

ASEAN-US
Technical Assistance & Training Facility



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SUMMARY AND PARTICIPANT EVALUATION

ASEAN Trade Negotiations Course
Jakarta, Indonesia (February 26, 2005)



NATHAN
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On Saturday February 26, the ASEAN-US Technical & Training Facility, housed in the ASEAN Secretariat, conducted a one day training course on trade negotiations. The 45 course participants included trade negotiators from ASEAN Member Countries and relevant technical staff from the Secretariat. Training course sessions covered regional and bilateral trade agreements, the WTO framework for those agreements, rules of origin, trade in services, and investment. Mr. Robert Fisher and Dr. William James were the course speakers provided by Nathan Associates Inc. Mr. Fisher has over 26 years of experience in trade policy, trade agreements, and investment. Currently a consultant for mostly private sector clients on international trade agreements such as the WTO, NAFTA, and the FTAA, he served previously for 11 years with the U.S. Trade Representative Office. Dr. James is an internationally recognized macroeconomist whose work has focused on trade and investment issues, concentrating primarily in Asia. He has worked in Indonesia for more than seven years and also in Japan.

Course evaluations gave each of the 7 course sessions a rating of 5 out of a possible 6, where 6 indicates that the session was highly informative or relevant to the participant's job. They indicated that the rules of origin session was the most popular session, followed by the Regional and Bilateral Trade Agreements sessions. The least popular session was the Overview of the WTO. A common thread among participant comments on the evaluation forms is a desire for follow on training courses that are more advanced, more in-depth and more specific to most of the topics covered. Both speakers remark in their reports after the training course that the questions they received indicate that the level of experience of the participants varies widely and that, therefore, some follow on courses that are more advanced and some that are more basic seem appropriate. Indeed the years of experience of the negotiators from Member Countries, as reported in the course evaluations, ranges from less than one year to 26 years. Secretariat staff participant experience ranges from less than one year to 15 years.

In mid-January when the ASEAN-US Facility opened at the Secretariat, staff learned that an unusually large number of negotiators from ASEAN Member Countries would be in Jakarta during the week of February 21. ASEAN Secretariat Staff and the ASEAN-US Facility decided together to take the calculated risk that enough negotiators to make the event worthwhile would be able to make arrangements on short notice to extend their stay in Jakarta at their government's expense and would attend a trade negotiations training course. The team also decided to compress what is normally two days worth of material into one day because it thought participants would be unwilling to attend a two-day course after a full week of negotiating sessions. Thus on a Saturday after a full week of negotiations, 34 negotiators (5 from Brunei, 9 from Indonesia, 7 from Singapore, 9 from Thailand and 3 from Vietnam) attended the course along with 11 relevant Secretariat staff. Some other delegation members indicated that they also wanted to attend but could not make the required arrangements in time.

The level of participation in the course at an inconvenient time on short notice indicates a certain level of interest in the content of the training course as do the evaluations. ASEAN holds trade-related internal discussions on an ongoing basis and is conducting trade negotiations with multiple external partners, the outcome of which will affect intra-ASEAN trade and ASEAN efforts in the direction of economic integration. Better prepared negotiators will negotiate better trade agreements that will more effectively support ASEAN in its goal to achieve economic integration and its benefits.

Following is the agenda for the Trade Negotiations Course, the Table of Contents of the course binder materials, and a summary of the evaluations of the Trade Negotiations Course submitted by participants on February 26.

