

2011 ASEAN FRAMEWORK FOR REGIONAL COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP

Adopted in Bali, Indonesia on 17 November 2011

We, the Heads of State/Government of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (hereinafter referred to as "ASEAN"), namely Brunei Darussalam, the Kingdom of Cambodia, the Republic of Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, the Republic of the Philippines, the Republic of Singapore, the Kingdom of Thailand, and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, on the occasion of the 19th ASEAN Summit in Bali, Indonesia;

Reiterating our commitment to the purposes and principles of the ASEAN Charter;

Recognizing the benefits to our people of sound, more dynamic and sustainable economic relations with partner countries;

Guided by the ASEAN Charter "To maintain the centrality and proactive role of ASEAN as the primary driving force in its relations and cooperation with its external partners in a regional architecture that is open, transparent, and inclusive" (Article 1 section 15);

Do hereby:

Welcome engagement with partners to enhance economic integration and cooperation based on mutual interest, transparency, and best practice;

Recognize that an essential element of engagement is to ensure that all ASEAN Member States and their populations are provided with the opportunities to participate fully and benefit from economic integration and cooperation;

Resolve to establish an ASEAN-led process by setting out principles under which ASEAN will engage interested ASEAN FTA partners in establishing a regional comprehensive economic partnership agreement and, subsequently, with other external economic partners;

Determine that these principles should establish a level playing field for all partners and reflect best practices and standards in all aspects of engagement;

Agree to engage ASEAN FTA partners and other external economic partners to establish comprehensive economic partnership agreements. These agreements shall be guided by the general principles outlined in this Framework and the specific principles to be defined by ASEAN in the areas of trade in goods, trade in services, investment, and other areas related to trade and investment that may be agreed upon.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES FOR REGIONAL COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP

Coverage

The purpose is to achieve a comprehensive and mutually beneficial economic partnership agreement. This agreement shall involve broader and deeper engagement with significant improvements over existing ASEAN FTAs/CEP with Dialogue Partners. This agreement will also provide a basis for addressing issues that may emerge in the future.

Process

The agreement can be accomplished in a sequential manner or single undertaking or through any other agreed modality.

Open accession

The agreement shall have an open accession clause to enable participation of any of the ASEAN FTA partners should they not be ready to participate at the outset as well as any other external economic partners.

Transparency

Signed agreements will be made public to ensure that stakeholders understand and take advantage of economic integration and cooperation.

Economic and Technical Cooperation

Economic and technical cooperation will be an integral part of the agreement to support ASEAN Member States and maximize their benefits from the implementation of the agreement.

Facilitation

The agreement shall include practical measures and cooperative efforts to facilitate trade and investment, including reduction of transaction costs for businesses recognizing that regulatory and administrative requirements and processes may constitute significant barriers to trade and investment.

Economic Integration

The agreement shall contribute to ASEAN economic integration, equitable economic development and strengthening economic cooperation between ASEAN Member States as well as between ASEAN and its partners.

Special and Differential Treatment

The agreement shall provide for special and differential treatment to ASEAN Member States, especially Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Viet Nam.

Consistency with WTO

The agreement shall be consistent with the WTO Agreement.

Periodic review

The agreement shall be subject to periodic review to ensure effective and beneficial implementation.

We ask concerned ASEAN Ministers and the Secretary-General of ASEAN to implement the above principles and to define the specific principles under which ASEAN will engage with partners.