

# 2018 JOINT MEDIA STATEMENT ON THE FIFTH REGIONAL COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP (RCEP) INTERSESSIONAL MINISTERIAL MEETING

*Adopted in Tokyo, Japan, on 1 July 2018*

1. The Ministers from the 16 RCEP Participating Countries (RPCs) attended the 5<sup>th</sup> RCEP Intersessional Ministerial Meeting held on 1 July 2018 in Tokyo, Japan. The Ministers discussed the developments since the 4<sup>th</sup> RCEP Intersessional Ministerial Meeting on 3 March 2018 in Singapore, including the outcomes of the 22<sup>nd</sup> round of negotiations held on 28 April – 8 May 2018 also in Singapore; the intersessional meetings of selected working groups and sub-working groups; as well as the 4<sup>th</sup> RCEP Intersessional TNC and Related Meetings held on 25-29 June 2018 in Tokyo, Japan, which were also participated by the Working Group on Electronic Commerce (e-Commerce), the Working Group on Intellectual Property (IP), and the Sub-Working Group on Customs Procedures and Trade Facilitation (CPTF) and intensification of market access bilateral negotiations.
2. The Ministers recognised the importance of swiftly and successfully concluding the RCEP negotiations consistent with the *Guiding Principles and Objectives for Negotiating the RCEP*, particularly in view of the current global trade environment which faces serious risks from unilateral trade actions and reactions, as well as their debilitating implications on the multilateral trading system. To this end, the Ministers reaffirmed their resolve to work together and see through the RCEP negotiations towards conclusion, and to achieve an agreement that would allow economies of different levels of development to actively participate in and benefit from an open and inclusive regional economic integration.
3. The Ministers welcomed the progress made by the negotiators across all areas, and agreed to work with a greater focus on finding breakthroughs for conclusion of the RCEP negotiations, in line with the RCEP Leaders' mandate in 2017. To this end, the Ministers tasked negotiators to focus efforts towards achieving a package of year-end outcomes.
4. On market access, the Ministers appreciated efforts undertaken by all RPCs to facilitate movements towards the final offers, including through the intensification of request and offer negotiations to address specific interests and concerns, and instructed negotiators to improve market access offers in order to meet Leaders' expectations of positive and constructive responses to requests. On rules, the Ministers noted the outcomes of the 4<sup>th</sup> RCEP Intersessional TNC Meeting and Related Meetings in the areas of e-Commerce, IP, and CPTF, and welcomed the progress made in narrowing the remaining gaps towards pragmatic landing zones.
5. The Ministers tasked the negotiators to further make progress for assessment by Ministers when they meet at the end of August 2018 in Singapore, and reaffirmed the commitment that the RCEP will have broader and deeper engagement with significant improvements over the existing ASEAN+1 FTAs, while recognising the individual and diverse circumstances of the participating countries.

### LIST OF MINISTERS/REPRESENTATIVES

- (a) **Hon. Steven Ciobo MP**, Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment, Australia;
- (b) **H.E. Dato Seri Paduka Haji Erywan bin Pehin Yusof**, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade II, Brunei Darussalam;
- (c) **H.E. Sok Sopheak**, Under Secretary of State, Ministry of Commerce (representing **H.E. Pan Sorasak, Minister of Commerce**, Cambodia);
- (d) **H.E. Wang Shouwen**, Vice Minister of Commerce and Deputy China International Trade Representative, People's Republic of China (representing **H.E. Zhong Shan**, Minister of Commerce, People's Republic of China);
- (e) **Mr. Anup Wadhawan**, Officer on Special Duty (OSD) and designate Vice Minister and Secretary, Department of Commerce (representing **H.E. Suresh Prabhakar Prabhu**, Minister for Commerce and Industry, India);
- (f) **H.E. Enggartiasto Lukita**, Minister of Trade, Republic of Indonesia;
- (g) **H.E. Hiroshige Seko**, Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry, Japan;
- (h) **H.E. Hyun Chong KIM**, Minister for Trade, Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy, Republic of Korea;
- (i) **H.E. Mrs. Khemmani Pholsena**, Minister of Industry and Commerce, Lao PDR;
- (j) **Datuk Isham Ishak**, Deputy Secretary-General (Trade), Ministry of International Trade and Industry, Malaysia;
- (k) **H.E. Set Aung**, Deputy Minister for Planning and Finance, Myanmar (representing **H.E. Soe Win**, Union Minister for Planning and Finance, Myanmar);
- (l) **Hon. Damien O'Connor**, Minister of State for Trade and Export Growth, New Zealand;
- (m) **H.E. Ramon M. Lopez**, Secretary of Trade and Industry, Republic of the Philippines;
- (n) **H.E. Chan Chun Sing**, Minister for Trade and Industry, Singapore;
- (o) **H.E. Chutima Bunyapraphasara**, Deputy Minister of Commerce, Thailand (representing **H.E. Sonthirat Sonthijirawong**, Minister of Commerce, Thailand);
- (p) **H.E. Tran Tuan Anh**, Minister of Industry and Trade, Viet Nam; and
- (q) **H.E. Dato Lim Jock Hoi**, Secretary-General of ASEAN.