

Thailand Attends Special ASEAN-Australia Foreign Ministers Meeting on COVID-19 (2/7/2020)



Foreign Minister Don Pramudwinai on 30 June 2020 attended the Special ASEAN-Australia Foreign Ministers Meeting on Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) via videoconference, according to a release issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Dato Seri Hishammuddin Tun Hussein, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Malaysia, as the Country Coordinator for ASEAN-Australia Dialogue Relations, co-chaired the Meeting with Senator the Hon. Marise Payne, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for Women of Australia.

The Meeting discussed ASEAN-Australia cooperation in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic through strengthening public health cooperation and mitigating socio-economic impacts on the people and businesses in ASEAN.

On this occasion, the Foreign Minister underscored the importance of the international community, including ASEAN and Australia, in working together to recover and build back better in this post-COVID-19 world, whether it is the economy, society or the environment.

He also highlighted the need to foster and promote a stable and peaceful environment that will be conducive for recovery to succeed. Under the ASEAN-Australia framework, the Foreign Minister encouraged exchanging information and collaborating on vaccines and anti-viral medicines, which once available should be global public goods at affordable price.

He also encouraged both sides to work towards the signing of the RCEP within this year, enhance digital economy to support businesses, especially MSMEs, as well as enhancing necessary digital skills for the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

He invited Australia to support the COVID-19 ASEAN Response Fund and to work with the ASEAN Centre for Sustainable Development Studies and Dialogue on sustainable cooperation projects to build regional resilience against future emergencies.

ASEAN and Australia have entered into the 46th year of its Dialogue Relations this year. Australia is ASEAN's first Dialogue Partner and is a Strategic Partner of ASEAN that has supported ASEAN across the 3 pillars.

This Meeting is another demonstration of ASEAN and Australia's mutual determination in addressing the COVID-19 and its impacts on the region for a sustainable recovery.