



**THE NINETEENTH AEM–METI CONSULTATIONS
20 August 2013, Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam**

JOINT MEDIA STATEMENT

1. The ASEAN Economic Ministers (AEM) and the Minister for Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) of Japan met on 20 August 2013 in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam for the 19th AEM-METI Consultations. The Consultations were co-chaired by The Hon. Pehin Dato Lim Jock Seng, Second Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Brunei Darussalam and H.E. Toshimitsu Motegi, Minister for Economy, Trade and Industry of Japan.

2. The Ministers noted the performance of ASEAN-Japan bilateral trade and investment for the period 2011-2012, which showed, in the area of trade, a 4.0% decline from US\$273.3 billion in 2011 to US\$262.4 billion in 2012. The decline was due to the drop in ASEAN's exports to Japan by 13.0% from US\$145.2 billion in 2011 to US\$126.3 billion in 2012. ASEAN's imports from Japan however increased by 6.2% amounting from US\$128.1 in 2011 to US\$136.1 billion in 2012. Notwithstanding, Japan maintained its position as ASEAN's second largest trading partner after China.

3. The Ministers were pleased to note that foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows from Japan to ASEAN increased by 26.4% from US\$16.4 billion in 2011 to US\$20.8 billion in 2012. Japan remained the second largest source of FDI for ASEAN with a share of nearly one fifth of total inward investments to ASEAN in 2012.

ASEAN-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership (AJCEP) Agreement

4. The Ministers reaffirmed their commitments to further promote trade and investment between ASEAN and Japan through the implementation of the AJCEP. Noting the challenges relating to the transposition of tariff reduction schedules and product specific rules (PSRs) brought about by periodic amendments to the Harmonised System (HS) Code, the Ministers encouraged the AJCEP Joint Committee to find a medium- to long-term solution to the transposition issues to ensure that the migration of the tariff reduction schedules and PSRs into the new HS are carried out in a timely and more efficient manner. The Ministers underscored the importance of continuously seeking ways to facilitate the flow of trade in goods under the AJCEP to encourage its utilisation.

5. The Ministers noted the on-going negotiations for the Trade in Services and Investment Chapters of the AJCEP and encouraged officials to substantially conclude negotiations for an agreement of further mutual benefit before the Commemorative Summit.

6. Noting the support provided by the Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF), which has been extended to end-2013, to ASEAN-Japan economic cooperation activities, the AEM expressed their appreciation to the contribution of the Government of Japan, through JAIF, and requested for information on any alternative source of funding for the effective implementation of the AJCEP economic cooperation projects and the ASEAN-Japan 10-Year Strategic Economic Cooperation Roadmap.

ASEAN-Japan 10-year Strategic Economic Cooperation Roadmap

7. The Ministers emphasized the importance of a steady implementation of activities under the ASEAN-Japan 10-Year Strategic Economic Cooperation Roadmap, endorsed at the 18th AEM-METI held in 2012, for ASEAN and Japan to strengthen their relationship with further integrated markets and production networks. The Ministers also welcomed the progress in economic cooperation activities listed in the Roadmap, including expanding cooperation in the areas of Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs), developing a website to increase the utilisation of AJCEP, improving information technology and cyber security environment in ASEAN, and developing industrial human resources in ASEAN with all ASEAN Member States' participation in the Asia Professional Education Network (APEN), and enhancing medical collaboration between ASEAN and Japan.

8. The Ministers instructed the officials to accelerate the implementation of the activities that have yet to be implemented, and to further improve the Roadmap reflecting the outcomes of the ASEAN-Japan Commemorative Summit in December 2013 and inputs from industries, to achieve the goals of the Roadmap including doubling trade and investment flows between ASEAN and Japan by 2022.

