



MINISTRY OF
INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND INDUSTRY

SPEAKING NOTES
YB DATO' SERI MOHAMED AZMIN ALI
AT
THE SPECIAL ASEAN ECONOMIC MINISTERS – MINISTER
OF ECONOMY, TRADE AND INDUSTRY OF JAPAN
VIDEO CONFERENCE ON COVID-19 RESPONSE
29 JULY 2020

Thank you Chair, H.E. Minister Tran Tuan Anh
Excellencies ASEAN Economic Ministers
H.E. Mr Hiroshi Kajiyama, Minister of Economy, Trade and
Industry of Japan.

- Firstly, Malaysia would like to thank Japan for initiating this Special AEM-METI Video Conference Meeting on COVID-19 Response. I recall that the Special ASEAN Plus Three Virtual Meeting held on 4 June was very constructive where we adopted the statement to commit ourselves on mitigating the economic impact of the pandemic.
- We appreciate the commitment shown by the Dialogue Partners including Japan in fighting the pandemic hand in glove with ASEAN. It is commendable that ASEAN and Japan have initiated this collaborative work to safeguard the lives and livelihoods of our people.
- Like many other countries, Malaysia had undertaken mitigation efforts to cushion the economic impact of the pandemic. My government had announced three stimulus packages amounting to about USD68 billion which is equivalent to 19.1 per cent of our GDP.
- While exerting constant efforts in curbing the COVID-19 spread and fatality rate, Malaysia has to strike a balance to ensure that our economy remains on firm grounding. Hence, since 10 June, Malaysia has put in place the



Recovery Movement Control Order (RMCO) which is set to continue till 31 August 2020. With nearly all economic sectors being reopened, we are gradually steering away from the repercussions caused by the pandemic.

- The COVID-19 cases in Malaysia have reduced to a low level but my government continues to monitor the situation closely as we cannot afford to be complacent. On the contrary, we won't hesitate to reimpose strict measures if the situation warrants it.

Honourable Ministers, Excellencies,

- I would like to share that with e-Commerce becoming a new normal. We believe this will provide further boost to online spending and the use of digital applications in businesses. Further, we are working towards more effective means to spearhead digital transformation for the ASEAN region. In this regard, I believe Japan could play an instrumental role in the context of ASEAN Plus Three.
- As we continue our efforts towards economic recovery, we, therefore, look towards to Japan continuing to work closely with ASEAN. To my mind, reinforcing synergies is the way to go not just in battling COVID-19 successfully but also in ensuring our upward economic trajectory. Together, we must demonstrate strong solidarity, vision and leadership.
- I would like to reiterate that vaccine availability and affordability are paramount in combating this virus and that ASEAN should consider en bloc measures to procure vaccines in order to increase the chances of availability for the region. Therefore, I urge Japan to share your expertise as we work together to ensure that the movement of essential medical supplies, including vaccines and antiviral medication is unimpeded.



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- Finally, I hope that the ASEAN-Japan Economic Resilience Action Plan and all its initiatives will be executed in a timely and effective manner in order to achieve all the objectives.
- This Action Plan signifies a strong commitment and solidarity between ASEAN and Japan in combating the COVID-19 pandemic, both in health and economic fronts. I am confident that this Action Plan will greatly contribute towards revitalising our economy and facilitate business continuity and growth.

Thank you.