

## **Media Statement**

### **Full Lockdown Should Be Considered Carefully, Give Economy Chance to Breathe**

**Kuala Lumpur, May 19, 2021** – As the country is experiencing another surge in COVID-19 positive cases reported from several states, we at EUROCHAM Malaysia support the Government’s decision to respond to the threat in favour of public health by utilising proven strategies.

With this in mind, EUROCHAM Malaysia cautions against a restrictive full lockdown for any state or the whole country, as it certainly will hinder Malaysia’s economic recovery and social sustainability and may be partially led by skewed data as well as community spread rather than workplace related infections.

Businesses are still restructuring and recuperating from the impact of the first lockdown last year, and facing many challenges due to the protracted pandemic including: substantial revenue and financial losses, logistics challenges and supply chain interruptions just to name a few. “Many businesses including the European business community here in Malaysia have abided to the SOPs set by the government as well as adopted stricter measures within to ensure health and safety of employees despite the losses that they have faced.” - Oliver Roche, Chairman of EUROCHAM Malaysia. “In fact”, he also mentioned, “Recent data by the Crisis Preparedness and Response Centre (CPRC) has found that the numbers reduced from over 200 clusters totaling 28,524 cases within the manufacturing sector in early January to only 31 clusters in May 2021 at 1,598 cases, with a decline of nearly 95%.”

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In light of this positive development, we feel that instead of a complete and unspecific lockdown, a more targeted set of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) focusing on stricter measures on travel and social activities would be ideal. This approach would reduce community spread and allow businesses to continue rebuilding themselves and stimulate the economy again. “As mentioned earlier in the year, if the government were to impose a full lockdown on a state or even the nation, it will cause serious implications to not only the economy, but also for the livelihoods of many. We hope that the Government will look into the matter with great consideration, accelerate the vaccination roll-out and integrate further technological solutions to help cope with tracing and monitoring of hotspot areas rather than subjecting the whole nation to a complete halt.” - Sven Schneider, CEO of EUROCHAM Malaysia.

If the government is of the opinion that a full lockdown is unavoidable, EUROCHAM Malaysia again stresses that more targeted approaches to specific red zones and specifically focusing on community spread and risk may be most relevant to be implemented. This approach should be accompanied by mass testing and vaccination efforts and a comprehensive financial support programme. Considering the likely challenge of the government to provide further assistance, we as chambers are concerned about a potentially devastating and lasting impact on the Malaysian economy and its capacity to attract Foreign Direct Investments.

## **ABOUT EUROCHAM MALAYSIA**

EUROCHAM Malaysia has been established since 1993 as chamber of chambers by several European Union (EU) bilateral chambers of commerce. It is the aim of the chamber to be the united voice of the EU business community in Malaysia as well as to facilitate trade and investment between Europe and Malaysia. With our goal to bolster business alliances for a prosperous EU-Malaysia partnership, we take pride in our diverse membership based on the EU bilateral chambers of commerce, associated chambers as well as direct corporate members from Europe and Malaysia.

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EUROCHAM Malaysia functions as an umbrella for the following bilateral chambers of commerce and associate chambers, which have expressed their deep concern about the potential of a strict lockdown:



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