Dialogue between Secretary-General of ASEAN with the Federation of Japanese Chambers of Commerce and Industry in ASEAN (FJCCIA)

9. The Ministers were pleased with the outcomes of the 6th Dialogue between the Secretary-General of ASEAN and the FJCCIA held on 12 July 2013 in Hanoi, Viet Nam. Stressing that the improvement of business environment in ASEAN would benefit both ASEAN and Japan, the Ministers agreed to take into consideration the FJCCIA's requests which would be submitted at the next dialogue in 2014 into the efforts to deepen economic integration by 2015 and beyond. The Ministers noted that these requests could include elimination of non-tariff barriers/measures, coordinating the level of liberalisation and scope of the ASEAN Framework Agreement on Trade in Services (AFAS) among ASEAN Member States, as well as addressing the remaining issues from current requests.

10. The Ministers called on the WTO Information Technology Agreement (ITA) participants to swiftly conclude the negotiations on the expanded product coverage of the ITA, to enable a commercially significant outcome by the 9th WTO Ministerial Conference in December this year.

AEM-METI Economic and Industrial Cooperation Committee (AMEICC) activities

11. The Ministers appreciated the progress of AMEICC working group activities, and especially welcomed the proposed cooperation projects under the Working Group on Small & Medium Enterprises (SME-WG), such as strengthening business-academia networking for fostering competitive SMEs in ASEAN, and enhancing ASEAN SMEs' FTA utilization. The Ministers also noted the discussion at the Working Group on Automotive Industry (WG-AI), on developing user-friendly self-certification system in ASEAN Trade in Goods Agreement (ATIGA) while continuing the current Form D system. In relation with the AMEICC working group activities, the Ministers reiterated the importance of closer communication between the AMEICC Secretariat and the ASEAN Secretariat to effectively develop/implement these cooperation projects as major components of the ASEAN-Japan 10-Year Strategic Economic Cooperation Roadmap.

Recent Economic Initiatives

12. The ASEAN Ministers appreciated Japan's briefing on its new growth strategy, "Japan Revitalisation Strategy – Japan is Back", and shared the conviction that ASEAN and Japan would be able to grow together with the new growth strategy which signifies Japan's confidence to invigorate its economy, and hence contribute to the growth of the region together. The ASEAN Ministers also welcomed Japan's policy to relax visa requirements for tourists from certain ASEAN Member States.

ASEAN-Japan Commemorative Summit

13. The Ministers noted that this year marks the 40th Anniversary of ASEAN-Japan Dialogue Relations, and looked forward to the successful convening of the ASEAN-Japan Commemorative Summit, scheduled in Tokyo, Japan on 13-15 December 2013.

14. The Ministers welcomed the proposal from Japan to hold the ASEAN-Japan 40th Year Commemorative Forum after the Commemorative Summit in order to exchange views on the medium- and long-term vision and policies of the ASEAN-Japan relations. The Ministers noted the tentative program of the Commemorative Forum submitted by Japan, and looked forward to gaining insights from industries and academia to further deepen economic integration between ASEAN and Japan.



LIST OF MINISTERS

1. **The Hon. Pehin Dato Lim Jock Seng**, Second Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Brunei Darussalam
2. **H.E. Cham Prasidh**, Senior Minister and Minister of Commerce, Cambodia
3. **H.E. Bayu Krisnamurthi**, Vice Minister of Trade, Indonesia
4. **H.E. Toshimitsu Motegi**, Minister for Economy, Trade and Industry of Japan
5. **H.E. Nam Viyaketh**, Minister of Industry and Commerce, Lao PDR
6. **H.E. Dato' Sri Mustapa Mohamed**, Minister of International Trade and Industry, Malaysia
7. **H.E. Kan Zaw**, Union Minister for National Planning and Economic Development, Myanmar
8. **H.E. Gregory L. Domingo**, Secretary of Trade and Industry, the Philippines
9. **H.E. Lim Hng Kiang**, Minister for Trade and Industry, Singapore
10. **H.E. Niwattumrong Boonsongpaisan**, Minister of Commerce, Thailand
11. **H.E. Vu Huy Hoang**, Minister of Industry and Trade, Viet Nam
12. **H.E. Le Luong Minh**, Secretary-General of ASEAN