



JOINT MEDIA STATEMENT OF THE THIRTY-FIFTH MEETING OF THE ASEAN DIRECTORS-GENERAL OF CUSTOMS

Phnom Penh, Cambodia
2 – 4 June 2026

1. The 35th Meeting of the ASEAN Directors-General of Customs (DG) was held on 2-4 June 2026 in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. The Meeting was chaired by H.E. Dr. Kun Nhem, Minister Attached to the Prime Minister, Director-General of the General Department of Customs and Excise of Cambodia and was attended by 11 ASEAN Member States (AMS) and the ASEAN Secretariat.

2. We expressed concern over the continued tensions in the Middle East and their impact on international trade and global supply chains. The escalating conflict heightened volatility in global energy markets, disrupted trade flows, and created uncertainty for businesses due to higher logistics costs and rising prices of energy and other essential goods. We reaffirmed ASEAN Customs' commitment to maintaining and enhancing supply chain resilience to absorb the impact of external shocks, strengthening coordinated procedures to mitigate risks, and supporting the continuity of private sector operations. We acknowledged the task from the ASEAN Economic Community Council to accelerate regional initiatives to ensure the seamless movement of essential goods in the region, including by enhancing transparency and predictability in customs procedures through the adoption of digital technology and expanding the ASEAN Single Window (ASW) to External Partners.

3. We noted the implementation of the ASEAN Authorised Economic Operator Mutual Recognition Arrangement (AAMRA) by nine (9) AMS¹ and encouraged the remaining AMS to implement it in due course to strengthen the regional supply chain and enhance intra-ASEAN trade. We also noted the ongoing consultations on the possibility of negotiating Authorised Economic Operator Mutual Recognition Arrangements (AEO MRAs) between the ASEAN Customs and the Dialogue Partners (DP) Customs Administrations. We looked forward to commencing MRA discussions with China in July 2026, with a view to signing the MRA in 2027. The arrangement will facilitate trade, reduce regulatory burden, and enhance the utilisation of our ASEAN-Plus Free Trade Area (FTA).

4. We welcomed Myanmar as the seventh ASEAN Customs Transit System (ACTS) Participating Member State (PMS) in December 2025, marking a significant milestone to further enhance regional connectivity and reinforcing our commitment to the seamless cross-border movement of goods in the region. In pursuit of a more resilient and future-ready logistics network, we planned to pilot the railway mode under the ACTS among three AMS, namely Malaysia, Thailand, and Lao PDR, by the end of 2026, while encouraging Brunei Darussalam and Indonesia to continue advancing the necessary and operational readiness for the ACTS pilot for the Borneo Corridor in a timely manner, taking into account each country's domestic procedures and national readiness. We looked forward to the feasibility study on the possibility of connecting the ACTS with China to maximise the impact of the

¹ The AAMRA has been implemented among nine (9) AMS, namely Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand.

ASEAN-China Free Trade Agreement (ACFTA) 3.0, which is expected to enter into force in 2027.

5. We endorsed the Roadmap for the Next Generation of the ASEAN Single Window (ASW 2.0) (2026–2030), which will steer the continued development of the ASW, including the expansion of electronic exchanges of trade administration documents within ASEAN and the establishment of such exchanges with External Partners. We looked forward to the finalisation of technical enhancements to the ASW and implementation of the ASW 2.0, as well as the timely commencement of these exchanges between ASEAN and External Partners. This would further facilitate trade, reduce compliance costs, and advance digital interoperability within ASEAN, and between ASEAN and its External Partners. We affirmed our commitment to facilitate the discussions and advance the progress towards the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding Between the Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the People's Republic of China on Single Window Cooperation by end 2026. We recognised the benefits to be derived from greater digital connectivity, and reiterated the importance of strengthening single window connectivity between ASEAN and China through intensifying engagement and dialogue.

