



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Volume 6/Issue 1 - January 2020

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN



Dear EU-ABC members, partners and colleagues,

First, allow me to wish each of you a Happy New Year and a prosperous and healthy 2020.

We started last year with daily news of financial market volatility, US-China trade tension, China's transition to a slower growth trajectory, and worries about "hard Brexit" —and ASEAN as a region of comparative stability. We enter 2020 with stock markets in an uptrend, somewhat better news on US-China and Brexit having entered a new phase (with still many uncertainties to be resolved). As we entered the Chinese New Year holidays, however, uncertainty came back with the outbreak of the new coronavirus in Hubei. We must be vigilant, and assist however possible the efforts in China and internationally to contain the spread.

ASEAN growth slowed a bit in 2019, but, in the views, European business, ASEAN remains the region of greatest opportunity by almost two to one. With 88% of European businesses planning to expand trade and investment in ASEAN, the Business Council's most important objective is to help create a positive business environment to help make that possible. A recent survey ("The State of Southeast Asia: 2020") of ASEAN citizens rank Europe as the second most trusted partner to "do the right thing" to contribute to global peace, security, prosperity and governance (Japan was #1, US #3, and China and India tied at #4). It behoves all of us to live up to those expectations of trust by delivering talent, innovation, IP, jobs, investment and sustainable business models that lead to shared prosperity and progress toward the Sustainable Development Goals.

This year the EU-ABC will continue to engage with ASEAN bodies, ASEAN member states, the European Commission, and other key organisations and I urge all members to be active and be heard. There are many opportunities to get involved. I draw your attention in particular to the following key events and dates in the first half of 2020:

- Trade & Investment Mission to Thailand: 17-19 February, Bangkok
- ASEAN Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors Meeting: 26-27 March, Halong Bay, Vietnam
- Brussels visit and ASEAN event: 23 & 24 April
- Trade & Investment Mission to Myanmar: 8-9 June
- ASEAN Customs Directors General Meeting: 10-12 June, Nay Pyi Taw
- EU-ABC AGM and Gala Dinner: 15 June, Singapore

In addition please be on the lookout for announcements of other events and programs.

Later in 2020 we will organise several other Trade and Investment missions and also the 8th EU-ASEAN Business Summit in September.

Work is also underway on the development of a position papers on healthcare and life sciences, financial services, automotive and digital economy sectors, as well as papers on trade facilitation & customs issues and sustainability issues. We invite all of our members to play an active role in developing positions on these topics, and in proposing new ones.

I would like to thank each of our existing members for your continued support and engagement. We are here to serve the interests of our members so please do not hesitate to contact either myself or our Executive Director Chris Humphrey if you have questions or ideas for how to further strengthen or develop the EU-ABC.

Best wishes for the New Year and New Decade!

Kind regards,

Donald Kanak
Chairman

EU-ABC EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

Seminar Series - Entering the Emerging Markets of ASEAN: A Comparison between Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar and Thailand



The EU-ASEAN Business Council started off the year with our first seminar, **Entering the Emerging Markets of ASEAN: A Comparison between Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar and Thailand**.

Held on 17 January at the [EU Delegation to Singapore Office](#), speakers from [Luther](#), each subject matter experts in their respective markets, shared with attendees information on market entry, market access restrictions, tax regimes, labour law, acquisition of land, forex rules and FTAs & the potential effects of RCEP for Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar and Thailand.

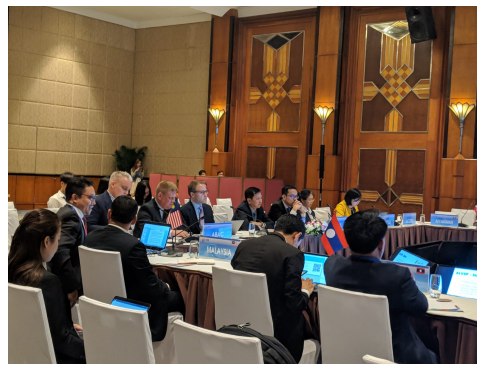
A truly engaging and informative session where attendees gained valuable insights on how to successfully undertake market entry from a legal perspective to four of the fastest growing economies in the region.

We look forward to bringing you more exciting events and seminars through the year. Stay up to date with our latest events through [here](#).

For more information about hosting a seminar with us, click [here](#)

Many thanks to EU Delegation to Singapore office for hosting the seminar.

Find more pictures from the event at our EU-ABC [Facebook page](#).



The EU-ABC attend the 16th edition of the ASEAN Trade Facilitation Joint Consultative Committee (ATF-JCC) held by the Ministry of Industry and Trade (MoIT) in Hanoi on 9 – 10 January 2020. It is the first meeting organised by MoIT since Vietnam took over ASEAN Chairmanship from Thailand.

Areas covered in the meeting included cooperation in facilitating intra-ASEAN trade, initiatives on simplifying customs procedures with the aim of reducing 10 percent of trading cost within the bloc in 2020 and also touched on the establishing a mechanism for exchanging information about NTMs, the increase of consultation between ASEAN governments and the business community. A proposal for regulatory impact assessment of NTMs was also discussed.

High-Level Symposium on Enhancing Intra-ASEAN Trade and Investment for a Cohesive and Responsive ASEAN



Chris Humphrey, Executive Director of [EU-ABC](#), was invited to the ***High-Level Symposium on Intra-ASEAN Trade and Investment: Enhancing Intra-ASEAN Trade and Investment for Cohesive and Responsive ASEAN Community***.

