



**THE TWENTY-SECOND AEM–METI CONSULTATIONS
6 August 2016, Vientiane, Lao PDR**

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 6 August 2016, in Vientiane, Lao PDR for the Twenty-second AEM-METI Consultations. The Consultations were co-chaired by H.E. Mrs Khemmani Pholsena, Minister of Industry and Commerce of Lao PDR, and H.E. Hiroshige Seko, Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry of Japan.
2. Japan commended the establishment of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) on 31 December 2015 as a major milestone in regional economic integration. Japan also welcomed the new AEC Blueprint 2025, which envisages an AEC by 2025 that is highly integrated and cohesive; competitive, innovative and dynamic; with enhanced connectivity and sectoral cooperation; a more resilient, inclusive, and people-oriented, people-centred ASEAN; and integrated with the global economy.
3. The Ministers were pleased to note that Japan is ASEAN's second largest trading partner and the second largest source of FDI for ASEAN. In 2015, two way trade between ASEAN and Japan reached USD 239.4 billion, accounting for 10.5 per cent of ASEAN's total trade. Meanwhile, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) flows from Japan to ASEAN amounted to USD 17.4 billion, accounting for 14.5 per cent of total FDI inflows into ASEAN.
4. The Ministers welcomed the conclusion of the negotiations on Trade in Services including the Financial and Telecommunication annexes and Movement of Natural Persons (MNP) Chapters as well as the investment negotiation under the ASEAN-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership (AJCEP) Agreement. The Ministers look forward to the implementation of the outcomes of the negotiations.
5. The Ministers noted the on-going efforts to improve the implementation of the AJCEP Agreement. The Ministers underscored the importance of the implementation of the AJCEP Tariff Reduction Schedules (TRS) and Product Specific Rules (PSR) in the updated Harmonised System in facilitating the trade between ASEAN and Japan. In this regard, the Ministers tasked officials to exert utmost efforts and flexibilities in resolving the outstanding issues to finalise the transposition of AJCEP TRS as soon as possible. The Ministers also stressed the importance of adhering to the guidelines to resolve the outstanding transposition issues.
6. The Ministers commended the progress made in the implementation of the ASEAN-Japan 10-year Strategic Economic Cooperation Roadmap. The Ministers welcomed

the revision of the Roadmap which takes into consideration the new strategic thrust of the AEC Blueprint 2025 and agreed to report the renewed Roadmap to the ASEAN-Japan Summit. The Ministers shared the view that ASEAN and Japan would work together to meet the objectives of the Roadmap through enhancing Bilateral Economic Cooperation, Economic Integration of ASEAN and Cooperation for Integrating the Region into the Global Economy. The Ministers noted the importance of strengthening cooperation in the various pillars of cooperation in the Roadmap such as infrastructure development, human resource development, MSME development, innovation and transfer of technology, trade facilitation, supply-chain and connectivity, nurturing new industries, establishing of ASEAN-Japan innovation network and enhancing inclusive and open economic integration. The Ministers also noted the importance of open trade policies and advanced industrial development to tackle the uncertainty in the global economy.

7. The Ministers welcomed the progress of the activities undertaken by AMEICC (AEM and METI of Japan Consultations - Economic and Industrial Cooperation Committee) in various areas, including (i) industrial human resources development, through assisting young people in Asia in improving their technical skills and acquiring knowledge in the next three years as well as providing capacity building in mutually agreed areas; ii) support SMEs development through financing, which includes improving SME financing for AMS as appropriate iii) Mekong industrial development through the “Mekong Industrial Development Vision 2015–2020”; iv) AMEICC’s WG activities, in particular, the launch of full operation of the ASEAN-Japan Chemical Safety Database (AJCSD) under AMEICC WG-CI. The ASEAN Economic Ministers expressed their appreciation to Japan for its continuous support to ASEAN economic development.

8. The Ministers noted the outcomes of the 3rd ASEAN-Japan Public Private Dialogue on New Industries, held on 22 June 2016 in Bangkok, Thailand, particularly on the recommendations on the enhancement of productivity in the services industry, which is indispensable for further economic growth in ASEAN. The recommendations are the result of joint discussion among ASEAN and Japan government officials, services companies, and researchers in understanding the policies in services and the best practices in services industry. The Ministers noted that the recommendations could be used as foundation to build new cooperation mechanism between ASEAN and Japan to further improve the productivity of services industry in Asia.

9. The Ministers also noted the outcomes of the 9th Dialogue between Secretary-General of ASEAN and Federation of Japanese Chambers of Commerce and Industry in ASEAN (FJCCIA), in particular, the session with Chairs of Sectoral Committees for the first time. The Ministers noted the recommendations to further facilitate trade through ASEAN trade in goods agreement, harmonization of standards, and the improvement of custom procedures.

LIST OF MINISTERS

1. **H.E Dato Paduka Lim Jock Hoi**, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Brunei Darussalam (representing The Hon. Pehin Dato Lim Jock Seng, Minister at the Prime Minister's Office and Second Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Brunei Darussalam);
2. **H.E. Pan Sorasak**, Minister of Commerce, Cambodia;
3. **Mr Iman Pambagyo**, Director General of International Trade Negotiations, Ministry of Trade, Indonesia (representing H.E. Enggartiasto Lukita, Minister of Trade, Indonesia);
4. **H.E. Hiroshige Seko**, 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. Kyaw Win**, Union Minister of Planning and Finance, Myanmar;
8. **H.E. Ramon M. Lopez**, Secretary of Trade and Industry, the Philippines;
9. **Mr Loh Khum Yean**, Permanent Secretary for Trade and Industry, Singapore (representing H.E. Lim Hng Kiang, Minister for Trade and Industry (Trade), Singapore);
10. **H.E. Apiradi Tantraporn**, Minister of Commerce, Thailand;
11. **H.E. Nguyen Cam Tu**, Deputy Minister of Industry and Trade, Viet Nam (representing H.E. Tran Tuan Anh, Minister of Industry and Trade, Viet Nam);
12. **H.E. Le Luong Minh**, Secretary-General of ASEAN.