



ASEAN-AUSTRALIA-NEW ZEALAND FREE TRADE AREA (AANZFTA)

THE THIRTEENTH MEETING OF FTA JOINT COMMITTEE 19, 21-22 July 2021 (Virtual Meeting)

The Thirteenth Meeting of the AANZFTA Joint Committee (FJC) was held virtually on 19 and 21-22 July 2021. Representatives from all ASEAN Member States (AMS), Australia, and New Zealand, as well as the staff members from the ASEAN Secretariat attended the Meeting, which was co-chaired by:

- a) Ms. Nor Zerlina Momin, Acting Director, Trade Division, Ministry of Finance and Economy, Brunei Darussalam, on behalf of the ASEAN Member States;
- b) Mr. Michael Dean, Acting Assistant Secretary, FTA Policy and Implementation Branch, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, for Australia; and
- c) Mr. Keawe Woodmore, Manager, FTA Implementation Unit, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, for New Zealand.

All FJC Subsidiary Bodies (SBs) reported on their ongoing work and plans, either to take forward elements included under the AANZFTA upgrade negotiations, or to implement the commitments and cooperation activities under the AANZFTA. These subsidiary bodies are:

- (i) *Committee on Trade in Goods (CTG)*
- (ii) *Sub-Committee on Customs Procedure and Trade Facilitation (SC-CPTF)*
- (iii) *Sub-Committee on Rules of Origin (SC-ROO)*
- (iv) *Sub-Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SC-SPS)*
- (v) *Sub-Committee on Technical Regulations and Conformity Assessment Procedures (SC-STRACAP)*
- (vi) *Committee on Trade in Services (CTS)*
- (vii) *Sub-Committee on Telecommunications (SC-TEL)*
- (viii) *Committee on Electronic Commerce (CEC)*
- (ix) *Working Group on Government Procurement (WG-GP)*
- (x) *Committee on Investment (COI)*
- (xi) *Committee on Competition (CC)*
- (xii) *Intellectual Property Committee (IPC)*
- (xiii) *Sub-Committee on Financial Services (SC-FIN)*
- (xiv) *Sub-Committee on Economic Cooperation (ECSC)*

SUMMARY OF THE MAIN OUTCOMES

1. Issues Arising from the Upgrade Negotiation of the AANZFTA

EMPHASISED the importance for the subsidiary bodies to ensure that the Agreement remains of high standard, fit for purpose, future-proof for any future challenges, relevant to businesses and people. **EMPHASISED** the need for future-proofing the Agreement by incorporating elements that would contribute to accelerating post-pandemic economic recovery and building economic resilience.

NOTED the ASEAN's preference on the scope of Trade and Sustainable Development (TSD), as proposed by New Zealand, that should be limited to cooperation, information sharing, and capacity building, as well as not be subjected to Dispute Settlement Mechanism given this issue being relatively new to ASEAN.

EXPRESSED the possibility to utilise the 9th ASEAN-CER Integration Partnership Forum (IPF) as a starting point to better understand on the topics and elements of TSD under the cooperation.

WELCOMED the Philippines' Non-Paper, "Proposed Inclusion of an MSME Chapter as Part of the AANZFTA Upgrade Negotiations" for further deliberation by FJC.

AGREED to consider the RCEP Chapter on SME as a basis for the discussion.

2. FJC Work Programme and AANZFTA Upgrade Work Plan

REITERATED the importance of aligning the FJC Work Programme with the AANZFTA upgrade to capture specific issues that require FJC's guidance.

NOTED and PROVIDED GUIDANCE on the progress of discussion conducted by FJC and its subsidiary bodies towards the conclusion of the AANZFTA Upgrade Negotiations, including inclusion of cross-cutting issues such as MSME.

3. Economic Cooperation

WELCOMED commitments from Australia and New Zealand for their support to the AECSP Successor Programme and encouraged SBs to continue exploring the possibility of developing new short-term projects relevant to the AANZFTA upgrade agenda.

NOTED that AECSP Successor Programme is scheduled to commence on 1 January 2022, with a six-month transition period to ensure smooth implementation of the successor programme by 1 July 2022.

NOTED the progress of “*Lesson Learned from the RCEP Agreement and Other Relevant FTAs to support the AANZFTA Upgrade Negotiations*”, which will give significant inputs for SBs to consider possible elements for the AANZFTA Upgrade.

NOTED the progress of “*AECSP Symposium: Results, Lessons Learned and Future Directions of the AANZFTA Economic Cooperation*” which would mark the 11th year implementation of AECSP and define potential areas of priorities for the AECSP Successor Programme.

4. The 9th ASEAN-CER Integration Partnership Forum

NOTED that New Zealand is developing a concept note with detailed information and plans on the possibility to organize the 9th ASEAN-CER Integration Partnership Forum (IPF) this year.