

**Opening Address By**

**Yang Mulia Pengiran Hj Md Zain bin Pengiran Hj Abdul Razak  
Acting Permanent Secretary  
Ministry Of Communications  
Brunei Darussalam**

**At**

**The 23<sup>rd</sup> ASEAN Consultative Committee on Standards and Quality  
(ACCSQ) Automotive Product Working Group (APWG) Meeting**

**On**

**Tuesday, 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2016**

**At**

**The Centrepont Hotel, Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam**

Bismillahirrahmanirrahim.

Honourable Heads of Delegations, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. Assalamu'alaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh and a very good morning.
2. On behalf of the Government of Brunei Darussalam, I'm very delighted to extend my warmest welcome to you to Brunei Darussalam and to the 23<sup>rd</sup> ASEAN Consultative Committee on Standards and Quality (ACCSQ) Automotive Product Working Group (APWG) Meeting. It is indeed a great honor for Brunei Darussalam to once again host this significant event.

Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

3. In less than a decade, ASEAN GDP has nearly doubled to US\$2.6 trillion in 2014<sup>1</sup>, outpacing most economies of the world. In automotive sector alone, ASEAN is reported to be one of the largest automotive market in the world and it will continue to gain in importance as a production base for the world's biggest car manufacturers, especially from Asia, the US and the EU<sup>2</sup>.
4. With the combined 3<sup>rd</sup> largest population in the world, just after India and China, ASEAN is anticipated to continue to grow rapidly as a consumer market for vehicles<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Chairman's Statement of the 27<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit Kuala Lumpur, 21 November 2015. *Online*

<sup>2</sup> ASEAN Automotive: Looking to 2015, 2014. The Economist. Intelligence Unit. *Online*

<sup>3</sup> ASEAN Automotive: Looking to 2015, 2014. The Economist. Intelligence Unit. *Online*

Ladies and Gentlemen,

5. The establishment of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC), as announced by our Leaders during the 27<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit, held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia<sup>4</sup> last year, is a major milestone, positioning ASEAN as a market with less barrier, freer flow of goods and services, investment, skilled labour and flow of capital and hence offering wider trade, investment and job opportunities.
6. Its impact to the automotive sector is substantial. It will help to spur increased competition, innovations and economic dynamism in the region's automotive market.
7. However, as in any other sector, non-tariff barriers have remained a challenge.

Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

8. I believe, this is where the works and initiatives of the APWG are relevant and important in removing those barriers and hence improving ASEAN competitiveness and facilitating trade with the rest of the world.
9. Among others, this includes the completion of the ASEAN Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA) on Type Approval for Automotive Products.
10. As we are fully aware of, the main objective of this MRA is to ensure that once a regulated automotive product is tested by a listed testing

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<sup>4</sup> Chairman's Statement of the 27<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit Kuala Lumpur, 21 November 2015. *Online*

laboratory and/or inspected by the listed inspection body in the exporting Member States, the product can enter and be marketed in the importing Member States without being subjected to further testing or inspection in the importing Member States.

11. I have been made to understand that MRA of products in other economic sectors such as in ICT is also being pursued and it may be worthwhile to compare their progress with that of the automotive sector and see if there is anything to be learnt from these sectors.
12. With the successful implementation of the MRA, producers will find it easier and less costly to export their automotive components and systems to other members of ASEAN, thus greatly contributing to the realization of the AEC.
13. I learned that the MRA is targeted to be submitted to ASEAN Consultative Committee for Standards and Quality (ACCSQ) for endorsement by June 2016 and to be endorsed by SEOM and subsequently signed by the ASEAN Economic Ministers (AEM) in the fourth quarter of 2016.
14. I understand that this is a big task and I believe with your collective wisdom and under the ASEAN spirit of goodwill, friendship and cooperation, you can achieve this goal.

Honourable Heads of Delegations, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

15. Without taking much more of your time, I wish you all a constructive and fruitful meeting.

16. Lastly, I also hope that you will find time to visit some of the interesting places here in our Kingdom Of Unexpected Treasure, Brunei Darussalam.
17. With the Kalimah “Bismillahirrahmanir Rahim”, it is my great pleasure to declare the 23<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the ASEAN Consultative Committee on Standards and Quality (ACCSQ) Automotive Product Working Group (APWG) officially open.

Thank you.

Wabillahi Taufik Walhidayah, Wassalamu'alaikum Warrahmatullahi Wabarakatuh.