



**THE TWENTY-FIFTH AEM-METI CONSULTATIONS  
7 September 2019, Bangkok, Thailand**

**JOINT MEDIA STATEMENT**

1. Economic Ministers from the ten ASEAN Member States and the Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI), Japan (“the Ministers”) met on 7 September 2019 in Bangkok, Thailand for the Twenty-Fifth AEM-METI Consultations. The Consultations were co-chaired by H.E. Jurin Laksanawisit, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Commerce, Thailand and H.E. Hiroshige Seko, Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry, Japan.
2. The Ministers noted that, according to preliminary ASEAN data, total merchandise trade between ASEAN and Japan reached USD 229.2 billion in 2018, accounting for 8.2 per cent of ASEAN’s total merchandise trade, while total FDI inflows from Japan amounted to USD 21.2 billion, accounting for 13.7 per cent of total FDI inflows to ASEAN. This placed Japan as ASEAN’s fourth largest trading partner and second largest external source of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) among ASEAN’s Dialogue Partners in 2018.
3. The Ministers welcomed the signing of the First Protocol to Amend the ASEAN-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership (AJCEP) Agreement to incorporate the Chapters on Trade in Services, Movement of Natural Persons (MNP), and Investment, and looked forward to the entry into force of the Protocol. The Ministers expected that the Protocol, once it is implemented, will further broaden and deepen bilateral ASEAN-Japan economic relations, particularly for services providers and investors to expand their businesses in the region.
4. The Ministers reviewed the progress in the implementation of the AJCEP Agreement and noted the on-going efforts on the implementation of tariff commitments under the AJCEP Agreement based on the latest HS code. The Ministers encouraged all Parties to expedite such implementation in this regard.
5. The Ministers welcomed the outcomes of the 12<sup>th</sup> Dialogue between the Secretary-General of ASEAN and Federation of Japanese Chambers of Commerce and Industry in ASEAN (FJCCIA), which was held on 12 June 2019 in Pattaya, Thailand and on 7 July 2019 in Jakarta, Indonesia. The Ministers also noted FJCCIA’s recommendations, which consist of Trade Facilitation, Labor Environment & Human Resource Development, and Data Governance.
6. The Ministers commended the outcomes of the business activities under ASEAN Japan Innovation Network (AJIN), such as a forum on 4<sup>th</sup> Industrial Revolution and Society 5.0 in collaboration with AJBC, ASEAN BAC and JETRO held on 27<sup>th</sup> March

2019, and a series of business matching for ASEAN-Japan collaborative innovation led by JETRO.

7. The Ministers welcomed the progress made in various areas through the implementation of the ASEAN-Japan 10-year Strategic Economic Cooperation Roadmap, including in trade facilitation, Intellectual Property Rights (IPR), micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), infrastructure, energy, innovation and transfer of technology.

8. From a viewpoint of promoting “ASEAN-Japan Fourth Industrial Revolution(4IR) initiative“, the Ministers welcomed the proposal to launch an “ASEAN-Japan Fourth Industrial Revolution(4IR) Dialogue”, which is a two-way dialogue between ASEAN and Japan aimed at: i) identifying social and economic challenges to be solved through 4IR innovation, ii) sharing examples of pioneer businesses which apply digital innovation in real society and iii) discussing policies to create business-friendly environment for such innovation and business to be widely applied in the society. The Ministers tasked officials to look into details of this proposed Dialogue.

9. The Ministers also highlighted the importance of enhancing Japan’s “tailor-made” cooperation with ASEAN such as capacity building for legal and regulatory frameworks on e-commerce, support for upgrading the ASEAN Single Window.

10. The Ministers noted the various activities carried out by AMEICC, including i) new industry development through implementation of pilot projects between ASEAN companies and Japan companies in ASEAN countries; ii) industrial human resource development through endowed courses at universities; iii) SMEs promotion through supporting production of "50 Success Stories of Digitalisation of ASEAN MSMEs" and holding "SME Finance Symposium"; iv) development of Mekong sub-region through holding Mekong-Japan business forum and formulating Mekong Industrial Development Vision 2.0; and v) AMEICC’s Working Group (WG) activities regarding chemical industry and automobile industry. The ASEAN Economic Ministers expressed their appreciation to Japan for its continuous support to ASEAN economic development.

11. The Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to uphold an open, inclusive, transparent, non-discriminatory and rules-based multilateral trading system, as embodied in the WTO, and noted the importance of WTO reforms amidst the global economic uncertainties.

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## **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. Sok Sopheak**, Secretary of State, Ministry of Commerce, Cambodia (representing H.E. Pan Sorasak, Minister of Commerce, Cambodia);
3. **H.E. Enggartiasto Lukita**, Minister of Trade, Indonesia;
4. **H.E. Hiroshige Seko**, Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry, Japan;
5. **H.E. Mrs. Khemmani Pholsena**, Minister of Industry and Commerce, Lao PDR;
6. **H.E. Lokman Hakim Ali**, Secretary General, Ministry of International Trade and Industry, Malaysia (representing H.E. Darell Leiking, Minister of International Trade and Industry, Malaysia);
7. **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. 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.