



**Joint Media Statement of the Inaugural RCEP Ministers' Meeting
17 September 2022, Siem Reap, Cambodia**

1. ASEAN Member States alongside Australia, China, Japan, Korea, and New Zealand gathered in Siem Reap on 17 September 2022 for the Inaugural RCEP Ministers' Meeting. The Meeting was co-chaired by H.E. Dr. Jerry Sambuaga, Vice Minister of Trade of Indonesia and H.E. the Hon Phil Twyford, Minister of State for Trade and Export Growth of New Zealand.
2. The Meeting welcomed the entry into force of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Agreement on 1 January 2022, which also almost coincides with the launch of the RCEP negotiations in 2012 when Cambodia was also the ASEAN Chair. Noting the importance of the RCEP Agreement to the region, the Meeting looked forward to its ratification by all signatory States.
3. The Meeting noted the progress of the work of the RCEP Joint Committee and welcomed the establishment of subsidiary bodies under the Joint Committee's supervision. The Meeting encouraged officials to work to expand the utilisation of the RCEP Agreement and to monitor and review the implementation of the RCEP Agreement to improve business environment in the region. The Meeting, in this connection, reaffirmed the necessity to refrain from taking any measures inconsistent with the obligations under the RCEP Agreement. The Meeting looked forward to the expeditious establishment of the RCEP Secretariat, on terms to be agreed by the Parties, to provide secretariat and technical support to the RCEP Joint Committee and its subsidiary bodies.
4. The Meeting shared the view that the RCEP could contribute to the region's post-pandemic recovery efforts and to creating a more resilient supply chain. In this regard, the Meeting highlighted the need to promote greater utilisation of the RCEP Agreement to deepen regional economic integration.