



THE EIGHTEENTH AEM PLUS THREE CONSULTATIONS
23 August 2015, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

JOINT MEDIA STATEMENT

1. Economic Ministers from the ten ASEAN Member States and Economic Ministers of People's Republic of China ("China"), Japan, and Republic of Korea ("Korea") met on 23 August 2015 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia for the Eighteenth AEM Plus Three Consultations. The Consultations were co-chaired by H.E. Dato' Sri Mustapa Mohammed, Minister of International Trade and Industry, Malaysia, H.E. Gao Hucheng, Minister of Commerce of China, H.E. Yoichi Miyazawa, Minister of Economy, Trade, and Industry of Japan, and H.E. Yoon Sang-jick, Minister of Trade, Industry, and Energy of Korea.
2. The Ministers were pleased with trade performance in the region. According to ASEAN Statistics, total trade of ASEAN with Plus Three countries reached USD 727.1 billion in 2014, accounting for 28.8 per cent of total ASEAN trade. Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflow from Plus Three Countries in 2014 amounted to USD 26.7 billion.
3. The Ministers reiterated that collaboration between ASEAN and Plus Three Countries remained important to keep the economic foundation in the region strong, especially in light of recent global financial instability. The Ministers reaffirmed leaders' statement that ASEAN Plus One Free Trade Agreements (FTA) with the Plus Three Countries would significantly contribute to enhancing the sustainability of the Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs) in the region.
4. The Ministers expressed their appreciation to East Asia Business Council (EABC) for the continuous support to promote economic integration in the region. The Ministers noted the report by the EABC on the progress of its activities, and its submission of the recommendations which included, among others, supporting SMEs access to non-collateral financing; enabling SMEs access to project fund under the ASEAN Secretariat; promoting cross-border e-commerce in East Asia; and engaging stakeholders in RCEP negotiations and early conclusion thereof. The Ministers welcomed the inputs and looked forward to further inputs from the private sector to facilitate regional economic integration as envisaged under the RCEP.
5. The Ministers underscored the role of the ASEAN-China Centre, ASEAN-Japan Centre, and ASEAN-Korea Centre in promoting trade and investment in the larger context of the ASEAN Plus Three cooperation. The Ministers also encouraged the ASEAN Business Advisory Council (ABAC), EABC and the three Centres to establish relevant linkages to support and promote MSMEs.

LIST OF MINISTERS

1. **The Hon. Pehin Dato Lim Jock Seng**, Second Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Brunei Darussalam;
2. **H.E. Pan Sorasak**, Secretary of State, Ministry of Commerce, Cambodia;
3. **H.E. Gao Hucheng**, Minister of Commerce, China;
4. **Mrs Sondang Anggraini**, Adviser to the Minister on Trade and Diplomacy, Ministry of Trade, Indonesia (representing H.E. Thomas Trikasih Lembong, Minister of Trade, Indonesia);
5. **H.E. Yoichi Miyazawa**, Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry of Japan;
6. **H.E. Yoon Sang-jick**, Minister of Trade, Industry and Energy, Republic of Korea;
7. **H.E. Mrs Khemmani Pholsena**, Minister of Industry and Commerce, Lao PDR;
8. **H.E. Dato' Sri Mustapa Mohamed**, Minister of International Trade and Industry, Malaysia;
9. **H.E. Dato' Seri Ong Ka Chuan**, Minister of International Trade and Industry II, Malaysia;
10. **H.E. Dr. Kan Zaw**, Union Minister for National Planning and Economic Development, Myanmar;
11. **H.E. Gregory L. Domingo**, Secretary of Trade and Industry, the Philippines;
12. **Mrs Ow Foong Pheng**, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Trade and Industry, Singapore (representing H.E. Lim Hng Kiang, Minister for Trade and Industry, Singapore);
13. **Mr Thawatchai Sophastienphong**, Director General of the Department of Trade Negotiations, Ministry of Commerce, Thailand (representing H.E. Gen. Chatchai Sarikulya, Minister of Commerce, Thailand);
14. **H.E. Nguyen Cam Tu**, Deputy Minister of Industry and Trade, Viet Nam (representing H.E. Vu Huy Hoang, Minister of Industry and Trade, Viet Nam);
15. **H.E. Le Luong Minh**, Secretary-General of ASEAN.