

2025 JOINT LEADERS' STATEMENT ON THE REGIONAL COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP

Issued in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on 27 October 2025

1. We, the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Participating Countries – ASEAN Member States, Australia, China, Japan, New Zealand and Republic of Korea gathered on 27 October 2025 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, on the occasion of the 5th RCEP Summit.
2. We reaffirmed our commitment to the World Trade Organization (WTO) rules and principles as the foundations of an open, transparent, fair and rules-based multilateral trading system that ensures predictability and non-discrimination for all trading partners. We underscored that regional integration pursued within the framework of the multilateral trading system, with the WTO at its core, is fundamental to the region's economic stability, resilience and long-term prosperity, and highlighted the importance of ambitious WTO reform to ensure the organisation better deliver on the interests of all Members.
3. We recognised the pivotal role of RCEP in contributing to regional economic integration and cooperation. We are also deeply conscious of the importance of strengthening the region's economic resilience amidst current global and regional economic and trade uncertainties. In this context, we reiterated our firm commitment to enhancing the full and effective implementation of the RCEP Agreement as a vital step towards achieving the full potential of the region's trade and growth.
4. We also reaffirmed our commitment to refraining from taking any measures inconsistent with the obligations under the RCEP Agreement, ensuring that markets remain open, free and rules-based, removing unnecessary barriers to trade, and strengthening trade and investment facilitation for all.
5. We underscored the importance of the RCEP Agreement and domestic reforms in ensuring a level playing field and in promoting strong and resilient domestic and regional growth. We also acknowledged the essential role of regional governments' efforts to mitigate uncertainties in the global economy.
6. To achieve these shared objectives and with a view to ensuring that the Agreement remains relevant and responsive to regional and global challenges, we have instructed Ministers and Officials to intensify efforts to:
 - i. Enhance the full and effective implementation of the RCEP Agreement;
 - ii. Advance the accession process of applicants into the RCEP Agreement while ensuring that the standards of the RCEP Agreement are maintained;
 - iii. Advance the RCEP economic cooperation agenda to narrow the gap of implementation, particularly for the less developed economies and address longer-term emerging challenges such as climate change, digital transformation and supply chain vulnerabilities;
 - iv. Strengthen RCEP institutions, through the establishment of an effective RCEP Secretariat;

- v. Commence the preparation for the General Review of the RCEP Agreement, scheduled for 2027, and continue discussions on ways to accelerate the implementation of the RCEP Agreement to ensure a level playing field and promote strong and resilient domestic and regional growth, including by progressing the built-in agenda and expanding the benefits of RCEP by, among others, considering options to incorporate provisions on modern and emerging issues;
 - vi. Engage businesses and other stakeholders in supporting implementation of the RCEP Agreement and advancing the economic cooperation agenda, thereby ensuring that RCEP remains inclusive.
7. We reaffirmed our support to ASEAN centrality and commitment in promoting open and inclusive regional economic integration that is mutually beneficial and forward-looking. To this end, we welcomed initiatives that reinforce regional economic resilience, in the spirit of open regionalism.