

**MINISTER LIM HNG KIANG TO ATTEND THE 15<sup>th</sup> ASEAN ECONOMIC  
COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETING AND RELATED MEETINGS  
IN MANILA, THE PHILIPPINES, 11-12 NOVEMBER 2017**

1. Minister for Trade and Industry (Trade) Lim Hng Kiang will be in Manila, the Philippines from 11-12 November 2017 to attend the 15<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) Council Meeting, the Preparatory Meeting of the ASEAN Economic Ministers (AEM) and the Inter-Sessional Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Ministerial Meeting. These meetings will take place alongside the 31<sup>st</sup> ASEAN Summit and Related Summits that will be attended by Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong.
2. At these meetings, the Ministers will discuss the progress made in implementing the AEC 2025 Blueprint and deliverables under The Republic of the Philippines' 2017 ASEAN Chairmanship. Ministers from ASEAN and its Dialogue Partner countries will also take stock of the status of negotiations on the RCEP, in preparation for the RCEP Leaders' Meeting on 14 November 2017.
3. On 12 November, Ministers from ASEAN and the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development of Hong Kong, China (HKC) will also sign the ASEAN – HKC Free Trade Agreement (AHKFTA) and the ASEAN – HKC Investment Agreement (AHKIA) which will enhance relations and strengthen economic cooperation between ASEAN and HKC. Negotiations for the AHKFTA and AHKIA were launched by leaders of ASEAN and HKC at the 22<sup>nd</sup> ASEAN Summit in April 2013 and were concluded in July 2017. The ratification process for the AHKFTA and AHKIA is expected to be completed within two years.
4. Mr Lim will be accompanied by officials from the Ministry of Trade and Industry.

**Ministry of Trade and Industry**

11 November 2017

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