Agenda

ASEAN Trade Negotiations Course

February 26, 2005

Jakarta, Indonesia, Hotel Sofitel Gran Mahakam

	8:30 – 9:00	Arrival/Registration/Coffee
	9:00 – 9:15	Welcome and Introduction Noordin Azhari, Director, Bureau for Economic Integration, ASEAN Secretariat
Session 1	9:15 – 10:00	Overview of the World Trade Organization (Robert Fisher) <ul style="list-style-type: none">— WTO and RTA's (Article XXIV, Enabling Clause, DDA)
Session 2	10:00 – 11:00	Regional and Bilateral Trade Agreements (Robert Fisher and William James) <ul style="list-style-type: none">— Comprehensive versus Sectoral Approach to RTA's/BTA's— Deeper ASEAN Integration— Issues Associated with Regional Liberalization
	11:00 – 11:15	Coffee Break
Session 3	11:15 – 12:15	Regional and Bilateral Trade Agreements (Continued) <ul style="list-style-type: none">— Interactive Discussion
	12:15 – 1:45	Lunch
Session 4	1:45 – 2:45	Rules of Origin (William James) <ul style="list-style-type: none">— Non-preferential (WTO)— Preferential (RTA/BTA)
Session 5	2:45 -3:45	Trade in Services (Robert Fisher) <ul style="list-style-type: none">— ASEAN Integration Issues
	3:45 -4:00	Coffee Break
Session 6	4:00 -4:45	Investment (Robert Fisher) <ul style="list-style-type: none">— ASEAN Integration Issues
	4:45 – 5:00	Wrap-up/Evaluations

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Jakarta, Indonesia, Hotel Sofitel Gran Mahakam

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- 3 Regional and Bilateral Trade Agreements (Robert Fisher)**
- 4 Regional and Bilateral Trade Agreements (William James)**
- 5 Rules of Origin**
- 6 Trade in Services**
- 7 Investment**
- 8 Selected Resources on International Trade**
 - Suggested Readings and Web Links
 - Frequently Cited Regional Trading Agreements and the Parties to Them, World Bank, Global Economic Prospect (GEP) 2005
 - Regional Trade and Preferential Trading Agreements: A Global Perspective, Chapter 2, World Bank, GEP 2005
 - The Future of the WTO: Addressing Institutional Challenges in the New Millennium (also known as the Sutherland Report)
- 9 Acronyms and Glossary**

Evaluation

ASEAN Trade Negotiations Course

February 26, 2005

Jakarta, Indonesia, Hotel Sofitel Gran Mahakam

Your answers to this questionnaire will help us to improve our training programs. Thank you for taking the time to fill it out.

Personal data

Years of experience in trade

< 1 to 26 years

Country of Representation

Brunei, Indonesia,
Singapore, Thailand,
Vietnam, and the
Secretariat

Presentations:

On a scale of 1 to 6, please rate each session on its quality of information and relevance. A 6 indicates your opinion that the session was highly informative or relevant to your job while a 1 indicates your opinion that the presentation was not informative or relevant to your job.

Presentation and Presenter

Average

Overview of the World Trade Organization
(*Robert Fisher*)

5

Regional and Bilateral Trade Agreements
(*Robert Fisher*)

5

Regional and Bilateral Trade Agreements
(*William James*)

5

Regional and Bilateral Trade Agreements:
Interactive Discussion

5

Rules of Origin
(*William James*)

5

Trade in Services
(*Robert Fisher*)

5

Investment
(*Robert Fisher*)

5

Subject Matter

Would you like to see more, the same, or less time devoted to the following negotiations topics:

Session	Topic	More	Same	Less
1	Overview of the WTO	9	16	9
2	Regional and Bilateral Trade Agreements	22	10	1
3	Regional and Bilateral Trade Agreements: Interactive Discussion	24	10	1
4	Rules of Origin	27	4	1
5	Trade in Services	20	9	2
6	Investment	20	10	4

