



**THE TWENTY-FIRST AEM–METI CONSULTATIONS
23 August 2015, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia**

JOINT MEDIA STATEMENT

1. Economic Ministers from the ten ASEAN Member States and the Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) of Japan met on 23 August 2015 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia for the Twenty-first AEM-METI Consultations. The Consultations were co-chaired by H.E. Dato' Sri Mustapa Mohammed, Minister of International Trade and Industry of Malaysia and H.E. Yoichi Miyazawa, Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry of Japan.
2. The Ministers noted the performance of ASEAN-Japan bilateral trade and investment. According to ASEAN statistics, two-way trade between ASEAN and Japan reached USD 229.1 billion in 2014, accounting for 9.1 per cent of ASEAN's total trade. Japan remained ASEAN's third largest trading partner after China and the European Union (EU). Foreign direct investment (FDI) inflow from Japan to ASEAN amounted to USD 13.4 billion, accounting for 9.8 per cent of total FDI inflow to ASEAN. Japan remained the second largest source of FDI inflow to ASEAN after the EU.
3. The Ministers were pleased with the implementation of activities under the ASEAN-Japan 10-year Strategic Economic Cooperation Roadmap in various areas including intellectual property, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), content, and disaster risk reduction. The Ministers also welcomed the progress of AMEICC activities including programmes under Japan's supplementary budget such as: i) support for the development of the "ASEAN Strategic Action Plan for SME Development 2016 - 2025"; ii) developing database on Non-Tariff Measures in cooperation with ERIA; iii) holding the special seminar on ASEAN Automobile industry development; and iv) starting the trial operation of ASEAN-Japan Chemical Safety Database aiming to start the full operation in April 2016. The Ministers noted that the ASEAN-Japan 10-year Strategic Economic Cooperation Roadmap will be reviewed in 2016 taking into account the ASEAN Community Vision 2025.
4. The ASEAN Ministers expressed appreciation to Japan for its continued support towards ASEAN integration and welcomed Japan's support for ASEAN vision post-2015. The Ministers welcomed Japan's proposal to support the ASEAN's implementation of the ASEAN SME Strategic Action Plan (2016-2025), including further discussions on any form of credit guarantee system in ASEAN-Japan region.

5. The Ministers were pleased with the outcomes of the dialogue with the Federation of Japanese Chambers of Commerce and Industry in ASEAN (FJCCIA), as well as with the 8th Dialogue between Secretary-General of ASEAN, which preceded the 21st AEM-METI Consultations. The Ministers noted the recommendations from the FJCCIA including harmonisation of standards and specifications, institutional connectivity, and human resource development, and informed that these have been incorporated in the ASEAN Economic Community Blueprint 2025.

6. The Ministers noted the outcomes of the 2nd ASEAN-Japan Public Private Dialogue held on 30 July 2015 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia particularly on the recommendations to build an innovation network and to share best practices and challenges in nurturing new business players and new business areas, enhancing ties among investors and entrepreneurs, as well as sharing experiences on government initiatives to support entrepreneurs in ASEAN and Japan.

7. The Ministers noted the on-going work to advance the implementation of the ASEAN-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership (AJCEP). The Ministers commended the finalisation of the guidelines for transposing tariff reduction schedules (TRS) under the AJCEP into the newer version of the Harmonised System. In this regard, the Ministers encouraged officials to adhere to the guidelines to resolve the outstanding transposition issues as soon as possible.

8. The Ministers also noted the on-going effort to conclude the AJCEP trade in services and investment negotiations. The Ministers tasked officials to exert utmost flexibilities in resolving all the outstanding issues and to engage in an effective manner in order to finalise negotiations within the year.

LIST OF MINISTERS

1. **The Hon. Pehin Dato Lim Jock Seng**, Second Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Brunei Darussalam;
2. **H.E. Pan Sorasak**, Secretary of State for Commerce, Cambodia (representing H.E. Sun Chanthol, Senior Minister and Minister of Commerce, Cambodia);
3. **Mrs Sondang Anggraini**, Adviser to the Minister on Trade and Diplomacy, Ministry of Trade, Indonesia (representing H.E. Thomas Trikasih Lembong, Minister of Trade, Indonesia);
4. **H.E. Yoichi Miyazawa**, Minister for Economy, Trade and Industry of Japan;
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. Dr. Kan Zaw**, Union Minister of National Planning and Economic Development, Myanmar;
8. **H.E. Gregory L. Domingo**, Secretary of Trade and Industry, the Philippines;
9. **Mrs Ow Foong Pheng**, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Trade and Industry, Singapore (representing H.E. Lim Hng Kiang, Minister for Trade and Industry, Singapore);
10. **Mr Thawatchai Sophastienphong**, Director General of the Department of Trade Negotiations, Ministry of Commerce, Thailand (representing H.E. Gen. Chatchai Sarikulya, Minister of Commerce, Thailand);
11. **H.E. Nguyen Cam Tu**, Deputy Minister of Industry and Trade, Viet Nam (representing H.E. Vu Huy Hoang, Minister of Industry and Trade, Viet Nam);
12. **H.E. Le Luong Minh**, Secretary-General of ASEAN.