Singapore have completed their domestic procedures for the entry into force of the Agreement on 1 September 2009, the Ministers encouraged the other Parties to complete their respective domestic procedures as soon as possible for the Agreement to enter into force at an early day.

Economic Cooperation

8. The ASEAN Ministers expressed their appreciation to Korea for the second contribution of USD 500,000 to the ASEAN-Korea Economic Cooperation Fund, making up to date Korea's contribution to the Fund amounting USD 1,031,915. The Ministers also welcomed the information that the third contribution of approx USD 500,000 to the ASEAN-Korea Economic Cooperation Fund could be expected for the fiscal year of 2010.

9. The Ministers noted that in general, all 17 projects in the work cycle of 2008 – 2009 were well received by the ASEAN participants as the projects were based on mutual interests and practical requirements to strengthen FTA-related economic activities. The Ministers encouraged their senior officials to look into further enhancing the ASEAN-Korea comprehensive economic partnership by broadening the cooperation coverage to other areas such as IPRs, Customs and Agriculture, as recommended in the AKTNC Expert Group's Study.

Institutional Arrangement for the Implementation of AKFTA

10. The Ministers agreed to establish the AKFTA Implementing Committee (AKFTA-IC) and endorsed its Terms of Reference. Its main responsibility is to ensure the effective implementation of all agreements under the Framework Agreement on Comprehensive Economic Cooperation between ASEAN and Korea.

LIST OF MINISTERS

1. **H.E. Pehin Dato Lim Jock Seng**, Second Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Brunei Darussalam
2. **H.E. Cham Prasidh**, Senior Minister and Minister of Commerce, Cambodia
3. **H.E. Mari Elka Pangestu**, Minister of Trade, Indonesia
4. **H.E. Mr. Kim Jong-Hoon**, Minister for Trade, Republic of Korea
5. **H.E. Nam Viyaketh**, Minister of Industry and Commerce, Lao PDR
6. **H.E. Dato' Mustapa Mohamed**, Minister of International Trade and Industry, Malaysia

7. **H.E. U Soe Tha**, Minister for National Planning and Economic Development, Myanmar
8. **H.E. Peter B. Favila**, Secretary of Trade and Industry, the Philippines
9. **H.E. Lim Hng Kiang**, Minister for Trade and Industry, Singapore
10. **H.E. Pornniva Nakasai**, Minister of Commerce, Thailand
11. **H.E. Vu Huy Hoang**, Minister of Industry and Trade, Viet Nam
12. **H.E. Surin Pitsuwan**, Secretary-General of ASEAN