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After several years of negotiations by ministers from 12 Asia-Pacific countries (including Malaysia), the controversial Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPPA) was concluded successfully a few weeks ago. The TPPA covers a region representing 40% of global economy and 800 million people.

The final text has been made public and a cost-benefit study commissioned by the Malaysian government has also been completed and its findings are available for interested parties.

The TPPA goes far beyond conventional trade agreements as it covers a wide range of economic activities both within each member country and between member countries. Issues relating to trade in goods are addressed in only 7 chapters. The remaining 20 plus chapters deal with investment, trade in services (including financial services, communication and electronic commerce), government procurement, state-owned enterprises, extension of intellectual property (IP) rights beyond WTO norms, labour, environment, SMEs, investor-state dispute settlement mechanism (ISDS) and a host of other provisions which member country laws must conform with.

Supporters of the TPPA have welcomed it by claiming that it is a 21st century trade agreement which will foster economic growth, closer economic integration in the region, and comprehensive market access to all parties. Opponents have argued that it will increase income inequality within and between member countries as the provisions favour multinational business interests against the needs of ordinary citizens. In particular, they argue that increasing IP rights sets up technological barriers for developing countries as patents and copyright periods are extended. Health advocates are concerned about the cost of medicines as generics will not be available as quickly as before.

Another controversial issue is the ISDS which proponents claim will encourage more foreign direct investment while opponents claim that nations are giving away their sovereign rights to change laws that may affect business owners.

Given the differing views, the Malaysian Economic Association is pleased to provide a platform for discussing the TPPA in a forum where the keynote address will be given by a senior member of Malaysia's TPPA negotiating team following which there will be a balanced discussion with 2 speakers on each side of the argument.

### The Secretariat

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Malaysian Economic Association

## 2016 TPPA FORUM

- DATE : 11 January 2016 (Monday)
- TIME : 09:00 am - 12:30 pm
- VENUE : Conference Hall 2, Securities Commission, Bukit Kiara, Kuala Lumpur
- FEE : RM200 (MEMBERS OF PEM)  
RM250 (NON MEMBERS)

### PROGRAMME

- 9.00 – 9.30 am - Registration & Refreshment
- 9.30 – 9.35 am - Welcome Speech by Tan Sri Dato' Mohd Sheriff Bin Mohd Kassim  
President of Malaysian Economic Association
- 9.35 – 10.25 am - Keynote Speaker  
Datuk J. Jayasiri  
Ministry of International Trade and Industry
- Moderator : Dato' Latifah Merican Cheong
- 10.25 – 11.30 am - Panelists :
  1. YBhg Tan Sri Dato' Dr Mohd Munir Majid  
Chairman Bank Muamalat Malaysia
  2. YBhg Datuk Seri Saw Choo Boon  
President of FMM
  3. Prof. Gurdial S. Nijar  
Faculty of Law , University Malaya
  4. Prof. Jomo K. S.  
Former Senior UN Official
- 11:30 am - 12.30 pm - Q & A