

## Foreword [ERIA]

Over the years, multilateral trade negotiations have helped to substantially reduce tariff rates. While tariffs have been reduced, the number of non-tariff measures (NTMs) is increasing and is often blamed to be a source of the lack of integration in ASEAN. Yet, in spite of their growing number, we generally have little understanding and information, and thus there is an urgent need to develop a better understanding and transparency of existing NTMs.

The Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA), in collaboration with the United Nations Conference for Trade and Development (UNCTAD), and ASEAN national teams consisting of economists and government officials of ASEAN countries collected and classified NTMs in the 10 ASEAN countries (Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Viet Nam) based on the latest Multi Agency Support Team February 2012 classification. They worked on all regulations and official documents, including international conventions adopted by countries which had been in effect by January 2015.

The project is led by Lili Yan Ing (ERIA) and Santiago Fernandez de Cordoba (UNCTAD). The report editing team consists of Rizqy Anandhika and Ruth Elisabeth. The core team consists of Michelle Ayu Chinta Kristy, Chi Le Ngo, Maxim Gubarev, Fabien Dumesnil, and Denise Penello-Rial. The project is advanced through the supervision and comments from Shujiro Urata (ERIA), Olivier Cadot (Lausanne University), Ralf Peters (UNCTAD), Ponciano Intal, Jr. (ERIA), and Guillermo Valles Galmes (UNCTAD). The successful work would not have been possible without the invaluable work of national teams composed of the economists and government officials of ASEAN countries.

The project consists of two phases: NTM data collection (the data were released in January 2016) and country report (April 2016) and data analyses on how NTMs will affect trade in the region (January 2017). The project aims to (i) collect, validate, and store NTM data from official sources; (ii) improve the general understanding of these measures and their impact on world trade; and (iii) provide insights on NTMs in ASEAN countries.

The project also significantly benefited from the supervision and support of ASEAN government officials, particularly Sta. Rebecca Fatimah (MITI Malaysia), Sulaimah Mahmood (MTI Singapore), Donna Gultom (MOT Indonesia), Phuong Van Hoang (MIT Viet Nam), and Mark Ng (MTI Singapore). Along the way of conducting the project, the initial work and preliminary

findings were well endorsed and accepted at the ASEAN's Senior Economic Officials Meeting in August 2015 in Kuala Lumpur, at the ASEAN's High Level Task Force in January 2016 in Vientiane and East Asian Senior Economic Officials Meeting in April 2016 in Kuala Lumpur.

This initiative is only the beginning of the journey of ASEAN to improve the transparency of NTMs. ERIA and UNCTAD will work hand in hand with ASEAN member states in improving NTM transparency and overall trade environment.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "H. Nishimura". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "H" and a stylized "Nishimura".

Professor Hidetoshi Nishimura

President of ERIA

Jakarta, April 2016