



## **PRESS STATEMENT**

(FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE)

### **EFFECTIVE CONSULTATIONS WITH BUSINESSES IN IMPLEMENTING TPPA**

The Sarawak Timber Association noted the Dewan Rakyat approved a motion on 27 January 2016 allowing Malaysia's participation in the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPPA) to strengthen our country's competitiveness at the regional and global levels. The Government would now be required to amend the existing laws, policies and practices to be in line with the various Chapters detailed in TPPA within the timeframe stipulated, which is 2 years after signing TPPA.

According to Dato' Sri Mustapa Mohamed, Minister of International Trade and Industry (MITI), some laws are expected to be amended, covering areas such as labour; environment; customs; patent, copyright and trademark; anti-corruption; etc. Other ministries such as the Ministry of Human Resources, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment and the Ministry of Health were reported to be involved in the implementation of TPPA. Dato' Seri Mustapa was reported as telling a press conference that the first amendments to the laws affected by TPPA would be tabled in Dewan Rakyat in March 2017.

The study by PricewaterhouseCoopers has revealed that there would be adjustment costs to businesses from increased competition and cross-sectoral TPPA obligations. The Association is rather concerned with these adjustment costs, as we strongly believe that the adjustment costs must be minimal and affordable in order for Malaysia to remain competitive.

Therefore, the Association would like to urge the Government to be more transparent in policies formulation and amendments to the laws, as well as subsequent implementation of TPPA. MITI must uphold its promises to take into consideration of all concerns expressed by the people. The relevant ministries must therefore conduct nation-wide consultations as well as dialogue sessions involving all stakeholders with invitations to be extended to all lead associations during its transitional period before making any amendments to the policies and laws affected by TPPA.

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