



**THE SIXTEENTH AEM-MOFCOM CONSULTATIONS
8 September 2017, Pasay City, Philippines**

JOINT MEDIA STATEMENT

1. Economic Ministers from the ten ASEAN Member States and China (“the Ministers”) met on 8 September 2017 in Pasay City, Philippines, for the Sixteenth AEM-MOFCOM Consultations. The Consultations were co-chaired by H.E. Ramon M. Lopez, Secretary of Trade and Industry of the Philippines, and H.E. Zhong Shan, Minister of Commerce of China.

2. Minister Zhong Shan of China 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 China, reached USD 368 billion in 2016, accounting for 16.5 per cent of ASEAN’s total merchandise trade. Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) flows from China to ASEAN amounted to USD 9.2 billion in 2016 accounting for 9.5 per cent of total ASEAN’s FDI. Ministers welcomed the continued strong levels of trade and investment, and noted that China maintained its position as ASEAN’s largest trading partner since 2009 and continued to be ASEAN’s fourth largest external source of FDI.

4. The Ministers noted the implementation status of the Protocol to Amend the Framework Agreement on Comprehensive Economic Cooperation and Certain Agreements thereunder between ASEAN and China (ACFTA Upgrading Protocol), and tasked Senior Officials to ensure that the implementation achieves the underlying objectives of promoting and facilitating trade and investment amongst Parties. The Ministers also emphasised the need for all Parties to continue deliberations on the remaining elements under the ACFTA Upgrading Protocol to improve ASEAN-China’s trade. The Ministers emphasised the importance of having a mutually beneficial balance in ASEAN-China trade relations, and welcomed the effort to address the issues of Iron and Steel trade through first holding the consultation meeting between the industry associations with the participation of government representatives from ASEAN and China in March 2018.

5. The Ministers noted the activities undertaken to implement the Joint Statement between ASEAN and China on Production Capacity Cooperation, including the development of industrial parks, which stimulated the growth of businesses in the concerned ASEAN Member States. After the release in September 2016, the bilateral investment and economic cooperation between ASEAN and China has been stronger,

shown by the increase of China's direct investment to ASEAN that reached USD 4.8 billion during the first seven months of 2017.

6. The ASEAN Ministers congratulated China for the successful conclusion of the 13th China-ASEAN Expo 2016 under the theme of "Building the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road, Forging an Even Closer China-ASEAN Community of Common Destiny" in Nanning, China on 11–14 September 2016. A series of events, showcasing the achievements of bilateral cooperation between China and ASEAN, were held to commemorate the 25th Anniversary of the establishment of dialogue relations. The Ministers looked forward to the 14th China-ASEAN Expo to be held at the same venue on 12–15 September 2017.

7. The Ministers noted the developments in the ASEAN-China Connectivity Cooperation and the outcomes of the Belt and Road Forum held in May 2017, which was attended by Heads of Government/State from 29 countries. The Ministers welcomed China's proposal to better synergise the Belt and Road Initiative with ASEAN's development strategy in order to further enhance China-ASEAN economic and trade relations. The initiative aims to create trade, financial, and culture networks stretching from East Asia to Europe and beyond, with key areas of focus industrial development, financial integration and reform, and infrastructure construction. In this relation, the Ministers underscored the importance to ensure that the initiative be a win-win collaboration formula for business people and government amongst Parties.

8. The Ministers noted the progress made in the discussion on the proposed Joint Statement between China and ASEAN on Further Deepening the Cooperation of Infrastructure Connectivity, and tasked officials to work on a joint statement to be issued during the 20th China-ASEAN Summit.

9. The Ministers noted with appreciation for China's effort to organise the first China International Import and Expo in 2018, and encouraged the active participation of the ASEAN Member States.

10. The Ministers noted the assistance cooperation between China and ASEAN. Since 2013, the Chinese government has announced a total of RMB 200 million of grant assistance to ASEAN Member States, with the aim of reducing the development gap in the ASEAN region, enhancing national development capacity, fueling regional economic growth, and promoting the ASEAN community building. Under the above assistance, China and ASEAN have launched relevant assistance projects in areas such as disaster relief and prevention, e-commerce, animal disease prevention and control, and are actively exploring cooperation in clean energy, e-tourism and FTA. The Ministers underscored the importance to strengthen cooperation and ensure that Chinese assistance brings tangible benefits to ASEAN countries and people.

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. Sok Sopheap**, Under Secretary of State of the Ministry of Commerce, Cambodia (representing H.E. Pan Sorasak, Minister of Commerce, Cambodia);
3. **H.E. Zhong Shan**, Minister of Commerce, the People's Republic of China;
4. **H.E. Enggartiasto Lukita**, Minister of Trade, Indonesia;
5. **H.E. Mrs. Khemmani Pholsena**, Minister of Industry and Commerce, Lao PDR;
6. **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. **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.