



**THE THIRTEENTH CONSULTATIONS BETWEEN  
THE ASEAN ECONOMIC MINISTERS AND  
THE MINISTER OF ECONOMY, TRADE AND INDUSTRY OF JAPAN  
(AEM-METI)**

**23 August 2006, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia**

**Joint Media Statement**

1. The Thirteenth AEM-METI Consultations was held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on 23 August 2006. The Consultations was co-chaired by H.E. Dato' Seri Rafidah Aziz, Minister of International Trade and Industry of Malaysia and H.E. Mr. Toshihiro Nikai, Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry, Japan.

**ASEAN-Japan Trade and Investment Relations**

2. The Ministers exchanged views on recent global and regional developments. They were pleased to note that total trade between ASEAN and Japan increased by 7.9 per cent from US\$ 143.3 billion in 2004 to US\$ 154.6 billion in 2005.

3. The Ministers noted that FDI flows from Japan also increased from US\$ 3.12 billion in 2004 to US\$ 3.16 billion in 2005. Japan remained to be ASEAN's third largest source of FDI.

**Progress of Work under the Framework of ASEAN-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership (AJCEP)**

4. The Ministers noted the progress of the AJCEP negotiations and efforts exerted by the ASEAN-Japan Committee on Comprehensive Economic Partnership (AJCCEP) to move forward the negotiations. They noted in particular the agreement reached on the basic idea of "common list, common schedule and common rules of origin" for the AJCEP, the details of which are currently being negotiated. They also noted the agreement in principle reached by ASEAN and Japan on the criteria for conferring originating status under the AJCEP Rules of Origin.

5. The Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to implement the measures for the realisation of the AJCEP. The Ministers considered the modality for the Trade in Goods component of the regional FTA and instructed the AJCCEP to further study the coverage and staging, the disciplines and treatments that may be applied to

products taking into account the concerns of the least developed countries in ASEAN. Recognising that some of the outstanding issues were still under consideration, they tasked the AJCEP to explore creative ways to narrow the gaps to accelerate the AJCEP within the targets set by the Leaders.

### **ASEAN-Japan Economic Cooperation**

6. The Ministers, underlining the importance of economic cooperation initiatives to complement the AJCEP, noted with satisfaction the steady implementation of the ASEAN-Japan Economic Partnership Cooperation, which was proposed by Japan at the AEM-METI Consultations in Jakarta in 2004.

7. The Ministers welcomed Japan's proposal for a joint project "ASEAN Common Investment Climate Initiative" coordinated by Japan External Trade Organisation, Japan Business Federation, and Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry, that will help promote investment particularly in the sectors that formulate regional production networks by improving communications between the Japanese investors and ASEAN policy makers. They also welcomed Japan's new initiatives to enhance logistics efficiency and the ASEAN brand project for strengthening the competitiveness of small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

8. The Ministers agreed to Japan's proposal for a track-two study on a possible Comprehensive Economic Partnership in East Asia (CEPEA) comprising ASEAN, Australia, China, India, Japan, Korea, and New Zealand. However, the ASEAN Ministers re-iterated the need to expeditiously conclude the AJCEP as the basis for such expanded regional integration initiative.

9. The ASEAN Ministers welcomed Japan's proposal to establish an Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA), and requested Japan to discuss this proposal further with the ASEAN Secretariat.

10. The ASEAN Ministers expressed their appreciation to Japan for her continuing support to ASEAN, particularly in efforts to narrow the development gaps between Member Countries, deepen economic integration and realise its vision to establish the ASEAN Economic Community.

### **AEM-METI Economic and Industrial Cooperation Committee (AMEICC)**

11. The AEM-METI Economic and Industrial Cooperation Committee (AMEICC) also met as part of the AEM-METI Consultations. They noted with appreciation the timely implementation of the AMEICC projects as well as the effective manner by which these projects are being implemented. They also expressed their support to the idea that the AMEICC should stress on its function of providing recommendations to Ministerial level frameworks in line with the initiatives of ASEAN. From this viewpoint, the Ministers supported the recommendation of the AMEICC HRD-WG to create an authorisation scheme for ASEAN common standard curriculum as the basis of common industrial skill qualifications and its proposal to develop several curricula as pilot projects.

**Other Areas of Cooperation**

12. The Ministers noted that the 7<sup>th</sup> ASEAN-Japan Senior Officials Meeting on Energy (SOME-METI) was convened in July 2006. Acknowledging that improving energy efficiency and conservation is a key to achieving economic growth, energy security and climate change problem simultaneously, they expressed support to the initiatives of the Energy Officials in forging mutual cooperation in this area. They also encouraged Energy Officials to continue developing and promoting new and alternative sources of energy to reduce oil dependency and enhance regional energy security.

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## LIST OF MINISTERS

1. **Mr. Lim Jock Hoi**, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Brunei Darussalam
2. **H.E. Dr. Cham Prasidh**, Senior Minister and Minister of Commerce, Cambodia
3. **H.E. Dr. Mari Elka Pangestu**, Minister of Trade, Indonesia
4. **H.E. Mr. Toshihiro Nikai**, Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry, Japan
5. **H.E. Dr. Nam Viyaketh**, Minister of Industry and Commerce, Lao PDR
6. **H.E. Dato' Seri Rafidah Aziz**, Minister of International Trade and Industry, Malaysia
7. **H.E. U Soe Tha**, Minister for National Planning and Economic Development, Myanmar
8. **H.E. Mr. Peter B. Favila**, Secretary of Trade and Industry, the Philippines
9. **H.E. Mr. Lim Hng Kiang**, Minister for Trade and Industry, Singapore
10. **H.E. Dr. Uttama Savanayana**, Vice Minister for Commerce, Ministry of Commerce, Thailand
11. **H.E. Mr. Truong Dinh Tuyen**, Minister of Trade, Viet Nam
12. **H.E. Mr. Ong Keng Yong**, Secretary-General of ASEAN

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