



**THE SECOND AEM TROIKA OPEN-ENDED DIALOGUE  
WITH SWITZERLAND TRADE MINISTER  
13 September 2021 (Video Conference Meeting)**

**JOINT MEDIA STATEMENT**

1. Economic Ministers from the ten ASEAN Member States and Switzerland (“The Meeting”) held a virtual meeting on 13 September 2021 for the 2<sup>nd</sup> ASEAN Economic Ministers (AEM) – Switzerland Dialogue. The Dialogue were co-chaired by H.E. Dato Dr. Amin Liew Abdullah, Minister at the Prime Minister’s Office and Minister of Finance and Economy II, Brunei Darussalam and H.E. Guy Parmelin, President of the Swiss Confederation and Head of the Federal Department of Economic Affairs, Education and Research of Switzerland.
2. The Meeting noted the performance of ASEAN – Switzerland bilateral trade and investment that remains strong despite the pandemic. According to the ASEAN statistics, two-way trade between ASEAN and Switzerland in 2020 was recorded at USD 25.8 billion, up from the previous year at USD 25.1 billion. Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) also recorded a positive trend in 2020 compared to 2019. In 2020, FDI from Switzerland to ASEAN was recorded at USD 4.6 billion; an increase from 2019 which recorded FDI of USD 4.2 billion.
3. The Meeting noted with concern the advent of new COVID-19 virus variants that has made the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic becoming even more challenging. The Meeting, therefore, underscored the importance of stronger global cooperation in the fight against the pandemic. In particular, the Meeting underscored the importance of ensuring the availability equitable access and distribution of safe and effective vaccines, and the expeditious vaccination programmes to end the pandemic that has caused the loss of many human life throughout the world.
4. In light of the above, the Meeting underscored the importance of the unimpeded flow of essential goods such as vaccines, medicines, medical supplies, and food in accordance with the WTO rules. The Meeting also reaffirmed their commitments in refraining from introducing or maintaining measures that could disrupt the flow of essential goods and services that are key in mitigating the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

5. The Meeting noted with concern the socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic that has brought grave challenges to the livelihood of many people and businesses throughout the world. In this connection, the Meeting acknowledged the importance of keeping markets open for trade and investment to maintain macroeconomic and financial stability. The Meeting also underscored the importance of leveraging digitalization and sustainable development to inject economic resilience in the region.
6. The Meeting noted the progress of the negotiations of the Joint Declaration of Cooperation (JDC) between ASEAN and the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) and looked forward to its adoption.
7. The Meeting noted the potential economic cooperation opportunities under the ASEAN-Switzerland Sectoral Dialogue Partnership: Practical Cooperation Areas 2022-2026 such as, in the areas of sustainable and inclusive economic development, digitalization, MSMEs, and e-commerce as well as human development and vocational education and training.
8. The Meeting exchanged views with ASEAN and Switzerland's private sector representatives on how to strengthen trade, investment and cooperation.

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