

RCEP: Challenging ASEAN Centrality

By Tan Sri Dr Rebecca Fatima Sta Maria
ERIA Senior Policy Fellow
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Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia



Getting to the Basics: the ASEAN Way

- Top – Down,
Government-driven
- Informal and incremental approach to co-operation through lengthy consultation and dialogue (consensus, non-interference)
- ‘National interests’ and ‘sovereignty’ still prevail



RCEP: the Ambition



Streamline and consolidate the existing ASEAN+1 FTAs

Improve commitments and reduce the gaps in the ASEAN+1 FTAs to create a highly competitive economic area

Strengthen regional production and supply network, and integration into the global economy

RCEP: Scope and Coverage, beyond +1 FTAs

- Comprehensive market access
- Trade and business facilitation
- Trade remedies
- Economic cooperation
- Trade in Goods, Trade in Services and Investments
- Economic and technical cooperation
- Competition policy and Intellectual property rights
- Dispute settlement mechanism
- E-commerce

RCEP Scope and Coverage

- Government procurement, labour and environment are not covered in the negotiations but there is request from some RCEP participating countries to include these elements in the negotiations
- The RCEP is not an exclusive regional grouping
- Other countries can participate only after the existing 16 countries have completed the negotiations

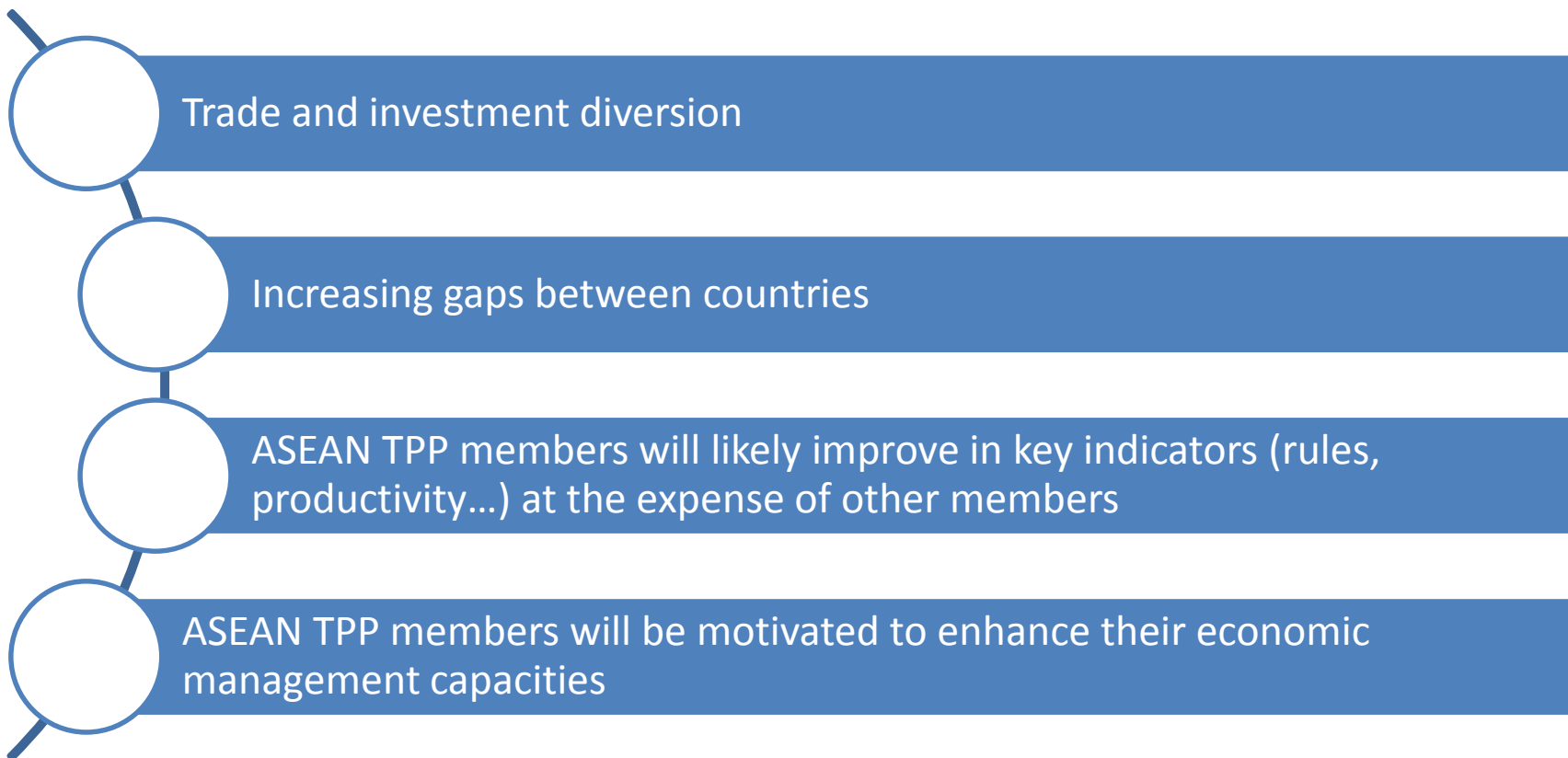
The Reality...

- ASEAN Centrality?
 - Diversity in membership, different levels of development
 - ASEAN negotiating as a group, lowest common denominator?
- Challenges among the ASEAN FTA Partners (China-India; China-Japan; Japan-Korea; Japan-NZ)
- TPP: the 3rd party in the negotiation?
- Who's the champion?

TPP and RCEP: Mutually Exclusive or Mutually Reinforcing?



TPP = Negative Impact on ASEAN Integration?



BUT... 'better rules and regulations, more efficient production' should work for all...



- Trade facilitation: TBT; SPS
- Inclusive, SMEs

ERIA
Sentral Senayan II, 6th Floor
Jalan Asia Afrika No. 8
Gelora Bung Karno, Senayan
Jakarta Pusat 10270
Indonesia
www.eria.org