



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

THE FIFTEENTH MEETING OF THE ASEAN-AUSTRALIA-NEW ZEALAND FREE TRADE AREA (AANZFTA) JOINT COMMITTEE (15TH FJC) 16 February and 7 March 2022 (Virtual Meeting)

The Fifteenth Meeting of the AANZFTA Joint Committee (15th FJC) was held virtually on 7 March 2022. The Preliminary Meeting of the 15th FJC was held on 16 February 2022. Representatives from all ASEAN Member States (AMS), Australia, and New Zealand, as well as the staff members from the ASEAN Secretariat attended the Meetings, which were co-chaired by:

- a) Ms. Nor Zerlina Momin, Acting Director, Trade Division, Ministry of Finance and Economy, Brunei Darussalam, on behalf of the ASEAN (during the Preliminary Meeting of the 15th FJC on 16 February 2022);
- b) Mr. Yusdiman Saman, Acting Assistant Director, Trade Division, Ministry of Finance and Economy, Brunei Darussalam, on behalf of the ASEAN during the 15th FJC on 7 March 2022);
- c) Ms. Juliana Nam, Assistant Secretary, FTA Policy and Implementation Branch, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, for Australia; and
- d) Mr. Keawe Woodmore, Deputy Director General, FTA Implementation Unit, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, for New Zealand.

The FJC Co-Chairs emphasised the importance of ensuring the AANZFTA remains of high standard and quality, fit for purpose, relevant, and adds value to businesses. It is important to maintain momentum on the upgrade negotiations and for FJC to provide clear guidance for Subsidiary Bodies (SBs) to move the negotiations forward by exercising their utmost flexibility. It was also highlighted that the possible inclusion of trade and sustainable development and micro, small and medium enterprises would support the post-pandemic recovery. The FJC Co-Chairs encouraged the AANZFTA Parties to refocus the negotiations towards its targeted conclusion by September 2022.

FJC SBs who are involved in the upgrade negotiations and/or have their meeting after the 14th FJC reported on their ongoing work and plans. These SBs are:

- (i) *Sub-Committee on Customs Procedure and Trade Facilitation (SC-CPTF)*
- (ii) *Committee on Trade in Services (CTS)*
- (iii) *Sub-Committee on Telecommunications (SC-TEL)*
- (iv) *Sub-Committee on Financial Services (SC-FS)*

- (v) *Working Group on Government Procurement (WG-GP)*
- (vi) *Committee on Investment (COI)*
- (vii) *Committee on Electronic Commerce (CEC)*
- (viii) *Economic Cooperation Sub-Committee (ECSC)*

SUMMARY OF THE MAIN OUTCOMES

1. The AANZFTA Upgrade Negotiations

AGREED that the upgraded AANZFTA should add value to existing agreements, taking into account recommendations from the Comparative Study from RCEP Agreement and Other Relevant FTAs to support the AANZFTA Upgrade Negotiations. **REQUESTED** SBs to determine and identify the value-adding elements under its upgraded chapters, provide justifications, and report to the 16th FJC Meeting.

NOTED that the substantial conclusion of the AANZFTA Upgrade Negotiations is a Priority Economic Deliverable (PED) of Cambodia and **URGED** Parties to expedite domestic consultations and exercise their utmost flexibility with a view to meeting the targeted timeline of September 2022.

TASKED SBs to accelerate the text-based negotiations and attribution to texts, identify any outstanding issues and surface options to the FJC for resolutions.

TASKED the Economic Cooperation Sub-Committee (EC-SC) to look into the concept paper for possible inclusion and placement of Trade and Sustainable Development (TSD) provisions in the upgraded AANZFTA, without prejudice to the outcomes of the negotiations.

AGREED to establish an Ad-hoc Group on Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) to look into the concept paper for possible inclusion and placement of MSMEs provisions in the upgraded AANZFTA, without prejudice to the outcomes of the negotiations.

URGED the Working Group on Legal and Institutional Issues (WGLII) to convene the 1st meeting as soon as possible and to finalise the legal drafting guidelines begin the legal scrubbing of concluded chapters, and discuss the legal aspects for Chile's possible accession.

2. FJC Work Programme and AANZFTA Upgrade Negotiations Monitoring Progress

TASKED SBs to update their work plan and to schedule additional meetings, as necessary. **NOTED** that ASEAN proposed to have one additional Senior Economic Official Meeting – Closer Economic Relations (SEOM-CER) Consultation in June 2022.

REQUESTED the ASEAN Secretariat to continue updating the monitoring table as appropriate.

3. Economic Cooperation

ENDORSED the AANZFTA Implementation Support (AIS) Programme as the successor programme of the AANZFTA Economic Cooperation Support Programme (AECSP) beyond June 2022.

NOTED the legal and operational documents that may be needed for the operationalisation of the AANZFTA Implementation Support (AIS) programme.
TASKED the ASEAN Secretariat to undertake the necessary preparations.

NOTED that the AECSP has supported 98 projects across nine Economic Cooperation Work Programme (ECWP) components, with 84 completed, three discontinued, and 11 ongoing projects.

NOTED the status of the project approval and implementation of the interim projects, namely: (i) AANZFTA Consumer Affairs Programme Phase II (CAP II); (ii) Competition Law Implementation Program Phase V (CLIP V); (iii) the ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework Committee Phase V; (iv) STRACAP Work Implementation Program (SWIP) – Stream 2: Cooperation in International Standards Engagement in Cosmetics Analysis; and (v) ASEAN Regional Diagnostic Network (ARDN) - Phase III.

4. The 9th ASEAN-CER Integration Partnership Forum (9th ASEAN-CER IPF)

NOTED that New Zealand has contracted the consultant to manage the 9th ASEAN-CER IPF under the theme of Trade and Sustainable Development and preferably to be held after the EC-SC's discussion on the concept paper.
REQUESTED the ASEAN Secretariat to coordinate with New Zealand in finding a suitable date for the 9th ASEAN-CER IPF.

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