General Questions/Comments

1. What part of this course did you like the most?
 - Rules of Origin – 14
 - Regional and Bilateral – 11
 - WTO – 5
 - Services – 3
 - All of the topics were equally useful – 2
 - Discussion – 3
 - The fact that general overview/introduction has been presented properly (though perhaps too fast on the latter part of the day)
 - Information on the WTO is important, but since there was limited time, the information on WTO could be contracted and spend more time on the other topics
 - The timing (back-to-back with series of tiring real negotiating sessions did not help in having fresh minds that would absorb the worthy material)
 - The speakers took effort to use layman terminology as far as possible
2. What part of this course did you like the least?
 - WTO – 4
 - Services – 3
 - Investment – 3
 - Not getting to study the document before
 - The examples used
 - Too basic
 - Too much information on ASEAN that the audience is already aware of
 - There is a lack of concrete examples (e.g. re: ROO and Services), and presentations are very US-centric, not objective
3. What other topics would you like to see included?
 - Simulation and topics of negotiation skills
 - How to begin negotiation (the steps, strategy)
 - Negotiation experiences
 - Contents of other FTAs/BTAs
 - WTO principles related to RTAs and FTAs with in-depth analytical views

- Safety valves under RTAs (e.g. safeguards, anti-dumping measures, subsidies)
- TBT
- TBT specifically in the context of FTA
- DSM
- SPS
- Competition policy
- Government procurement
- ASEAN integration
- More details on ROO, such as examples of line by line ROO for some products and the explanation. Perhaps a separate course on ROO would be useful for those on the negotiating team for ROO
- IPR
- Standards
- More concrete information and examples (e.g. schedule on services commitments, some of the ROO of other countries/regional groupings, some problematic items or issues faced by other countries/regional groupings.
- Tips on the negotiation itself, not just the theory
- Trade in services in the framework of FTA (e.g. Does services play an important role; experience in some selected countries)
- Non-tariff barriers
- Trade facilitation
- Deeper, more sector-specific issues
- More detailed discussion on RTAs (e.g. N/N, N/S and S/S)
- Experience/comment with regard to how best could ASEAN adapt in the future negotiation with more developed economies.
- Case studies

4. Did this course use a good mix of lecture and interactive discussion?

- Yes -- 3
- No -- 1
- Okay, it depends on dynamics
- Too much lecture but probably because of the time limitation
- Okay due to time constraints
- Not really a mix, very good lecture, lacking of interactive discussion, especially after lunch sessions
- The speaker should be able to provoke interactive discussion so discussion could be more interesting
- Yes, it's a good mix but not balanced. More interactive discussion would be great

5. What sorts of follow-up activities for this course would you find useful?

- Less basics, more practical issues
- More time
- Ask the participants to prepare a paper/write-up on what issues they are facing, and what problems they are having, before attending the course
- Two days activity as originally planned would be more effective (considering that this course is interesting and important)
- More capacity building/training for
 - negotiators
 - regulators

- conducting consultation with concerned sectors
- Narrow focus to some specific issues relating to ASEAN negotiations (e.g. specific sectors)
- Once a year updates
- Another course
- Circulate materials to those who could not attend the course
- More course but allowing more time (2-3 days) to cover all the topics
- Simulations of negotiations
- Give much information and understanding on regional and bilateral trade that is useful for one to enter into negotiations on FTA
- Elements and steps of FTA negotiations
- How to be a good negotiator
- Discussion
- A more focused workshop on 1 or 2 topics. Participants should be provided with outline of session before seminar
- More details of NAFTA implementation
- None
- Two day course with break out sessions on the specific topics (e.g. ROO, Customs procedures, IRP, SPS/TBT) to provide more opportunity for in-depth discussion
- Negotiation skills
- More case studies
- Further sectoral discussion to go into details of negotiations and particular challenges that arise from ASEAN Plus negotiations
- Contact with speakers
- Free talks

Thank you for filling out this questionnaire. Additional comments on any aspect of this course are welcome.

- The organization is quite good, time management and combination of lecturers from both private and academic fields is very efficient
- The Services lecture was an excellent lecture
- It was useful to realize how misinterpretations of the ASEAN cumulative ROO and general rule of “40% value added” could occur
- Some of the Rules of Origin information is incorrect and outdated