



9 December 2020

**Executive Vice President Valdis Dombrovskis**

Trade Commissioner  
European Commission  
Berlaymont Building  
200 Wetstraat / Rue de la Loi  
1049 Brussels  
Belgium

Dear Mr Dombrovskis,

On behalf of The European Association of Business and Commerce (EABC) in Thailand, I would like to sincerely congratulate you on your appointment as Trade Commissioner, and to introduce you to the EABC in Thailand.

Established in 2011, the EABC is the unified voice of the European business community in Thailand and acts as the European Chamber of Commerce in Thailand. EABC's objectives are to advocate for member interests, support European business in Thailand and to strengthen the Thai economy in promoting Thailand as an attractive partner for European investment and trade. EABC publishes a position paper most years with recommendations for the Thai government from the European business community in Thailand. Our activities also include policy and advocacy dialogues, building consensus amongst our constituents, providing support to European businesses in trade and investment, and organizing key events to foster opportunities for European businesses in Thailand. At a regional level, the EABC is a long-standing member of the EU-ASEAN Business Council (EU-ABC), and globally is a member of the European Business Organisation (EBO) Worldwide Network.

The EABC is committed to working closely with European businesses, the Royal Thai Government, EU Institutions, including the Delegation of the European Union to Thailand, European bilateral Chambers of Commerce and European missions, as well as counterparts in Thailand, ASEAN, and Europe. The EABC is also a regular participant in EU Programmes; for instance, the EABC annually co-organises EU Business Avenues in South East Asia, in which some 50 European ICT SMEs participate. EABC has played an active role in causing European SME participants to learn more about business opportunities in Thailand and establish new partnerships with Thai companies.

Our members tend to be long-standing investors in Thailand. Based on their interests, and our founding mission, the EABC takes a deep interest in helping to bring about a meaningful and mutually beneficial EU-Thailand Free Trade Agreement (FTA).

Thailand is now facing its most dire economic downturn in two decades. GDP has fallen by the greatest amount since the 1997 Asian financial crisis and is expected to have the largest decline





amongst Southeast Asian economies, while unemployment has soared due to declines in exports and an eviscerated tourism industry. Of course, no country has been spared from the social and economic fallout of the crisis—a potent reminder of the interlinked nature of the global economy. Free and fair trade, underpinned by a rules-based world trade order and best practices, remains the main path to Thailand’s economic recovery.

The EU is Thailand’s fifth largest trading partner and investor. Therefore, a timely resumption of Thailand Free Trade Agreement talks with the EU would be important for recuperating Thailand’s economy, particularly in sustaining Thailand’s competitiveness in the EU market. In addition, supported by Thailand’s strategic location in the heart of the Mekong region with close proximity to China and India, which offers opportunities for cross-border trade and investment as well as infrastructural development, the potential Thai-EU FTA could attract more foreign direct investment, boosting employment levels and strengthening the economy.

A robust EU-Thailand FTA would be one important element as a route to economic recovery for both Thailand and Europe and support effecting necessary reforms. As such, we wholeheartedly believe that the opportunity to create meaningful and material change should be seized.

We hope that, under your leadership, the EU-Thailand Free Trade Agreement (FTA) will become a priority of the Commission. The EABC and our members welcome all initiatives that will bolster Thailand’s global competitiveness and invigorate its economic growth, and we look forward to engaging in many fruitful collaborations. We remain at your disposal for any requests you may have or information you require. We respectfully and eagerly look forward to hearing in due course how we may be of assistance to the Commission in strengthening trade and investment relations between the EU and Thailand.

Kindly accept the assurance of our highest consideration.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Luca Bernardinetti', with a stylized flourish extending to the left.

Luca Bernardinetti  
EABC President