Held in Hanoi, Vietnam, on 10 January 2020, Chris was part of a panel discussing how to boost intra-ASEAN trade, sharing his views on the correlation between ASEAN's involvement in Global Value Chains and how that translates to intra-ASEAN trade and investment. Catch a snippet of the panel discussion [here](#)

Roundtable Discussion on Non-Tariff Barriers (NTBs) in ASEAN between the Private Sector and the ATF-JCC



On 22nd January in Bangkok, the EU-ABC, with assistance from the EU's ARISE+ project, and in collaboration with ASEAN BAC, organised a roundtable discussion with key ASEAN officials on moves to eliminate Non-Tariff Barriers in ASEAN.

The Roundtable followed on from the publication in June 2019 by the EU-ABC and ASEAN BAC of their joint report on Non-Tariff Barriers in the region (see: [here](#)) and provided a valuable platform for senior trade officials from ASEAN Member States and the private sector to exchange views and ideas on how to make faster progress on this key issue.

The Roundtable was addressed by the current Chair of the Co-ordinating Committee for ATIGA, Kejpiroon Kate Kohsuwan of the Ministry of Commerce in Thailand, and also from the author of the original report, Deborah Elms of the Asian Trade Centre."

EU-ABC UPCOMING EVENTS

EU-ABC Forward Look Calendar 2020



Luncheon with the Vietnamese Ambassador to Singapore

Date: Wednesday 12 February 2020
Time: 12pm - 2pm
Venue: No Menu Restaurant
23 Boon Tat Street Singapore 069621



The EU-ABC is honored to be hosting an exclusive by invite only roundtable luncheon to the Vietnamese Ambassador to Singapore.



MISSION TRIP TO BANGKOK

Date: 17 - 19 February 2020

The EU-ASEAN Business Council is organising a mission trip to Thailand to meet with the following Ministries and organisations:

- Prime Minister, H.E. Gen. Prayut Chan-o-cha with Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs Deputy Prime Minister, H.E. Somkid Jatusripitak
- Bank of Thailand
- Customs Department
- Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives
- Ministry of Commerce
- Ministry of Digital Economy and Society
- Ministry of Energy
- Ministry of Finance
- Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation
- Ministry of Industry
- Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment
- Ministry of Public Health
- Ministry of Tourism and Sports
- Ministry of Transport
- Board of Investment

Members, please indicate your interest to attend at info@eu-asean.eu.

- EU-ABC MNC Members have free access to three trips per annum.

- It will be chargeable from the fourth mission trip of the year onwards at SG\$2,500.
- Associate members will be charged SG\$1,250 per mission trip.
- Non-member companies who wish to join the delegation MUST qualify for EU-ABC membership to attend at a charge of SG\$2,500.
- Number of delegates per company will be limited to 3 persons (individual meeting capacity subject to availability based on respective ministries).

Transforming ASEAN to Leverage on Sustainable FTAs

24 February 2020

EU Delegation Office Singapore



SAVE THE DATE

Date: Monday 24 February 2020

Venue: EU Delegation Office Singapore

As ASEAN looks towards moving up the value chain, the grouping needs to prioritise sustainable and equitable growth to ensure that no one gets left behind. Moving past populist politics, export-oriented economies in ASEAN also need to reform and transform themselves to be able to capitalise on sustainable FTAs. Already, countries like Vietnam are moving towards this trend with the EU-Vietnam Free Trade Agreement, where there are legally binding rules on climate, labour and human rights.

Join the **EU-ASEAN Business Council** and **ASEAN CSR Network** as we bring you a dynamic roundtable discussion on Sustainable FTAs.

More details to follow, to indicate interest kindly click [here](#)

NEW EU-ABC MEMBERS

Angelica
AC TRADE ADVISORY

ASIA • PRACTICALITY • EMPOWERMENT

AC Trade Advisory is a firm believer in providing clients with practical, holistic and sustainable solutions to their international trade & customs matters, with a strong focus on Asia. Our team of international trade & customs practitioners have a wealth of experience, having worked in multinational corporations and reputable professional services firms with international portfolios.

With our first-hand knowledge of the dynamic international trade & customs landscape, practical know-hows and collaborative working experiences with other functions within companies such as tax, legal and supply chain etc., we are truly well-placed to understand our clients' international trade & customs needs and provide real value add to our clients' business in driving trade efficiencies and compliance.

PARTNER NEWS

INDUSTRY PRACTITIONER MASTERCLASS

USING FREE TRADE AGREEMENTS FOR YOUR BUSINESS TO ACHIEVE IMPORT DUTY SAVINGS

WHO SHOULD ATTEND:
For executives and professionals who are interested to make sense of the technical jargon of free trade agreements and actually use free trade agreements in their business contexts to achieve import customs duty savings



DATE : 26th -27th February 2020
TIME : 9AM - 5PM
VENUE : Suntec City Convention Centre
FEE : S\$1600 (Public)
S\$1300 (Clients and Alliance Partners)

4TH INTAKE

Knowledge Partner and Organiser:



Supported by:

Against the global backdrop of increasing trade uncertainties, free trade agreements (FTAs) remain a shining beacon for cross border merchandise trade to flourish with improved market access, reduced and eliminated import customs duties. However, businesses often find the underlying FTA legal texts to be difficult for non-international trade law personnel to read, digest and more importantly to translate them into operational and actionable steps.

Join AC Trade Advisory as they bring their fourth edition of Industry Practitioner Masterclass where expert trainers with rich industry practitioner and consulting backgrounds share more insights on the practical business interpretations of key FTA rules of origin and how to achieve FTA duty savings.

Register under EU-ABC to access the partner fee by clicking [here](#)



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