

**The Union of Myanmar National Initiative undertaking
support in Multilateral Trading System**

Excellencies

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Marrakesh Agreement enshrined in its preamble that member states in the field of trade and economic endeavour should be conducted with a view to raising standards of living, ensuring full employment and a large and steadily growing volume of real income and effective demand, and expanding the production of and trade in goods and services, while allowing for the optimal use of the world's resources in accordance with the objective of sustainable development, seeking both to protect and preserve the environment and to enhance the means for doing so in a manner consistent with their respective needs and concern at different levels of economic development.

It also recognizes that there is need for positive efforts designed to ensure that developing countries, and especially the least developed among them, secure a share in the growth in international trade commensurate with the needs of their economic development. It also enshrined the principle that there is determination to preserve the basic principle and to further the objectives underlying the multilateral trading system.

The objective of the WTO also encourage regional organizations to enhance this spirit to preserve the Multilateral Trading System. ASEAN also has taken up this idea of Multilateral Trading System.

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The ASEAN Endeavours

The ASEAN leaders at their Summit in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in December 1997 decided to transform ASEAN into a stable, prosperous, and a highly competitive region with equitable economic development, and reduced poverty and socio-economic disparities now known as ASEAN Vision 2020.

Then in Bali October, 2003 Summit ASEAN Leaders declared that ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) shall be the goal through regional economic integration (Bali Concord II) by 2020. Subsequently, the ASEAN Economic Ministers Meeting (AEM) held in 2006 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, agreed to develop " a single and coherent blueprint for advancing AEC by identifying characteristics of AEC by 2015 consistent with the Bali Concord II with clear targets and timelines for implementation of various measures. "

At the 12th ASEAN Summit in January 2007, the Leaders affirmed their strong commitment to accelerate the establishment

of an ASEAN Community by 2015 as envisioned in the ASEAN Vision 2020 in the ASEAN Concord II.

In particular the Leaders agreed to hasten the establishment of the ASEAN Economic Community by 2015 as to transform ASEAN into a region with free movement of goods and services and investments and skill labour and freer flow of capital.

The characteristics of AEC is that ASEAN shall act in accordance with the principle of outward looking, inclusive and market driven economy consistent with Multilateral Rule as well as adherence to rule base system with effective compliance implementation of economic commitments.

Thus, the AEC envisages the following key characteristics: (a) single market production base, (b) a highly competitive economic region, (c) a region of equitable economic development, and (d) a region fully integrated into the global economy.

Incorporating these elements in one blueprint shall ensure the consistency and coherence of these elements as well as the implementation and proper coordination among relevant stakeholders.

The ASEAN objectives and the preamble of the WTO are quite in line to promote the principle of Multilateral Trading System.

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Myanmar Endeavours

Myanmar is one of the founding members of WTO since at its birth of the WTO in January 1st, 1995. As an initiative to promote Multilateral Trading System to cooperate with the principles of WTO administratively it has an office for WTO in Geneva, Switzerland. There is also a separate department under the Ministry of Commerce that works on WTO matters. Myanmar is fully cooperating with the WTO.

In the ASEAN after becoming a member of the Organization Myanmar is actively taking part in ASEAN Summits with participation in Meetings mentioned above. The blueprint of ASEAN Economic Community is also studied with great enthusiasm like other ASEAN member states.

Endeavours are also made to be able to make the Strategic Schedule of ASEAN Economic Community taken interview the priority actions which are already underway in various areas.

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Conclusion

WTO gave birth to the concept of a Multilateral Trading System encouraging Regional arrangements. This idea was integrated into the ASEAN concept of AEC laying down the blueprint and Strategic Schedule for the AEC. Myanmar being a

member state of ASEAN is in cooperating with the ASEAN in the Strategic Schedule.

Thank you.