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## 1<sup>st</sup> ASEAN Digital Ministers' Meeting approves Singapore-led initiatives on ASEAN Data Management Framework, ASEAN Model Contractual Clauses for Cross Border Data Flows and ASEAN CERT Information Exchange Mechanism

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*Joint Press Release by MCI, IMDA and CSA*

### 1st ASEAN Digital Ministers' Meeting approves Singapore-led initiatives on ASEAN Data Management Framework, ASEAN Model Contractual Clauses for Cross Border Data Flows and ASEAN CERT Information Exchange Mechanism

1. Minister for Communications and Information and Minister-in-charge of Cybersecurity Mr S Iswaran attended the 1<sup>st</sup> Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Digital Ministers' Meeting (ADGMIN)<sup>1</sup>. The virtual meeting which took place on 21-22 January 2021, was hosted by Malaysia and attended by the ten ASEAN Digital Ministers. The meeting approved key Singapore-led initiatives, including the **ASEAN Data Management Framework (DMF)**, **ASEAN Model Contractual Clauses for Cross Border Data Flows (MCCs)** and the proposal to establish an **ASEAN CERT Information Exchange Mechanism** for enhancing cybersecurity cooperation. The meeting also approved the **ASEAN Digital Masterplan 2025 (ADM2025)**, which will help accelerate inclusive digital transformation so that ASEAN will emerge stronger and more resilient from the COVID-19 crisis.

2. Minister Iswaran said, "The ASEAN Digital Masterplan 2025 sets out the important role digitalisation will play to accelerate post-COVID-19 recovery. We are glad that ASEAN has pushed ahead with developing the ASEAN Data Management Framework and ASEAN Model Contractual Clauses for Cross Broder Data Flows, and agreed to establish an ASEAN CERT Information Exchange Mechanism. These tangible projects will help ASEAN businesses, especially the Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), seize the opportunities that the Digital Economy offers and strengthen our collective cybersecurity cooperation."



Minister for Communications and Information Mr S Iswaran speaking to ASEAN Digital Ministers at 1<sup>st</sup> ADGMIN.

**ASEAN Data Management Framework (DMF) and ASEAN Model Contractual Clauses for Cross Border Data Flows (MCCs)**

3. The ASEAN Data Management Framework and ASEAN Model Contractual Clauses for Cross Border Data Flows<sup>2</sup> are key resources and tools for ASEAN businesses to utilise in their data-related business operations. The ASEAN DMF is a guide for businesses, particularly Small and Medium Enterprises to implement a data management system. This includes guidelines for data governance structures and appropriate data protection safeguards depending on the underlying purpose of the dataset of interest throughout its lifecycle. MCCs are contractual terms and conditions that may be included in the binding legal agreements between businesses when transferring personal data to each other across borders.

4. The initiatives were developed by the ASEAN Working Group on Digital Data Governance, in close consultation with key associations and businesses in the ASEAN industry. These initiatives also received positive feedback from various international organisations, business associations and companies<sup>3</sup>, underscoring their practical value. The ASEAN Working Group on Digital Data Governance is chaired by Singapore.



Minister for Communications and Information Mr S Iswaran at the Opening Ceremony of 1<sup>st</sup> ADGMIN.

## ASEAN Digital Masterplan 2025

5. Singapore also welcomed the new ADM2025, which includes the following key elements:
- a. Establishing bridges with markets, how businesses should digitally connect beyond borders and how to facilitate more cross-border transactions via interoperable digital utilities and cross-border data flows;
  - b. The need to build digital skills and literacy capabilities so that people can thrive, and more tech job opportunities can be created;
  - c. The importance of digitalising businesses so that MSMEs/SMEs can transform; and
  - d. The need for resilient digital infrastructure and connectivity, as well as the necessary supporting policies and regulations.

## ASEAN Cybersecurity

6. During the meeting, the ASEAN Ministers also noted that enhancing cybersecurity cooperation is key to the security of our future economy and digitalisation initiatives especially in view of the recent rise of global cybersecurity and supply chain attacks and threats. They welcomed the proposal to enhance ASEAN cybersecurity cooperation through the formalising of existing AMS National CERT-level exchanges with the establishment of an ASEAN CERT information exchange mechanism as a core component of the future ASEAN CERT. The mechanism will support national CERTs through the exchange of information and best practices, and coordinate CERT capacity building programmes in the region.

### Annexes:

Annex A: Background on ASEAN DMF and MCCs

Annex B: Quotes from international organisations, associations, companies and law firms

<sup>1</sup> The ADGMIN was formerly known as the ASEAN Telecommunications and Information Technology Ministers Meeting (TELMIN).

<sup>2</sup> Refer to Annex A for more information

<sup>3</sup> Refer to Annex B for the quotes from international organisations, business associations and companies



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