6. We welcomed the conclusion of the negotiation of the ASEAN Digital Economy Framework Agreement (ASEAN DEFA), which is targeted to be signed at the 49th ASEAN Summit in November 2026. The ASEAN DEFA will lay out a solid foundation for ASEAN Customs to advance the paperless trade, accelerate the application of technologies in digitising customs processes to expedite customs clearance, enhance security, and reduce trade transaction costs.

7. We noted the progress made and encourage relevant Customs bodies to conclude the amendments to the ASEAN Harmonised Tariff Nomenclature (AHTN) 2028 in 2026 to allow the timely conduct of the transposition of the Product Specific Rules (PSR) and Tariff Reduction Schedules (TRS) under the upgraded ASEAN Trade in Goods Agreement (ATIGA). The new AHTN 2028 will include major updates reflecting evolving trade patterns, technological advancements, and global priorities in areas such as public health and environmental protection, which will reduce discrepancies, enhance transparency, and promote supply chain resilience.

8. We commended the completion of the 3rd Joint Customs Control (JCC) Operation, which has strengthened cooperation and commitment among AMS on preventing circumvention and combating origin fraud to enhance a transparent trade environment, targeting high-risk products prone to circumvention and origin fraud. We encouraged ASEAN Customs to engage the DP's Customs administrations and the private sector to prevent circumvention and combat origin fraud. We recognised the importance of invaluable support from the DP's Customs administrations in enhancing our familiarity with green customs initiatives and related measures on the circular economy and carbon neutrality, and we looked forward to further support in these areas.

9. We welcomed the completion of the 8th Joint Customs Middle Management Programme (8th JCMMP) in Malaysia. The Programme facilitated the exchange of expertise and best practices across key areas, including organisational service delivery in the era of artificial intelligence (AI), change management strategies, the strengthening of leadership and negotiation capabilities, and innovation in decision-making. The outcomes of the Programme underscored their contribution to enhancing leadership capacity, fostering knowledge exchange, and strengthening regional cooperation among ASEAN Customs officers, and highlighted the importance of sustaining the JCMMP as a meaningful platform for leadership development, professional networking, and the continued sharing of best practices at the middle management level. In support of broader ASEAN Customs capacity-building efforts, we also encouraged participation in the Regional Attachment Programmes to further enhance competencies, capacity building and knowledge transfer of Customs Personnel.

10. We welcomed the signing of the Second Protocol to Amend the ATIGA and the signed

ACFTA 3.0 Upgrade and noted the conclusion of the Customs Procedures and Trade Facilitation (CPTF) Chapter under the ASEAN – Canada Free Trade Agreement (ACAFTA). These enhancements and inclusions, which capture global trends in customs and trade facilitation, will leverage technologies to expedite the movement of goods, enhance transparency and predictability in Customs procedures, streamline customs clearance, and reduce trade transaction costs, among others. We noted the progress of the negotiations of the CPTF Chapter under the ASEAN – India Trade in Goods Agreement (AITIGA) Review and encouraged all AMS to exert their best efforts to conclude it in 2026 and soon announce its outcome to the private sector. We looked forward to more trade facilitative provisions being proposed and included in the CPTF Chapter under the upgrade negotiation of the ASEAN–Korea Free Trade Area (AKFTA), which will further enhance trade between ASEAN and the Republic of Korea.

11. We expressed our appreciation to the Customs administrations of Australia, China, Japan, and the Republic of Korea for their invaluable support and cooperation through the sharing of best practices, provision of technical assistance, and conduct of joint operation activities. We welcomed enhanced cooperation between ASEAN Customs and Japan Customs in information sharing, and encouraged its implementation to strengthen regional cooperation and combat illicit trade. We reaffirmed our commitment to deepening the collaboration with all DPs in advancing the customs agenda, including emerging issues.

12. We recognised the importance of support from the private sector and welcomed the continued constructive consultations to deliberate on various issues, including informed compliance, customs automation, AEO MRAs, as well as illicit trade and tobacco products. We reaffirmed our commitment to sustaining the exchange of views and information, fostering partnerships, in support of the simplification and modernisation of customs procedures.

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