



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

THE FOURTEENTH MEETING OF THE AANZFTA JOINT COMMITTEE 29 NOVEMBER 2021 (Virtual Meeting)

The Fourteenth Meeting of the AANZFTA Joint Committee (FJC) was held virtually on 29 November 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) Ms. Juliana Nam, Assistant Secretary, FTA Policy and Implementation Branch, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, for Australia; and
- c) Mr. Keawe Woodmore, Deputy Director General, FTA Implementation Unit, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, for New Zealand.

FJC Co-Chairs highlighted the importance for FJC Leads to provide guidance on the issues and challenges faced by SBs, as well as to constantly remind the respective SBs the purpose of the negotiations, which is to ensure that the Agreement remains fit for purpose, relevant, and adds value to businesses. There were also need to stock take and provide specific guidelines for negotiators and the committees noting that the upgrade negotiation is at the halfway point of the agreed timeline for conclusion by September 2022.

FJC Subsidiary Bodies (SBs) who are involved in the upgrade negotiations and/or have their meeting after the 13th FJC reported on their ongoing work and plans. 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 Technical Regulations and Conformity Assessment Procedures (SC-STRACAP)*
- (v) *Committee on Trade in Services (CTS)*
- (vi) *Sub-Committee on Telecommunications (SC-TEL)*
- (vii) *Sub-Committee on Financial Services (SC-FS)*
- (viii) *Working Group on Government Procurement (WG-GP)*
- (ix) *Committee on Investment (COI)*
- (x) *Committee on Competition (CC)*
- (xi) *Committee on Electronic Commerce (CEC)*

SUMMARY OF THE MAIN OUTCOMES

1. Issues Arising from the Upgrade Negotiation of the AANZFTA

ENCOURAGED the SBs to intensify their discussions to conclude the negotiations by September 2022.

AGREED for SBs to adopt the “Friends of the Chair” approach, where necessary, to accelerate the negotiation process. **ENCOURAGED** SBs to identify issues and challenges faced during the course of negotiations for FJC’s guidance, including by providing relevant options with justifications to facilitate the FJC’s discussions and decisions.

AGREED to establish the Working Group on Legal and Institutional Issues (WGLII) to work on legal aspects during the negotiations and other issues as requested by FJC.

NOTED that the scope of the TSD provisions, if included in the AANZFTA, should be limited to cooperation, information sharing, capacity building and should not be subjected to Dispute Settlement Mechanism (DSM).

NOTED that the placement of the MSME provision, if included in the AANZFTA, whether in a dedicated chapter or attached to existing chapters, will be subject to further negotiations by FJC. **NOTED** the Philippines’ suggestion to establish a dedicated committee to support the discussion and negotiation on MSME

2. FJC Work Programme and AANZFTA Upgrade Work Plan

NOTED updates on the FJC Work Programme including cross-cutting issues such as TSD and MSME.

TASKED SBs to hold more meetings, if necessary, and to conclude the negotiations as soon as possible in order to meet the target of conclusion of the AANZFTA Upgrade by September 2022.

REQUESTED SBs to provide continuous update to the ASEAN Secretariat regarding their future meetings in 2022.

3. Economic Cooperation

NOTED that full design of AECSP Successor Programme as well as the AANZFTA Implementation Support (AIS) Programme’s Facility are currently being finalised by the design team.

NOTED the progress of the report, *“Lesson Learned from the RCEP Agreement and Other Relevant FTAs to support the AANZFTA Upgrade Negotiations”*, which is currently in the process of finalisation.

NOTED the progress of *AANZFTA Website Consultancy 2021*, with the aim to update the AANZFTA website which served as a portal to provide information to the relevant stakeholders, promote greater public awareness and understanding of the AANZFTA implementation, benefits, and opportunities that AANZFTA offers.

NOTED the progress of *Monitoring Utilisation of AANZFTA Tariff Preferences Phase II – Building Individual Parties Capacities to Submit Compatible Data for CTG Analysis*.

4. The 9th ASEAN-CER Integration Partnership Forum

NOTED that that New Zealand is looking to hosting the 9th ASEAN-CER IPF in the 1st Quarter of 2022 and would appreciate cooperation in finding a suitable date in due course.