



ASEAN
13th SUMMIT 2007
SINGAPORE



13th ASEAN Summit
18 – 22 November 2007
Shangri-La, Singapore

13TH ASEAN SUMMIT PRESS STATEMENT

LIBERALISATION OF TRADE IN SERVICES IN ASEAN

The ASEAN Economic Ministers (AEM) today signed in Singapore the Protocol to Implement the 6th Package of Services Commitments under the ASEAN Framework Agreement on Services (AFAS). The AEM also signed two Mutual Recognition Arrangements (MRAs) for Architectural Services and Qualitative Surveying Services.

2 The AFAS provides the broad guidelines for ASEAN Member Countries to progressively improve Market Access and ensure National Treatment (non-discrimination between local and foreign investors/service suppliers) for services suppliers among ASEAN countries. ASEAN has concluded six packages of commitments under the AFAS through four rounds of negotiations since 1 January 1996. For this 6th Package, ASEAN Member Countries made commitments in the Priority Integration Sectors, namely Air Travel, Healthcare, e-ASEAN (telecommunications and IT services) and Tourism. These represent a considerable improvement over ASEAN Countries' commitments under the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) of the World Trade Organization (WTO).

3 Going forward, ASEAN will focus deliberations on the 5th Round of the AFAS which is expected to be concluded by August 2008. Besides ensuring that commitments are adhered to for meaningful services liberalisation, ASEAN's focus will also be on compiling the impediments/limitations to trade in services in order to foster greater transparency and gradual removal. On the MRA front, other areas being discussed include Accountancy, Medical Practitioners, Dentistry and Tourism Manpower.

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