

Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership – Negotiating Round 29, April 2020

The 29th Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Trade Negotiating Committee (TNC) meeting was held virtually between 20-29 April. 15 RCEP parties attended the negotiation, with India being absent.

The meeting was chaired by Indonesia, with the Republic of Korea acting as Facilitator for ASEAN FTA partners, and was the first full round of negotiations for 2020. Negotiators agreed to intensify the few outstanding bilateral market access negotiations.

Negotiators made good progress on a number of outstanding technical issues including the institutional arrangements and scheduling of commitments. Negotiators acknowledged the status of the legal verification process, being undertaken in parallel.

Negotiators agreed on presenting a proposal to India outlining a package of flexibilities to resolve India's outstanding issues and facilitate India's re-engagement in the negotiation with a view to achieve signature of RCEP by all 16 parties in November 2020.

The contents of the proposal was agreed to on the final day of Round 29 and was, in tandem with a joint statement, sent to India soon after. The 15 parties, including New Zealand, look forward to receiving India's response.

The joint statement can be found here: https://asean.org/storage/2017/11/RCEP-TNC-29-Joint-Statement_Final_ForUploading.pdf