



**THE SIXTH AEM-CANADA CONSULTATIONS
8 September 2017, Pasay City, Philippines**

JOINT MEDIA STATEMENT

1. The Economic Ministers from the ten ASEAN Member States and Canada (“the Ministers”) met on 8 September 2017 in Pasay City, Philippines, for the Sixth ASEAN Economic Ministers-Canada Consultations. The Consultations were co-chaired by H.E. Ramon M. Lopez, Secretary of Trade and Industry of the Philippines and Ms Pamela Goldsmith-Jones, Parliamentary Secretary for International Trade of Canada (representing H.E. François-Philippe Champagne, Minister of International Trade of Canada).
2. Canada congratulated ASEAN Ministers on the 50th Anniversary of the founding of ASEAN, which marks a historic milestone in ASEAN’s regional integration journey. The Ministers also commemorated the 40th anniversary of the establishment of ASEAN-Canada dialogue relations. The Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening economic cooperation towards shared prosperity and inclusive growth.
3. The Ministers noted the performance of ASEAN-Canada bilateral trade and investment for 2016. According to Canadian statistics, two-way merchandise trade was CAD 21.6 billion in 2016. 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 8.5 billion at the end of 2016, and the stock of FDI from ASEAN to Canada exceeded CAD 1 billion.
4. The Ministers endorsed the *Terms of Reference for a Joint Feasibility Study Toward an ASEAN-Canada Free Trade Agreement (FTA)*. Ministers also welcomed the completion of the *Preliminary Joint Feasibility Study for an ASEAN-Canada FTA*, which was jointly conducted by the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA) on ASEAN’s behalf and Global Affairs Canada. This preliminary study provides an overview of the ASEAN and Canadian economies; highlights key bilateral trends in terms of trade in goods, services and investment; examines each party’s broader approach to FTA negotiations; and evaluates the potential benefits of an ASEAN-Canada FTA.
5. In light of the positive results from the Preliminary Joint ASEAN-Canada FTA Feasibility Study, the Ministers tasked ASEAN and Canadian officials to complete the Joint ASEAN-Canada FTA Feasibility Study incorporating more in depth analysis, in line with the endorsed Terms of Reference. The Ministers further agreed to launch exploratory discussions to examine the potential for an ASEAN-Canada FTA.

6. The Ministers commended the progress made in the implementation of the *2016-2020 Work Plan to Implement the ASEAN-Canada Joint Declaration on Trade and Investment*. The Work Plan is bolstering the ASEAN-Canada dialogue on trade and investment, stimulating growing bilateral trade and investment activities, and supporting private sector initiatives. Notably, the Ministers welcomed the annual ASEAN-Canada Trade Policy Dialogue (TPD) held for the first time on 5 July 2017 in Cebu, Philippines, which focused on the impact of trade policies on the development and internationalisation of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs). At the TPD, ASEAN and Canadian representatives shared their respective international trade policy engagements and their approaches to supporting MSMEs, including measures they have put in place to ensure that trade instruments such as free trade agreements (FTAs) are reflective of and responsive to MSMEs' priorities and interests, particularly in the age of digital commerce.

7. The ASEAN Ministers expressed their appreciation for Canada's ongoing support to ASEAN's efforts to promote inclusive and innovation-led growth through technical assistance. The Ministers noted that CAD 22.9 million is being channeled by Canada to support the various initiatives being pursued in collaboration with relevant ASEAN sectoral bodies. This includes the Canada-OECD Project for ASEAN SMEs, which is a Canada-ASEAN initiative aimed at creating more competitive, resilient and innovative SMEs. The Ministers recognised the valuable work undertaken by this project to strengthen entrepreneurship, including by women, in ASEAN.

8. During the dialogue with the Canada-ASEAN Business Council, the Ministers commended the Council for its advocacy and contribution to promoting ASEAN-Canada trade and investment, and noted that the 4th Canada-ASEAN Business Forum will be held in Singapore on 21–22 March 2018.

9. During the dialogue with the Toronto Centre, the Ministers praised the valuable ongoing contribution of the Centre, including at senior levels, in strengthening financial sector supervision and regulation in the ASEAN region. The Toronto Centre's customised training program is providing important capacity-building opportunities for ASEAN Member States.

10. The Ministers agreed to build on the momentum achieved during this 40th anniversary year to strengthen our partnership and strive for deeper ASEAN-Canada economic collaboration.

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. **Mr Sim Sokheng**, Director-General for International Trade, the Ministry of Commerce, Cambodia (representing H.E. Pan Sorasak, Minister of Commerce, Cambodia);
3. **Ms Pamela Goldsmith-Jones**, Parliamentary Secretary for International Trade, Canada (representing H.E. François-Philippe Champagne, Minister of International Trade, Canada);
4. **H.E. Enggartiasto Lukita**, Minister of Trade, Indonesia;
5. **H.E. Mrs. Khemmani Pholsena**, Minister of Industry and Commerce, Lao PDR;
6. **Datuk Isham Ishak**, Deputy Secretary-General (Trade), Ministry of International Trade and Industry, Malaysia (representing H.E. Dato' Sri Mustapa Mohamed, Minister of International Trade and Industry, Malaysia);
7. **H.E. Kyaw Win**, Union Minister for Planning and Finance, Myanmar;
8. **H.E. Ramon M. Lopez**, Secretary of Trade and Industry, the Philippines;
9. **Ms Alpana Roy**, Director (ASEAN), Ministry of Trade and Industry, Singapore (representing H.E. Lim Hng Kiang, Minister for Trade and Industry (Trade), Singapore);
10. **Mr Boonyarit Kalayanamit**, Director General, Department of Trade Negotiations, Ministry of Commerce, Thailand (representing H.E. Mrs. Apiradi Tantraporn, Minister of Commerce, Thailand);
11. **H.E. Tran Quoc Khanh**, Vice 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.