

**EU-ASEAN BUSINESS COUNCIL PUBLISHES DATA GOVERNANCE REPORT TO SUPPORT VIETNAM'S ASEAN CHAIRMANSHIP: MAKES RECOMMENDATIONS AIMED AT IMPROVING ASEAN'S DIGITAL ECOSYSTEM**

**Singapore, 20 April 2020:** Supporting Vietnam's Chairmanship Theme of a Cohesive and Responsive ASEAN, the EU-ASEAN Business Council (EU-ABC) has published a paper to help advance the discussion on how ASEAN leaders can approach the issue of data governance at a time when cross border data flows are becoming key economic drivers.

**"Data Governance In ASEAN: From Rhetoric to Reality"** explores ways in which ASEAN governments can create regulations that take full consideration of international best standards and which are compatible within ASEAN and with the global community. This will minimise complexity and cost for businesses, which can be especially important for MSMEs. The movement of data across borders is essential to the global economy and is key in sustaining global commerce and trade, and particularly so for Southeast Asia as the digital economy has been one of the region's success stories. In 2019, the region's digital economy crossed the US\$100 billion mark, a three-fold growth in barely four years. ASEAN also has the third largest number of mobile-phone users in the world and the fourth largest number of Internet and Facebook users, making Southeast Asia one of the most data rich regions in the world.

Commenting on the paper, EU-ABC Chairman Donald Kanak said: "As countries in the region are in varying levels of physical lockdowns due to Covid-19, millions more citizens are taking to digital tools such as online learning, video conferencing and telemedicine. This places ever greater importance on data security and privacy protection. ASEAN leaders are rightfully focusing on these issues with ASEAN's Data Management Framework. We hope this report can provide useful inputs on how ASEAN can best bridge gaps in data governance, safeguard its citizens and improve long-term competitiveness and access to global markets."

Kees Jan Boonen, Head Public Affairs, Asia Pacific at Booking.com reiterated that "Data is the foundation for tech, therefore it is important we address the apprehension that surrounds it. This means taking the complexity out of governing data and allowing businesses and governments to work in a holistic way that allows such technology and ASEAN's digital economy to reach its full potential."

Claudia Chan, Senior Director of Government Affairs for SAP Southeast Asia concluded that: "For ASEAN to propel immense digitisation growth opportunities, it is imperative for member states to continue leveraging on building a strong foundation of progressive data governance policies that are business-friendly, promote cross border data flows that are in line with international and industry standards."

--END--



## **About the EU-ASEAN Business Council**

The EU-ASEAN Business Council (EU-ABC) is the primary and sole voice for European business covering all of the ASEAN region.

It is recognised by the European Commission and the ASEAN Secretariat and is an accredited entity under Annex 2 of the ASEAN Charter. Independent of both bodies, the Council has been established to help promote the interests of European businesses operating within ASEAN and to advocate for changes in policies and regulations which would help promote trade and investment between Europe and the ASEAN region. The Council works on a sectorial and cross-industry basis to help improve the investment and trading conditions for European Businesses in the ASEAN region through influencing policy and decision makers throughout the region and in the EU, as well as acting as a platform for the exchange of information and ideas amongst its members and regional players within the ASEAN region.

The EU-ABC's membership consists of large European Multi-National Corporations and the nine European Chambers of Commerce from around Southeast Asia. The EU-ABC represents a diverse range of European industries cutting across almost every commercial sphere from car manufacturing through to financial services and including Fast Moving Consumer Goods and high-end electronics and communications. Our members all have a common interest in enhancing trade, commerce and investment between Europe and ASEAN.

The Executive Director of the EU-ASEAN Business Council is Mr Chris Humphrey, and its Chairman is Mr Donald Kanak. The Council is led by an elected Board consisting of corporate leaders representing a range of important industry sectors and representatives of the European Chambers of Commerce.

## **Media Contacts**

### **Angeline Kwek**

Communications & Events Executive  
EU-ASEAN Business Council

T: +65 6631 2751 | M: + 65 9828 6354 | [angeline.kwek@eu-asean.eu](mailto:angeline.kwek@eu-asean.eu)

### **Chris Humphrey**

Executive Director  
EU-ASEAN Business Council

T: +65 6631 2751 | M: + 65 8168 2199 | [chris.humphrey@eu-asean.eu](mailto:chris.humphrey@eu-asean.eu)