

GLOBAL FORUM ON  
**TRANSPARENCY AND EXCHANGE OF  
INFORMATION FOR TAX PURPOSES**

# First Asia Initiative Meeting

16 February 2022

## Statement of Outcomes



## Statement of outcomes of the First Asia Initiative meeting

16 February 2022, Videoconference

1. On 16 February 2022, 49 participants, among whom 15 Tax Commissioners and Deputy Commissioners (participants) from 18 Asian members of the Global Forum and 3 development partners, came together for the first meeting of the Asia Initiative.<sup>1</sup> This high-level meeting was held by videoconference and chaired by Mr Suryo Utomo, Director General of the Directorate General of Taxes of Indonesia (see **Annex A**).
2. The Asia Initiative was launched by the Global Forum at its plenary meeting held on 17 November 2021 with the firm support of Ms Sri Mulyani Indrawati, Minister of Finance of Indonesia, and Mr Masatsugu Asakawa, President of the Asian Development Bank. This capacity-building initiative aims at promoting in the Asian region the implementation of the internationally agreed standards on transparency and exchange of information of the Global Forum (tax transparency standards) and the use of these standards to tackle tax evasion and other illicit financial flows. It also offers a framework for fostering tax co-operation, in particular through the Convention on Mutual Administrative Assistance in Tax Matters.
3. The participants welcomed the organisation of the first meeting of the Asia Initiative, a side event of Indonesia's G20 Presidency, which highlights the critical role of the implementation and use of the tax transparency standards in a sustainable post-pandemic recovery and the importance of a stronger regional and international co-operation to address tax evasion and other illicit financial flows. They also welcomed the participation of the Asian Development Bank, the Study Group on Asian-Pacific Tax Administration and Research, and the World Bank Group.
4. The participants shared their experience and explored opportunities offered by tax transparency and tax co-operation to fight tax evasion and other illicit financial flows, and ensure fair taxation which are critical to global efforts for a sustainable recovery. In particular, Mr Suryo Utomo, Director General of the Directorate General of Taxes of Indonesia, presented Indonesia's G20 tax priorities and the key role played by tax transparency in the domestic recovery strategy of his country. In addition, Mr Wang Jun, Commissioner of China's State Taxation Administration, Mr Tarun Bajaj, Revenue Secretary of India, Mr Yukihiro Oshika, Commissioner of the National Tax Agency of Japan, presented their experience on the actions their respective countries had taken to enhance revenue mobilisation post-covid-19, including by using all the possibilities offered by mutual administrative assistance agreements. They all strongly supported the Asia Initiative. Mr Abdullah A. Alfuntukh, Vice Governor for Strategy & Development of the Zakat, Tax and Customs Authority of Saudi Arabia, a special invitee to this meeting, also presented Saudi Arabia recovery strategy and the role played by tax transparency in the actions taken.
5. The Global Forum Secretariat presented its regional initiatives in Africa and Latin America and highlighted the prominent role tailored regional capacity-building programmes have to advance the tax transparency and development agenda, and the fight against tax evasion and other illicit financial flows.
6. There was broad understanding amongst the participants on the critical role of the political buy-in through a ministerial declaration to set high-level objectives and the need of an appropriate governance to develop actions and activities to meet these objectives.
7. The participants welcomed the draft Ministerial Declaration calling for enhancing the use of tax transparency for a sustainable mobilisation of domestic resources. They discussed the content of the draft declaration, in particular the high-level objectives of the Asia Initiative. All welcomed the support provided

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<sup>1</sup> More information on the Asia Initiative is available at [www.oecd.org/tax/transparency/what-we-do/technical-assistance/asia-initiative.htm](https://www.oecd.org/tax/transparency/what-we-do/technical-assistance/asia-initiative.htm).

by the Global Forum in bringing about tax transparency and reiterated their commitment to implement the tax transparency standards. They reached a general agreement on the content of the draft declaration subject to internal consultations. This discussion has set solid foundation to the commitment of Asian members of the Global Forum to the Initiative's objective.

8. The participants also discussed the proposal for the governance of the Asia Initiative. They recognised that such a governance was critical to create a regional ownership of the Initiative and facilitate achievements and monitoring of the objectives that will be set in the Ministerial Declaration. Following the discussions, the participants approved the governance of the Asia Initiative. In particular, they agreed that: (i) the initial mandate of the Initiative will be until 2026; (ii) the work of the Asia Initiative will be steered by Co-Chairs being senior officials of Tax Administration or Ministry of Finance; and (iii) the Co-Chairs will be designated for a two-year term with an overlap of only one year. They also approved an ad-hoc governance for the current year (2022) and warmly appointed Mr Suryo Utomo, Director General of the Directorate General of Taxes of Indonesia, as the 2022 Chair of the Asia Initiative, to set up the Initiative, lead the preparation of the signing of the Ministerial Declaration and develop a high-level work plan for the Initiative. After a call from an Asian member, they all agreed to also appoint Mr Suryo Utomo as a Co-Chair of the Initiative for 2023.

9. The participants finally welcomed the progress made during the meeting and looked forward to the signing of the Ministerial Declaration, the development of the high-level work plan, and the start of the Asia Initiative's activities.

**Annex A. List of participants of the first Asia Initiative meeting****Members of the Global Forum**

Brunei Darussalam • Cambodia • China (People's Republic of) • Georgia • Hong Kong (China) • India • Indonesia • Japan • Korea • Macau (China) • Malaysia • Maldives • Mongolia • Pakistan • Philippines • Saudi Arabia • Singapore • Thailand.

**Partners**

Asian Development Bank Group • Study Group on Asian-Pacific Tax Administration and Research • World Bank Group.



[www.oecd.org/tax/transparency](http://www.oecd.org/tax/transparency)



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