

2025 JOINT MEDIA STATEMENT OF THE 4TH REGIONAL COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP MINISTERS' MEETING

Issued in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on 25 September 2025

1. ASEAN alongside Australia, China, Japan, New Zealand, and the Republic of Korea gathered in Kuala Lumpur on 25 September 2025 for the Fourth RCEP Ministers' Meeting. The Meeting was co-chaired by H.E. Dyah Roro Esti Widya Putri, Vice Minister of Trade of the Republic of Indonesia and H.E. Yoji Muto, Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry of Japan.
2. The Meeting exchanged views on the recent regional and global economic developments and their implications for trade, investment, and economic integration, and discussed ways to strengthen the implementation of the RCEP Agreement in support of free and fair trade and rules-based multilateral trading system, particularly amid the emerging global economic landscape.
3. Recognising the pivotal role of RCEP in contributing to regional economic integration and cooperation, the Meeting underscored the importance of deepening trade and investment relations and building economic resilience and reaffirmed its full commitment to actively promote the RCEP Agreement so that it can be effectively utilised by businesses in the region. The Meeting also noted the importance of working towards the scheduled 2027 General Review of the Agreement, to ensure that the RCEP remains relevant amidst a changing economic landscape. The Meeting also remained committed to refrain from taking any measures inconsistent with the obligations under the RCEP Agreement, as well as to keep markets open, free, and rules-based, to remove unnecessary barriers to trade and strengthen trade and investment facilitation for all.
4. The Meeting expressed appreciation for the full operationalisation of the RCEP Support Unit (RSU) and its efforts to date in providing secretariat support to the RCEP Joint Committee (RJC) and its subsidiary bodies (SBs), thereby contributing to the effective implementation of the RCEP Agreement.
5. The Meeting noted the progress that has been made by the RJC and its SBs in implementing the RCEP Agreement and encouraged the officials to continue their work to ensure the transparent, smooth and effective implementation of the RCEP Agreement. In particular, the Meeting commended the Committee on Goods (COG), the Committee on Business Environment (CBE), and the Committee on Sustainable Growth (CSG) for the progress they have made.
6. The Meeting also welcomed the "Report of the RCEP Dialogue on Electronic Commerce," organised by Japan with the support from RSU, and encouraged the officials to continue their efforts in promoting the development and use of Electronic Commerce. The Meeting expressed appreciation to Australia, China, Japan, New Zealand, and the Republic of Korea for their Economic and Technical Cooperation (ECOTECH) activities, which were implemented to promote the RCEP Agreement and to support ASEAN in its efforts to deepen regional economic integration. The Meeting reiterated the importance of the ECOTECH cooperation under the RCEP Agreement in supporting the inclusive and robust implementation and utilisation of the RCEP Agreement. In this regard, the Meeting encouraged RCEP Participating Countries (RPCs) to continue to engage in more ECOTECH cooperation activities in order to promote and narrow the gap in the implementation of the RCEP Agreement as well as to address common challenges.

7. The Meeting reaffirmed that RCEP is an open and inclusive regional agreement and, in this regard, welcomed the adoption of the Terms of Reference (TOR) of the *Ad Hoc* Accession Working Group (AWG) by the RJC. The Meeting tasked the RJC to proceed with the consideration of the request for accession, in accordance with the Procedures for Accession to the RCEP Agreement, with a view to advancing the accession process while ensuring the high standards of RCEP are maintained.
8. The Meeting welcomed the adoption of the Guidelines for the RCEP Stakeholder Engagement by the RJC, which provides guidance for RPC's collective engagement with relevant stakeholders. In this regard, the Meeting acknowledged the progress made by the RJC in convening its first consultation with the RCEP Business Advisory Council (RBAC) on 23 August 2025, on the sidelines of the 10th RJC Meeting. The Meeting also encouraged RJC and its SBs to make further progress in its stakeholder engagement, with a view to garnering strategic inputs and concrete recommendations to strengthen the implementation of the RCEP Agreement.