

Framework Agreements on Enhancing ASEAN Economic Cooperation

Singapore, 28 January 1992

The Sultan of Brunei Darussalam, the President of the Republic of Indonesia, the Prime Minister of Malaysia, the President of the Republic of the Philippines, the Prime Minister of the Republic of Singapore and the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Thailand:

Reaffirming their commitment to the ASEAN Declaration of 8 August 1967, the Declaration of ASEAN Concord of 24 February 1976, the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia of 24 February 1976, the 1977 Accord of Kuala Lumpur and the Manila Declaration of 15 December 1987;

Desiring to enhance intra-ASEAN economic cooperation to sustain the economic growth and development of all Member States which are essential to the stability and prosperity of the region;

Reiterating their commitment to the principles of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (hereinafter referred to as "GATT");

Recognising that tariff and non-tariff barriers are impediments to intra-ASEAN trade and investment flows, and that existing commitments to remove these trade barriers could be extensively improved upon;

Noting the significant unilateral efforts made by Member States in recent years to liberalise trade and promote investments, and the importance of extending such policies to further open up their economies, given the comparative advantages and complementarity of their economies;

Recognising that Member States, having different economic interests, could benefit from subregional arrangements;

Conscious of the rapid and pervasive changes in the international political and economic landscape, as well as both challenges and opportunities yielded thereof, which need more cohesive and effective performance of intra-ASEAN economic cooperation;

Mindful of the need to extend the spirit of friendship and cooperation among Member States to other regional economies, as well as those outside the region which contribute to the overall economic development of Member States;

Recognising further the importance of enhancing other fields of economic cooperation such as in science and technology, agriculture, financial services and tourism;

Have Agreed As Follows:

Article I: Principles

1. Member States shall endeavour to strengthen their economic cooperation through an outward-looking attitude so that their cooperation contributes to the promotion of global trade liberalisation.

2. Member States shall abide by the principle of mutual benefit in the implementation of measures or initiatives aimed at enhancing ASEAN economic cooperation.

3. All Member States shall participate in intra ASEAN economic arrangements. However, in the implementation of these economic arrangements, two or more Member States may proceed first if other Member States are not ready to implement these arrangements.

Article 2: Areas of Cooperation

A. Cooperation in Trade

1. All Member States agree to establish and participate in the ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA) within 15 years. A ministerial-level Council will be set up to supervise, coordinate and review the implementation of the AFTA.

2. The Common Effective Preferential Tariff (CEPT) Scheme shall be the main mechanism for the AFTA. For products not covered by the CEPT Scheme, the ASEAN Preferential Trading Arrangements (PTA) or any other mechanism to be agreed upon, may be used.

3. Member States shall reduce or eliminate non-tariff barriers between and among each other on the import and export of products as specifically agreed upon under existing arrangements or any other arrangements arising out of this Agreement.

4. Member States shall explore further measures on border and non-border areas of cooperation to supplement and complement the liberalisation of trade.

B. Cooperation in Industry, Minerals and Energy

1. Member States agree to increase investments, industrial linkages and complementarity by adopting new and innovative measures, as well as strengthening existing arrangements in ASEAN.

2. Member States shall provide flexibility for new forms of industrial cooperation. ASEAN shall strengthen cooperation in the development of the minerals sector.

3. Member States shall enhance cooperation in the field of energy, including energy planning, exchange of information, transfer of technology, research and development, manpower training, conservation and efficiency, and the exploration, production and supply of energy resources.

C. Cooperation in Finance and Banking

1. Member States shall strengthen and develop further ASEAN economic cooperation in the field of capital markets, as well as find new measures to increase cooperation in this area.

2. Member States shall encourage and facilitate free movement of capital and other financial resources, including further liberalisation of the use of ASEAN currencies in trade and investments, taking into account their respective national laws, monetary controls and development objectives.

D. Cooperation in Food, Agriculture and Forestry

1. Member States agree to strengthen regional cooperation in the areas of development, production and promotion of agricultural products for ensuring food security and upgrading information exchanges in ASEAN.
2. Member States agree to enhance technical joint cooperation to better manage, conserve, develop and market forest resources.

