



**THE TWENTY-THIRD AEM-METI CONSULTATIONS
9 September 2017, Pasay City, Philippines**

JOINT MEDIA STATEMENT

1. Economic Ministers from the ten ASEAN Member States and the Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) of Japan (“the Ministers”) met on 9 September 2017, in Pasay City, Philippines, for the Twenty-third AEM-METI Consultations. The Consultations were co-chaired by H.E. Ramon M. Lopez, Secretary of Trade and Industry of the Philippines, and H.E. Hiroshige Seko, Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry of Japan.
2. The Minister of Japan congratulated ASEAN Ministers on the 50th Founding Anniversary of ASEAN, which marked a historic milestone in ASEAN’s regional integration. The Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to strengthen economic cooperation towards shared prosperity and inclusive growth.
3. The Ministers noted that merchandise trade between ASEAN and Japan reached USD 201.9 billion in 2016, accounting for nine per cent of ASEAN’s total merchandise trade, and placing Japan as ASEAN’s fourth largest trading partner. The Ministers also noted that Japan was ASEAN’s second largest external source of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in 2016 with FDI flows from Japan to ASEAN amounted to USD 14 billion, accounting for 14.5 per cent of total FDI flows to ASEAN.
4. ASEAN Ministers expressed their appreciation to Japan for organising the AEM Roadshow to Japan on 6–9 April 2017, covering the cities of Tokyo, Kyoto, Osaka and Wakayama. The AEM Roadshow included a courtesy call to the Japanese Prime Minister, Informal AEM-METI Consultations, as well as dialogues and interactions with scientific researchers, the private sector, government-affiliated organisations and local governments. The Ministers also witnessed the launch of ASEAN-Japan Innovation Network (AJIN) between ASEAN and Japan business representatives which would help in promoting innovation and the creation of new industries. The Roadshow provided opportunities for the Ministers and Senior Officials to engage with their counterparts, as well as the academic and business communities. The Ministers were pleased with the outcomes of the Roadshow. The Ministers noted that in the Roadshow, the Ministers agreed to consider a Japan-ASEAN Initiative to realise RCEP and to explore follow-up activities aimed at enhancing trade and economic cooperation between ASEAN and Japan. The Ministers also noted that during the Roadshow, the Ministers exchanged views on the way forward to conclude Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) as an inclusive and innovation-oriented agreement that covers high quality and commercially meaningful outcomes, not only on Goods, Services and Investment but also in rules (e.g. customs procedures, e-commerce, and intellectual property).

5. The Ministers noted the ongoing negotiations to finalise the Protocol to Amend the ASEAN-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership (AJCEP) Agreement to incorporate the Chapters on Trade in Services, Movement of Natural Persons (MNP), and Investment. The Ministers further underscored the importance for all Parties to exert utmost flexibility in this process, and looked forward to the finalisation of the Protocol as soon as possible.

6. The Ministers welcomed the progress in the implementation of the ASEAN-Japan 10-year Strategic Economic Cooperation Roadmap in various sectors, including activities in promoting human resources development, micro small and medium enterprise (MSME) development, infrastructure, innovation and transfer of technology. The roadmap would also enhance economic integration of ASEAN with sectoral bodies namely intellectual property, standard, customs and trade facilitation initiatives. The Ministers tasked the officials to accelerate the implementation of the remaining activities, and to consider further improvement of the activities under the Roadmap for mutual prosperity and industrial advancement of the region.

7. The Ministers welcomed following further ASEAN-Japan cooperation to realize inclusive and innovation-oriented growth: i) ASEAN-Japan cooperation for further innovation through ASEAN-Japan Innovation Platform (e.g. Introduction of ASEAN-Japan-wide Connected Industries); ii) support for MSME's inclusive growth; iii) support for introducing the rules for trade and investment facilitation on RCEP (e.g. promoting e-commerce, strengthening enforcement of intellectual property, and improving customs procedures); and iv) support for ERIA to contribute economic integration of ASEAN. The Ministers also welcomed that ASEAN-Japan Fair will be held in Manila this November.

8. The Ministers noted with appreciation the activities carried out by AMEICC (AEM and METI of Japan Consultations - Economic and Industrial Cooperation Committee) to support the implementation of the Roadmap, in various areas, including i) new industry development; ii) industrial human resources development; iii) support MSMEs development; iv) Mekong industrial development; and v) AMEICC's WG activities. The ASEAN Economic Ministers expressed their appreciation to Japan for its continuous support to ASEAN economic development, including Japan's contribution of USD 18 million last year.

9. The Ministers commended the activities undertaken by the ASEAN-Japan Innovation Network (AJIN), including MOC signed by ASEAN Japan Business Council (AJBC) and the AJIN members on 7 April 2017, namely survey on e-commerce utilization in East Asia and the policy proposal thereof by business jointly conducted with Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO), East-Asia Business Council (EABC) and ASEAN Business Advisory Council (ABAC), the initiative to enhance business matching in nurturing new industries by taking an active role from the planning stage of ASEAN Business and Investment Summit (ABIS) and the establishment of newly proposed ASEAN-BAC JBC Innovation Working Group to be co-chaired by AJBC.

10. The Ministers welcomed the outcomes of the 10th Dialogue between Secretary-General of ASEAN and Federation of Japanese Chambers of Commerce and Industry

in ASEAN (FJCCIA), in particular, the sectoral dialogue with ATF-JCC and CCS, and underscored the importance of this Dialogue framework. The Ministers also welcomed FJCCIA and JETRO's proposals on continuous discussion and cooperation projects with sectoral bodies, such as ATF-JCC, CCS and ACCEC.

11. The Ministers reaffirmed their shared commitment to work towards the swift conclusion of RCEP to achieve the objective of a modern, comprehensive, high-quality and mutually beneficial agreement.

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. **H.E. Pan Sorasak**, Minister of Commerce, Cambodia;
3. **H.E. Enggartiasto Lukita**, Minister of Trade, Indonesia;
4. **H.E. Hiroshige Seko**, Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry, Japan;
5. **H.E. Mrs. Khemmani Pholsena**, Minister of Industry and Commerce, Lao PDR;
6. **Datuk Seri J. Jayasiri**, Secretary General of the Ministry of International Trade and Industry, Malaysia (representing H.E. Dato' Sri Mustapa Mohamed, Minister of International Trade and Industry, Malaysia);
7. **Mr Tun Tun Naing**, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Planning and Finance, Myanmar (representing 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. **H.E. Lim Hng Kiang**, Minister for Trade and Industry (Trade), Singapore;
10. **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.