

Joint Media Statement of the 8th Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Ministerial Meeting

1. We, the Economic Ministers of the ASEAN Member States, Australia, China, Japan, Korea and New Zealand met on 27 August 2020 for the 8th Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Ministerial Meeting. The Meeting was chaired by H.E. Tran Tuan Anh, Minister of Industry and Trade of Viet Nam, in collaboration with Mr. Vangelis Vitalis, Deputy Secretary, Trade and Economic, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of New Zealand, acting as the Facilitator for the non-ASEAN RCEP Participating Countries (RPCs).
2. The Ministers acknowledged that the unprecedented challenge brought about by the COVID-19 global pandemic had affected the trade and investment performance among the RPCs. They agreed that this challenge made it imperative for countries in the region, including those participating in the RCEP negotiations, to not only keep their markets open, particularly for essential goods and services, but also boost joint cooperation and collaboration in the fight against the COVID-19 global pandemic.
3. The Ministers recognised the critical importance of the RCEP Agreement in light of ongoing uncertainties. They shared the view that the signing of the RCEP Agreement would enhance business confidence, strengthen the regional economic architecture and maintain the stability of the regional and global industrial chains and supply chains, as well as demonstrate the region's support for an open, inclusive, and rules-based multilateral trading system. The Ministers also underscored the significant role that the RCEP Agreement could play in post-pandemic recovery efforts as well as in contributing to the growth and stability of the regional and global economy.
4. The Ministers were pleased with the significant progress made towards finalising the RCEP Agreement for signing at the 4th RCEP Summit in November 2020. They also reiterated that the RCEP remains open for India given that not only had it participated in the RCEP negotiations since they were launched in 2012 but also in recognition of the potential of India to contribute to the region's prosperity.

LIST OF RCEP MINISTERS

- (a) **Senator the Hon Simon Birmingham**, Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment, Australia
- (b) **H.E. Dato Dr. Amin Liew Abdullah**, Minister at the Prime Minister's Office and Minister of Finance and Economy II, Brunei Darussalam;
- (c) **H.E. Pan Sorasak**, Minister of Commerce, Cambodia;
- (d) **H.E. Zhong Shan**, Minister of Commerce, People's Republic of China;
- (e) **H.E. Agus Suparmanto**, Minister of Trade, Republic of Indonesia;
- (f) **H.E. Kajiyama Hiroshi**, Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry, Japan;
- (g) **H.E. Ms. Myung Hee Yoo**, Minister for Trade, Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy, Republic of Korea;
- (h) **H.E. Mrs. Khemmani Pholsena**, Minister of Industry and Commerce, Lao PDR;
- (i) **H.E. Dato' Seri Mohamed Azmin Ali**, Senior Minister and Minister of International Trade and Industry, Malaysia;
- (j) **H.E. Thaung Tun**, Union Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations, Myanmar
- (k) **Mr. Vangelis Vitalis**, Deputy Secretary, Trade and Economic, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, New Zealand (representing Hon. Damien O'Connor, Minister of State for Trade and Export Growth, New Zealand);
- (l) **H.E. Ramon M. Lopez**, Secretary of Trade and Industry, Republic of the Philippines;
- (m) **H.E. Chan Chun Sing**, Minister for Trade and Industry, Singapore;
- (n) **H.E. Dr. Sansern Samalapa**, Vice Minister for Commerce, Thailand;
- (o) **H.E. Tran Tuan Anh**, Minister of Industry and Trade, Viet Nam; and
- (p) **H.E. Dato Lim Jock Hoi**, Secretary-General of ASEAN.
