

FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT ON COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION
BETWEEN THE ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH EAST ASIAN NATIONS AND THE PEOPLE'S
REPUBLIC OF CHINA

PREAMBLE

WE, the Heads of Government/State of Brunei Darussalam, the Kingdom of Cambodia, the Republic of Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic ("Lao PDR"), Malaysia, the Union of Myanmar, the Republic of the Philippines, the Republic of Singapore, the Kingdom of Thailand and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, Member States of the Association of South East Asian Nations (collectively, "ASEAN" or "ASEAN Member States", or individually, "ASEAN Member State"), and the People's Republic of China ("China"):

RECALLING our decision made at the ASEAN-China Summit held on 6 November 2001 in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam, regarding a Framework on Economic Co-operation and to establish an ASEAN-China Free Trade Area ("ASEAN-China FTA") within ten years with special and differential treatment and flexibility for the newer ASEAN Member States of Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Viet Nam ("the newer ASEAN Member States") and with provision for an early harvest in which the list of products and services will be determined by mutual consultation;

DESIRING to adopt a Framework Agreement on Comprehensive Economic Co-operation ("this Agreement") between ASEAN and China (collectively, "the Parties", or individually referring to an ASEAN Member State or to China as a "Party") that is forward-looking in order to forge closer economic relations in the 21st century;

DESIRING to minimise barriers and deepen economic linkages between the Parties; lower costs; increase intra-regional trade and investment; increase economic efficiency; create a larger market with greater opportunities and larger economies of scale for the businesses of the Parties; and enhance the attractiveness of the Parties to capital and talent;

BEING confident that the establishment of an ASEAN-China FTA will create a partnership between the Parties, and provide an important mechanism for strengthening co-operation and supporting economic stability in East Asia;

RECOGNISING the important role and contribution of the business sector in enhancing trade and investment between the Parties and the need to further promote and facilitate their co-operation and utilisation of greater business opportunities provided by the ASEAN-China FTA;

RECOGNISING the different stages of economic development among ASEAN Member States and the need for flexibility, in particular the need to facilitate the increasing participation of the newer ASEAN Member States in the ASEAN-China economic co-operation and the expansion of their exports, including, inter alia, through the strengthening of their domestic capacity, efficiency and competitiveness;

REAFFIRMING the rights, obligations and undertakings of the respective parties under the World Trade Organisation (WTO), and other multilateral, regional and bilateral agreements and arrangements;

RECOGNISING the catalytic role that regional trade arrangements can contribute towards accelerating regional and global liberalisation and as building blocks in the framework of the multilateral trading system;
HAVE AGREED AS FOLLOWS:

ARTICLE 1 Objectives

The objectives of this Agreement are to:

- (a) strengthen and enhance economic, trade and investment co-operation between the Parties;
- (b) progressively liberalise and promote trade in goods and services as well as create a transparent, liberal and facilitative investment regime;
- (c) explore new areas and develop appropriate measures for closer economic co-operation between the Parties; and
- (d) facilitate the more effective economic integration of the newer ASEAN Member States and bridge the development gap among the Parties.

ARTICLE 2 Measures For Comprehensive Economic Co-operation

The Parties agree to negotiate expeditiously in order to establish an ASEAN-China FTA within 10 years, and to strengthen and enhance economic co-operation through the following:

- (a) progressive elimination of tariffs and non-tariff barriers in substantially all trade in goods;
- (b) progressive liberalisation of trade in services with substantial sectoral coverage;
- (c) establishment of an open and competitive investment regime that facilitates and promotes investment within the ASEAN-China FTA;
- (d) provision of special and differential treatment and flexibility to the newer ASEAN Member States;
- (e) provision of flexibility to the Parties in the ASEAN-China FTA negotiations to address their sensitive areas in the goods, services and investment sectors with such flexibility to be negotiated and mutually agreed based on the principle of reciprocity and mutual benefits;
- (f) establishment of effective trade and investment facilitation measures, including, but not limited to, simplification of customs procedures and development of mutual recognition arrangements;
- (g) expansion of economic co-operation in areas as may be mutually agreed between the Parties that will complement the deepening of trade and investment links between the Parties and formulation of