E. Cooperation in Transportation and Communications

1. Member States agree to further enhance regional cooperation for providing safe, efficient and innovative transportation and communications infrastructure network.
2. Member States shall also continue to improve and develop the intra-country postal and telecommunications system to provide cost-effective, high quality and customer-oriented services.

Article 3: Other Areas of Cooperation

1. Member States agree to increase cooperation in research and development, technology transfer, tourism promotion, human resource development and other economic-related areas. Full account shall also be taken of existing ASEAN arrangements in these areas.
2. Member States, through the appropriate ASEAN bodies, shall regularly consult and exchange views on regional and international developments and trends, and identify ASEAN priorities and challenges.

Article 4: Sub-regional Economic Arrangements

Member States acknowledge that sub-regional arrangements among themselves, or between ASEAN Member States and non-ASEAN economies, could complement overall ASEAN economic cooperation.

Article 5: Extra-ASEAN Economic Cooperation

To complement and enhance economic cooperation among Member States, and to respond to the rapidly changing external conditions and trends in both the economic and political fields, Member States agree to establish and/or strengthen cooperation with other countries, as well as regional and international organisations and arrangements.

Article 6: Private Sector Participation

Member States recognise the complementarity of trade and investment opportunities, and therefore encourage, among others, cooperation and exchanges among the ASEAN private sectors and between ASEAN and non-ASEAN private sectors, and the consideration of appropriate policies aimed at promoting greater intra-ASEAN and extra-ASEAN investments and other economic activities.

Article 7: Monitoring Body

The ASEAN Secretariat shall function as the body responsible for monitoring the progress of any arrangements arising from this Agreement. Member States shall cooperate with the ASEAN Secretariat in the performance of its duties.

Article 8: Review of Progress

The ASEAN Economic Ministers' Meeting and its subsidiary bodies shall review the progress of implementation and coordination of the elements contained in this Agreement.

Article 9: Settlement of Disputes

Any differences between the Member States concerning the interpretation or application of this Agreement or any arrangements arising therefrom shall, as far as possible, be settled amicably between the parties. Whenever necessary, an appropriate body shall be designated for the settlement of disputes.

Article 10: Supplementary Agreements or Arrangements

Appropriate ASEAN economic agreements or arrangements, arising from this Agreement, shall form an integral part of this Agreement.

Article 11: Other Agreements

1. This Agreement or any action taken under it shall not affect the rights and obligations of the Member States under any existing agreements to which they are parties.
2. Nothing in this Agreement shall affect the power of Member States to enter into other agreements not contrary to the terms and objectives of this Agreement.

Article 12: General Exceptions

Nothing in this Agreement shall prevent any Member State from taking action and adopting measures which it considers necessary for the protection of its national security, the protection of public morals, the protection of human, animal or plant life and health, and the protection of articles of artistic, historic and archaeological value.

Article 13: Amendments

All Articles of this Agreement may be modified through amendments to this Agreement agreed upon by all the Member States. All amendments shall become effective upon acceptance by all Member States.

Article 14: Entry Into Force

This Agreement shall be effective upon signing.

Article 15: Final Provision

This Agreement shall be deposited with the Secretary General of the ASEAN Secretariat who shall promptly furnish a certified copy thereof to each Member State.

In Witness Whereof, the undersigned have signed this Framework Agreement on Enhancing ASEAN Economic Cooperation.

Done at Singapore, this **28th day of January, 1992** in a single copy in the English Language.

For Brunei Darussalam :

HAJI HASSANAL BOLKIAH
Sultan of Brunei Darussalam

For the Republic of Indonesia :

SOEHARTO
President

For Malaysia :

DR MAHATHIR BIN MOHAMAD
Prime Minister

For the Republic of the Philippines :

CORAZON C AQUINO
President

For the Republic of Singapore :

GOH CHOK TONG
Prime Minister

For the Kingdom of Thailand :

ANAND PANYARACHUN
Prime Minister