



## Agenda 1. Discussion on the Future Strategy of ERIA

### **Background and Discussion Points**

#### **(Background)**

#### **Completing a Decade of Integration in East Asia**

1. The year 2015 marked the Declaration of the ASEAN Community and the 10th anniversary of the establishment of the East Asia Summit (EAS). At this important stage, East Asia has reaffirmed its commitments for strategic dialogue and cooperation on political, security, and economic issues of common regional concern to promote peace, stability, and economic prosperity in the region. The Kuala Lumpur Declaration on the 10th anniversary of the East Asia Summit and the Kuala Lumpur Declaration on ASEAN 2025: Forging Ahead Together outline the task ahead for the region and for the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA).

#### **Dynamic Response to Regional Demands and the Global Environment**

2. The world economy is marred with slow rates of growth accompanied by slowing demands for goods and services. A dynamic response to these issues require even greater commitment to sustainable and inclusive growth than ever before. Countries of the East Asia region have accordingly enhanced their cooperation with greater focus on partnerships that deepen economic integration and make growth inclusive and resilient. Connectivity within and beyond the region will be a driver for strong global value chains, supported by quality infrastructure and transparent trade and investment rules. Further liberalisation of trade in goods and services with trade facilitation reform is the dynamics that this region will be addressing in full through the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP).



### **Supporting the Regional Integration and Global Connections in the Next Decade and Beyond**

3. ERIA has closely supported growth and integration in the region with academic research, capacity building, and advocacy activities. It has provided strong research documents to policymakers and businesses on regional economic integration, Comprehensive Asia Development Plan, ASEAN Economic Community, ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community, economic partnership agreements particularly RCEP, connectivity, non-tariff measures, small and medium enterprises, disaster management, social security, sustainable development, and energy. The ASEAN Economic Community Blueprint 2025 recognises ERIA as one of the two organisations whose research and related works are the basis of the document and as among the key institutions expected to contribute to its implementation. ERIA is committed to fulfil its role as detailed in the Plan of Action to Implement the Phnom Penh Declaration on EAS Development Initiative (2015–2017), released in Kuala Lumpur in November 2015.

#### **(Discussion points: The way forward)**

4. ERIA should continuously review its policy focus with due consideration to (i) deepening ASEAN integration, (ii) realising an inclusive East Asia, and (iii) addressing regional issues beyond ASEAN.

5. To support the region face even greater challenges, ERIA needs to strengthen the capacity of its academic research, capacity building programmes, and advocacy activities.

6. ERIA has provided policy directions and conceptual policy frameworks based on its solid academic studies, which have been well received by the region. As the region's expectation of ERIA increases, Ministers and Officials have requested ERIA to provide concrete and actionable policy recommendations.



**Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia**

**7. To respond to the request, ERIA recognises the need to build a bridge and conduit between policymakers in the region and ERIA’s academic research programmes. For this sake, ERIA proposes:**

- a. Organising policy workshops, possibly back to back with official meetings of ASEAN and/or East Asia, to enhance interactions between policymakers in the region, including senior officials, and leading academics, including ERIA researchers;**
- b. Establishing a ‘Policy Innovation Department’ that will:**
  - i. Draw from ERIA studies to develop concrete and innovative policy options for the region that can be discussed, decided, and implemented by the frameworks of ASEAN and East Asia, or by individual Member States,**
  - ii. Translate policy initiatives of the region into research agendas and initiate policy innovations, together with the ERIA research team, that address structural or growth bottlenecks.**

**8. Based on the discussion at the Special Governing Board Meeting, the Secretariat will table the draft reform plan for the next Governing Board Meeting.**

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