



Joint Ministerial Statement of the ASEAN Economic Ministers and the European Union Trade Commissioner on the Launch of Negotiations for the ASEAN-EU Free Trade Agreement (FTA)

1. The ASEAN Economic Ministers (AEM) and the Trade Commissioner of the European Union (EU) met in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam on 4 May 2007 for the 8th AEM-EU Consultation. The Consultation was co-chaired by H.E. Dato' Seri Rafidah Aziz, Minister of International Trade and Industry of Malaysia, and H.E. Mr. Peter Mandelson, the EU Trade Commissioner.

2. Ministers confirmed their shared desire to enhance economic relations by establishing a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) providing for comprehensive trade and investment liberalisation.

3. Ministers agreed to enter into the FTA negotiations mindful of our commitments, rights and obligations under our existing membership to multilateral, regional and bilateral agreements. Ministers agreed that the negotiating process will be based on a region-to-region approach which recognises and takes into account the different levels of development and capacity of individual ASEAN Member Countries.

4. A Joint Committee comprising senior officials from all ASEAN Member Countries and EU shall be established to develop the details of the modalities, work programme and time schedule for negotiating the ASEAN-EU FTA.

5. Throughout the negotiating process, measures will also be considered to support and strengthen the process of ASEAN economic integration, including through activities of the Trans-Regional EU-ASEAN Trade Initiative (TREATI).

6. In addition to reaching agreement on the launch of FTA negotiations, the Ministers discussed bilateral and regional economic developments and economic co-operation and reiterated their full support for an early, ambitious conclusion of the Doha Development Agenda negotiations.



LIST OF MINISTERS

- (i) **H.E. Pehin Dato Lim Jock Seng**, Second Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Brunei Darussalam;
- (ii) **Mr. Pich Rithi**, Deputy Director General, Ministry of Commerce, Cambodia (representing **H.E. Mr. Cham Prasidh**, Senior Minister and Minister of Commerce, Cambodia);
- (iii) **H.E. Mr. Peter Mandelson**, Trade Commissioner of the European Union;
- (iv) **Mr. Herry Soetanto**, Director General of International Trade Cooperation, Ministry of Trade, Indonesia (representing **H.E. Dr. Mari Elka Pangestu**, Minister of Trade, Indonesia);
- (v) **H.E. Dr. Nam Viyaketh**, Minister of Industry and Commerce, Lao PDR;
- (vi) **H.E. Dato' Seri Rafidah Aziz**, Minister of International Trade and Industry, Malaysia and Chairman of the AEM;
- (vii) **H.E. U Soe Tha**, Minister of National Planning and Economic Development, Myanmar;
- (viii) **H.E. Mr. Peter B. Favila**, Secretary of Trade and Industry, the Philippines;
- (ix) **H.E. Mr. Lim Hng Kiang**, Minister for Trade and Industry, Singapore;
- (x) **H.E. Mr. Krirk-krai Jirapaet**, Minister of Commerce, Thailand;
- (xi) **H.E. Mr. Truong Dinh Tuyen**, Minister of Trade, Viet Nam; and
- (xii) **H.E. Mr. Ong Keng Yong**, Secretary-General of ASEAN.