



JOINT MEDIA STATEMENT OF THE 30TH MEETING OF THE ASEAN DIRECTORS-GENERAL OF CUSTOMS

8 – 10 June 2021 via video conference

1. The 30th Meeting of the ASEAN Customs Directors-General was held via video conference on 8-10 June 2021. The Meeting was chaired by Mr. Rey Leonardo B. Guerrero, Commissioner of the Philippines' Bureau of Customs. The Meeting was attended by the ten ASEAN Member States (AMS) and the ASEAN Secretariat. The Meeting was preceded by an Informal Coffee Chat which, among others, is intended to welcome the new Directors-General from Indonesia and Thailand.

2. The ASEAN DGs of Customs commended the achievements and work progress made in the completion of the Strategic Plans of Customs Development (SPCDs) 2016 – 2020 with an implementation rate of 99 percent, and ranked Customs with the highest output delivery of 78 percent under Characteristic A, *A Highly Integrated and Cohesive Economy*, as indicated in the final report of the Mid-Term Review of the ASEAN Economic Community Blueprint 2025 (MTR AEC BP 2025).

3. The ASEAN DGs of Customs welcomed the work progress of the first five months in the implementation of SPCDs 2021-2025 reported by the Coordinating Committee on Customs (CCC); the Customs Procedures and Trade Facilitation Working Group (CPTFWG) and its sub-working groups, namely the Technical Sub-Working Group on Classification (TSWGC), the Sub-Working Group on ASEAN Customs Transit System (SWG-ACTS), as well as the Sub-Working Group on ASEAN AEO MRA (SWG-AAMRA); the Customs Enforcement and Compliance Working Group (CECWG); the Customs Capacity Building Working Group (CCBWG); and the ASEAN Single Window Steering Committee (ASWSC).

4. The ASEAN DGs of Customs discussed and provided guidance on the issues and concerns raised by the working groups.

ASEAN Single Window (ASW)

5. The ASEAN DGs of Customs welcomed the Live Operation of the ASEAN Customs Declaration Document (ACDD) which started on 31 December 2020 among Cambodia, Myanmar and Singapore, and followed by Malaysia and Thailand on 31 March 2021. The ASEAN DGs of Customs are looking forward for the remaining AMS to join the Live Operation of the ACDD within 2021.

6. The ASEAN DGs of Customs also look forward to the expansion of the ASW to accommodate the exchange of additional documents and exchange of trade documents with ASEAN Dialogue Partners.

ASEAN Harmonised Tariff Nomenclature (AHTN)

7. The ASEAN DGs of Customs commended the Technical Sub-Working Group on Classification (TSWGC)'s efforts in finding ways and tools to ensure the ongoing review of AHTN 2017 and the development of AHTN 2022 version continues via virtual meetings with scheduled implementation by January 2022. All AMS were urged to complete and implement AHTN 2022 in a timely manner. The AHTN ensures uniformity, transparency, and simplification in the classification of goods in the region.

ASEAN Customs Transit System (ACTS)

8. The ASEAN DGs of Customs welcomed the live implementation of the ACTS by the six Participating Member States¹ (PMS) on 2 November 2020, and the full ratification of Protocol 2 (Designation of Frontier Posts) of the ASEAN Framework Agreement on the Facilitation of Goods in Transit by all 10 AMS.

9. The ASEAN DGs of Customs appreciated the hard work and commitments of the ACTS PMS to attract and convince businesses to use ACTS in the movement of goods in transit by road even during the COVID-19 situation. The PMS were encouraged to work closely with their respective Transport Authorities to ensure swift transition to single truck movements (from origin to destination) in post-pandemic environment.

10. The ASEAN DGs of Customs also welcomed the initiatives being explored to: (a) enhance ACTS; (b) raise awareness and promote utilization of ACTS with the private sector; and (c) the Feasibility Study to implement ACTS along the Borneo corridor with the support of EU ARISE Plus.

Authorised Economic Operator (AEO) Programme and ASEAN AEO Mutual Recognition Arrangement (AAMRA)

11. The ASEAN DGs of Customs were pleased to note the work progress in the establishment of the national AEO programmes of the remaining AMS.

12. The ASEAN DGs of Customs also commended the work that is underway on the establishment of an ASEAN AEO MRA on a pathfinder basis involving the seven AMS² with operational AEO programmes for the first phase, targeted by 2023.

Post Clearance Audit (PCA)

13. The ASEAN DGs of Customs appreciated Indonesia as the Country Coordinator of the SPCD 08 for providing technical assistance on PCA to other AMS through virtual workshops, as well as the planned on-site training in the future.

14. The ASEAN DGs of Customs noted the initiative of strengthening the cooperation with the tax authorities of the AMS, and appreciated the survey conducted by the CECWG on the subject, noting that such cooperation would be possible to administer in all AMS.

Public Security and Protection of the Society

15. The ASEAN DGs of Customs noted the training modules on the plastic waste dumping was finalised and would be used and disseminated at the ASEAN Regional Workshop on

¹ The six Participating Member States are Cambodia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam.

² The AMS with operational national AEO Programmes comprises Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Viet Nam.

Combating Plastic Waste Dumping. The CECWG would initiate cooperation and information sharing with the ASEAN Working Group on Chemicals and Waste (AWGCW) in developing minimum standard requirement for plastic waste importation.

16. The ASEAN DGs of Customs also noted that the CECWG would be exploring cross-cutting cooperation with the ASEAN Network of Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) Enforcement Experts (ANIEE), particularly on intelligence information sharing on IPR enforcement and capacity building.

Joint Operation on Illicit Tobacco

17. The ASEAN DGs of Customs commended the joint operation between ASEAN and Australia to identify suspicious sea cargo and land border consignments to implement effective local countermeasures to disrupt the global supply of illicit tobacco through the Task Force on Illicit Tobacco *Project Portcullis 2021*.

Capacity Building Initiatives

18. The ASEAN DGs of Customs noted human resources development and capacity building initiatives aimed at promoting modernization of Customs administration as well as narrowing the gap among Customs administrations in ASEAN.

Knowledge Based Service (KBS)

19. The ASEAN DGs of Customs were pleased to note the plan for KBS website as an online information platform for ASEAN Customs administrations wherein ASEAN Customs officers may contribute through the submission of customs-related articles or other written articles in order to accelerate exchange of information and interaction among ASEAN Customs officers.

Consultations with World Customs Organisation (WCO), Regional Office of Capacity Building in Asia Pacific (ROCB A/P), Dialogue Partners, and the Private Sector

20. The ASEAN DGs of Customs held consultation with the WCO for better understanding of the priority programmes, strategic directions, and capacity building programmes of the WCO in relations to the ASEAN customs community.

21. The ASEAN DGs of Customs also held consultation sessions with the Customs Administrations of Australia, China, Japan and Korea to discuss recent developments, share best practices, and strengthen Customs-to-Customs cooperation in the region.

22. The ASEAN DGs of Customs further engaged the private sector, namely the EU-ASEAN Business Council (EU-ABC) and the US-ASEAN Business Council (US-ABC) to strengthen Customs-to-Business partnerships in the region.



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**At the end of the 30th Meeting of ASEAN Directors-General of Customs
via video conference.**