

**REMARKS  
BY  
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DEPUTY SECRETARY-GENERAL OF ASEAN FOR ASEAN ECONOMIC  
COMMUNITY**

**24<sup>TH</sup> ASEAN DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF CUSTOMS MEETING  
20-22 MAY 2015, BRUNEI DARUSSALAM**

Your Excellencies,

Eddie Dato Paduka Hj Sunny, Permanent Secretary (Performance), Ministry of Finance, Brunei Darussalam

Nguyen Ngoc Tuc, Director-General of the General Department of Viet Nam Customs

Maswadi Hj Mohsin, Acting Controller of Customs of Royal Customs and Excise Department of Brunei Darussalam

Distinguish Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen

Good morning!

2015 marks a milestone for ASEAN as we begin to realize our vision as one community. Over the past years we have worked hard to realize this vision and today we have made significant advancement in shaping an environment within the region for businesses to invest and thrive. Such advancement, amongst others, include:

- (a) Elimination of duties for 96% of products traded in ASEAN;
- (b) Establishment of interagency body at the national level in each Member State to strengthen domestic coordination to address NTM/NTBs;
- (c) Commencement of two Self-certification Pilot Projects to expedite the clearance of goods to further reduce transaction costs;

- (d) Completion of the transposition of ATIGA Product Specific Rules and the textile single list from HS 2007 into HS 2012;
- (e) Entry into force of the ASEAN Agreement on Customs;
- (f) Signing of the Protocol 7 on Customs Transit System under the ASEAN Framework Agreement on Facilitation of Goods in Transit;
- (g) Successful conclusion of the scaled down ASW pilot project involving the exchange of ATIGA Form D and the ASEAN Customs Declaration Document; and
- (h) Commencement of the full-fledged ASW pilot project in early April 2015 which will paved the way for the parallel testing and live implementation from July 2015 to November 2015.

It is no exaggeration to point out that such advancement would not have been possible without an efficient and harmonized customs procedures in place. It is imperative for ASEAN Customs to maintain the momentum and remain committed towards modernization and reform by adopting best practices on rulings pertaining to tariff classifications, customs enforcement, post-clearance audits and strategic management.

Such momentum and commitments would not only be key to the timely implementation of pending strategic measures leading up to end of 2015 but also facilitate broader and deeper regional integration beyond 2015 to create a level of flexibility and agility for ASEAN economies to scale to a level of international competitiveness.

In this regards, I would like to seek the support of the ASEAN Customs Director-General on the timely implementation of the following pending strategic measures to facilitate a seamless flow of goods, services and investment in the region:

- (a) Completion of the signing and ratification of the Protocol on the Legal Framework to Implement the ASEAN Single Window;

- (b) Ratification of the Protocol 7 on Customs Transit System under the ASEAN Framework Agreement on Facilitation of Goods in Transit;
- (c) Conclusion, signing and ratification of the Protocol 2 on Designation of Frontier Post under the ASEAN Framework Agreement on Facilitation of Goods in Transit; and
- (d) Completion of National Trade Repositories which are precursors to the ASEAN Trade Repository to provide a single point of access to all the trade-related information of ASEAN Member States.

The roles of Customs beyond 2015 will be more multi-faceted in an increasingly globalized world which is characterized by proliferation of free trade areas between least developed, developing and developed countries. Such developments would require Customs to adapt their regulatory and facilitative measures to the evolving business environment.

Towards this end, I would like to put forward some suggestions for the ASEAN Customs Director-General consideration in the context of the development of the AEC Post 2015 agenda:

- (a) Given the increasing complexity in the global supply chain, it is essential for Customs to adopt a total supply chain security approach to maintain ASEAN's position as an efficient, reliable, secure and trusted trading hub;
- (b) It is also important for ASEAN Customs to take note of the increasing specialization adopted by the private sectors and engage them in a holistic manner with the view to help them to develop their respective competitive niches;
- (c) More efforts should also be exerted to keep rules of origin simplified, business-friendly and trade-facilitative with the view to help SMEs to expand, upgrade, and deepen their linkages within the region; and
- (d) Capacity building programme for customs officers should be intensified so that they will be equipped with the requisite

capabilities to address future demands on Customs as its role become more multi-faceted.

Thank you.