CHAPTER 15

ECONOMIC AND TECHNICAL COOPERATION

Article 15.1: Definition

For the purposes of this Chapter, **work programme** means the list of economic and technical cooperation activities mutually determined by the Parties in accordance with Article 15.5 (Work Programme).

Article 15.2: Objectives

1. The Parties reaffirm the importance of ongoing economic and technical cooperation initiatives between Parties and agree to complement their existing economic partnership in areas where the Parties have mutual benefits and interests.

2. The Parties shall seek to prioritise economic and technical cooperation initiatives and, where possible, minimise duplication of ongoing efforts and utilisation of resources, particularly under the free trade agreements between the Member States of ASEAN and their free trade partners.

3. The Parties agree that the economic and technical cooperation in the RCEP context aims at narrowing development gaps among the Parties and maximising mutual benefits from the implementation and utilisation of this Agreement. The economic and technical cooperation shall take into account the different levels of development and national capacity of each Party.

4. The Parties acknowledge the provisions to encourage and facilitate economic and technical cooperation included in various Chapters of this Agreement.

Article 15.3: Scope

1. Economic and technical cooperation under this Chapter shall support the inclusive, effective and efficient implementation and utilisation of this Agreement through economic and technical cooperation activities which are trade or investment related as specified in the work programme.

2. The Parties shall explore and undertake economic and technical cooperation activities, including capacity building and technical assistance that focus on the following:

   (a) trade in goods;

   (b) trade in services;

   (c) investment;

   (d) intellectual property;

   (e) electronic commerce;

   (f) competition;

   (g) small and medium enterprises; and

   (h) other matters, as agreed upon among the Parties.

Article 15.4: Resources

1. Resources for economic and technical cooperation under this Chapter shall be provided voluntarily and in a manner that is agreed upon among the relevant Parties, taking into account the objectives set out in Article 15.2 (Objectives).

2. The Parties, on the basis of mutual benefit, may consider cooperation with, and contribution from:

   (a) non-Parties; or

   (b) sub-regional, regional, or international organisations or institutions,

   that are interested in developing mutually beneficial cooperation and partnerships, to support the implementation of the work programme.

Article 15.5: Work Programme

1. In accordance with paragraph 4 of Article 15.2 (Objectives), the Parties shall develop the work programme taking into consideration the economic and technical cooperation provisions