

**ASEAN EXPERTS GROUP ON COMPETITION (AEGC) REGIONAL WORKSHOP:
COMPETITION ECONOMICS IN PRACTICE**

7 – 9 Februari 2017, Brunei Darussalam

Date: 10 Jamadilawal 1438

07 February 2017

1. The Department of Economic Planning and Development (JPKE), the Prime Minister's Office, through the Competition and Consumer Affairs Division, brought together more than 30 senior officials from local government agencies as well as regional competition agencies within ASEAN to learn about ***Competition Economics in Practice***. The three-day workshop, beginning today, is organized in collaboration with the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC), New Zealand Commerce Commission (NZCC) and the ASEAN Secretariat, supported under the ASEAN-Australia-New Zealand Free Trade Area (AANZFTA) Competition Law Implementation Program (CLIP).
2. The workshop was officiated by Yang Mulia Dr Hajah May Fa'ezah Binti Haji Ahmad Ariffin, Deputy Permanent Secretary (Economy and Finance) at the Prime Minister's Office.
3. In her welcoming remarks, Yang Mulia Dr Hajah May Fa'ezah highlighted the important co-relationship between competition and sustainable economic growth as a result of increased productivity. The need to improve productivity right across Brunei has been highlighted many times in achieving our Wawasan 2035. There is a proven correlation between competition and productivity in countries that already implemented the law.
4. Yang Mulia Dr Hajah May Fa'ezah explained that one of the fundamental aims of competition law enforcement is to generate efficiency and productivity in the economy, particularly the key target sectors, which in turn contribute to accelerated

economic growth. This may have particularly strong effects on the cost of production, making the country more competitive, an important determinant in attracting foreign direct investment and promoting domestic business growth.

5. Through deterring anti-competitive behaviours such as cartels or abusive dominant behaviours, firms are incentivized to be more efficient, increase innovation and enhance consumer choice and product quality. Therefore, in addition to fostering economic growth, competition law plays an important role in supporting higher consumer welfare.
6. Currently, nine ASEAN Member States (AMSs) already have competition laws in place including Brunei Darussalam. Brunei Darussalam passed its Competition Order in 2015. The JPKE through the Competition Division has already started some advocacy work with the public sector policy makers, before rolling out to the broader community. So far, there is a high level of support and interest, especially touching upon 'bid rigging' issues. The Division will continue to raise awareness on the benefits of the law and to address any misconception on the scope of the law.
7. As Competition law is a complex and dynamic subject involving both legal and economic aspects. The theme chosen for this workshop, "Competition Economics in Practice", is one which has been requested by AMSs, that focuses on the economic pinning of competition law enforcement. This workshop offers not just economics concepts but also practical components, including cases, practical experiences and perspectives by other competition practitioners within the AMSs, to help participants understand better the application of theories. Specifically, the workshop will cover the use of economics concepts and analysis in the key prohibitions in competition law including cartels, bid-rigging, anti-competitive agreements, abuse of dominance and anti-competitive mergers.
8. Developing a competitive and innovative ASEAN community that sustains high economic growth and robust productivity is one of the top priorities in ASEAN

economic integration. In this regards, ASEAN Member States are to work towards effective enforcement of competition law, by providing a level playing field for all enterprises, especially the micro, small and medium enterprises.

9. The workshop is conducted at the Rizqun International Hotel, Gadong, Bandar Seri Begawan from 7 to 9 February 2017.
