



**THE FIFTH AEM-CANADA CONSULTATIONS  
4 August 2016, Vientiane, Lao PDR**

**JOINT MEDIA STATEMENT**

1. Economic Ministers from the ten ASEAN Member States and the Canadian Minister of International Trade met on 4 August 2016 in Vientiane, Lao PDR, for the Fifth AEM-Canada Consultations. The Consultations were co-chaired by H.E. Mrs Khemmani Pholsena, Minister of Industry and Commerce of Lao PDR and H.E. Chrystia Freeland, the Canadian Minister of International Trade.
2. Canada commended the establishment of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) in 2015 as a major milestone in regional economic integration. Canada 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-centered community; and integrated with the global economy.
3. The Meeting welcomed the establishment of Canada's Mission to ASEAN in Jakarta and the appointment of Canada's first dedicated Ambassador to ASEAN in January 2016, as well as the opening of Canadian diplomatic offices in the Lao PDR and Cambodia. The Ministers strongly believe that these developments will contribute greatly to ASEAN-Canada relations.
4. The Ministers noted the strong performance of ASEAN-Canada bilateral trade and investment for 2015. According to Canadian statistics, two-way merchandise trade has grown significantly, up 13.8 per cent to CAD \$21.4 billion in 2015. As a group, ASEAN ranked as Canada's sixth largest merchandise trading partner. Meanwhile, the stock of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) from Canada to ASEAN amounted to over CAD \$10 billion at the end of 2015, and the stock of foreign direct investment from ASEAN into Canada exceeded CAD \$1 billion. This positive performance will benefit both Canada and ASEAN.
5. The Ministers welcomed the progress of the *2016-2020 Work Plan to Implement the ASEAN-Canada Joint Declaration on Trade and Investment (JDTI)*, which aims to stimulate increased trade and investment through strengthening dialogue and supporting private sector initiatives.
6. To support the continued advancement of the Work Plan, and to further deepen collaboration, the Ministers agreed to establish an annual ASEAN-Canada Trade Policy Dialogue that will cover trade policy areas of mutual interest. The Ministers further agreed to task the senior officials to prepare draft terms of reference of a feasibility study on a potential ASEAN-Canada Free Trade Agreement.

7. The ASEAN Ministers expressed appreciation for Canada's continued support of ASEAN's post-2015 agenda. In particular, they noted the launch of new Canadian programming to foster progressive trade in ASEAN, valued at CAD \$13.6 million. These projects will focus on small and medium enterprises growth and more inclusive and equitable global value chains in the region. Additional ongoing Canadian programming in support of the ASEAN Economic Community is valued at CAD \$11 million in the areas of infrastructure, SMEs, agriculture and financial regulation. The Ministers also noted the priority that the new Government of Canada has placed on clean economic growth and climate change.

8. The Ministers noted Canada's desire to expand its regional engagement by joining the East Asia Summit (EAS) at the earliest opportunity.

9. During the dialogue with the Canada-ASEAN Business Council (CABC), the Ministers commended the Council for its contribution to promoting ASEAN-Canada trade and investment, and noted that the 3<sup>rd</sup> Canada-ASEAN Business Forum under the theme of *"Partnering for Growth in ASEAN"* will be held in September 2016 in Jakarta, Indonesia. The Ministers encouraged the CABC to continue its active role in promoting Canadian business engagement in the region.

10. As 2017 marks the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of ASEAN-Canada Dialogue relations, the Ministers agreed to utilize the momentum to elevate our partnership to new heights by strengthening our engagement, expanding economic partnership, and identifying new areas of potential cooperation.

## LIST OF MINISTERS

1. **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. **H.E. Chrystia Freeland**, Minister of International Trade, Canada;
4. **Mr Iman Pambagyo**, Director-General of International Trade Negotiations, Ministry of Trade, Indonesia (representing H.E. Enggartiasto Lukita, Minister of Trade, Indonesia);
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. **H.E. Lim Hng Kiang**, Minister for Trade and Industry (Trade), Singapore;
10. **H.E. Apiradi Tantraporn**, Minister of Commerce, Thailand;
11. **H.E. Tran Tuan Anh**, Minister of Industry and Trade, Viet Nam;
12. **H.E. Le Luong Minh**, Secretary-General of ASEAN.