

Timeline of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) negotiations

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Date	Type	Event
Nov-98	RCEP	East Asia Vision Group established by ASEAN+3 in wake of the Asian Financial Crisis
Oct-01	RCEP	East Asia Vision Group proposes a trade bloc comprising the ASEAN+3 economies (EAFTA)
May-06	TPP	P4 agreement enters-into-force (Brunei, Chile, New Zealand and Singapore)
Aug-06	RCEP	Japan proposes a trade bloc comprising the ASEAN+6 economies (CEPEA)
Jan-08	TPP	US agrees to enter talks with P4 members to create the Trans-Pacific Partnership
Nov-08	TPP	Australia, Peru and Vietnam join TPP negotiations
Jul-09	RCEP	EAFTA and CEPEA Track II Study Group Reports submitted to governments
Mar-10	TPP	First round of TPP negotiations
Oct-10	RCEP	East Asia Summit Leaders endorse regional integration through EAFTA/CEPEA processes
Oct-10	TPP	Malaysia joins TPP negotiations
Nov-11	RCEP	ASEAN Leaders endorse the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership initiative, with an ASEAN+6 membership
Nov-11	Regional politics	US announces 'Pivot to Asia' policy
Aug-12	RCEP	<i>Guiding Principles and Objectives for Negotiating RCEP</i> issued
Oct-12	TPP	Canada and Mexico join TPP negotiations
Nov-12	RCEP	RCEP Leaders endorse commencement of negotiations
Dec-12	Regional politics	Abe Shinzo elected Prime Minister of Japan
Mar-13	Regional politics	Xi Jinping becomes President of the PRC
May-13	RCEP	1st round of negotiations. Work commences on goods, services and investment
May-13	TPP	Japan joins TPP negotiations
Sep-13	RCEP	2nd round. Work commences on rules of origin, customs procedures and trade facilitation
Sep-13	Regional politics	PRC launches Belt and Road Initiative
Late 2013	Regional politics	PRC begins artificial land reclamation and militarisation in seven locations in the South China Sea
Jan-14	RCEP	3rd round. Work commences on economic and technical cooperation, competition, intellectual property and dispute settlement
May-14	Regional politics	Narendra Modi elected Prime Minister of India

Jun-14	RCEP	5th round. Work commences on legal and institutional issues, sanitary and phytosanitary measures, and technical regulations
Feb-15	RCEP	7th round. First market access offers tabled
May-15	Regional politics	Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank established
Aug-15	RCEP	9th round. Work commences on electronic commerce.
Oct-15	RCEP	10th round. Formal market access negotiations begin. Work commences on financial services and telecommunications
Oct-15	TPP	TPP negotiations formally conclude
Nov-15	RCEP	Original completion date of 2015 is missed. Leaders commit to 2016 completion
Nov-15	Regional politics	ASEAN Economic Community is established
Dec-15	Regional politics	Negotiating mandate for the WTO Doha Round lapses
Feb-16	TPP	TPP agreement is signed by 12 members
Apr-16	RCEP	12th round. First stakeholder engagement events held on sidelines.
Jun-16	Regional politics	UK referendum results in "Brexit" from EU
Jul-16	Regional politics	China rejects UNCLOS ruling rejecting claims to "9-dash line" in South China Sea
Aug-16	Regional politics	Japan launches Free and Open Indo-Pacific strategy
Sep-16	RCEP	Leaders resolve <i>"to find appropriate ways to address the various sensitivities and interests of each participating country"</i>
Oct-16	RCEP	15th round. First text chapter (economic and technical cooperation) is completed.
Nov-16	RCEP	2016 completion target is missed. Ministers provide strategic guidance to <i>"urge a swift conclusion"</i> to negotiations.
Nov-16	Regional politics	Donald Trump elected US President
Dec-16	RCEP	16th round. Chapter on SMEs is completed
Jan-17	TPP	US formally withdraws from TPP
Jan-17	TPP	Australian and Japanese Prime Ministers make joint statement to advance TPP without US
Apr-17	Regional politics	US demands renegotiation of Korea-US FTA
May-17	TPP	TPP-11 members meet to discuss next steps for agreement following US withdrawal
Jul-17	RCEP	19th round. Work commences on government procurement, resolving a longstanding debate over its inclusion.
Jul-17	TPP	Formal negotiating process for Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for the Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) begins amongst remaining eleven members
Jul-17	Regional politics	US demands renegotiation of NAFTA
Nov-17	RCEP	With agreement incomplete for the third year in a row, Leaders instruct an <i>"intensification of negotiations"</i> in 2018
Jan-18	TPP	CPTPP negotiations formally conclude

Feb-18	Regional politics	US begins imposing tariffs on various manufacturing products
Mar-18	TPP	CPTPP agreement is signed by eleven members
Mar-18	Regional politics	Korea-US FTA (KORUS) renegotiation complete
Jul-18	RCEP	23rd round. Chapters on customs procedures and government procurement completed
Jul-18	Regional politics	US-China trade war begins
Aug-18	RCEP	Ministers agree a package of year-end deliverables that would mean a <i>"substantial conclusion"</i> of negotiations in 2018
Sep-18	Regional politics	NAFTA is renegotiated as US-Mexico-Canada agreement (USMCA)
Oct-18	RCEP	24th round. Chapter on dispute settlement completed
Nov-18	RCEP	Chapters on institutional provisions, sanitary and phytosanitary measures, and technical regulations completed
Nov-18	RCEP	With agreement incomplete for a fourth year in row, Leaders commit to a 2019 conclusion
Dec-18	TPP	CPTPP enters-into-force once six parties complete ratification (Aus, Can, Jpn, Mex, NZ, Sng)
Jan-19	TPP	Vietnam ratifies TPP-11
Mar-19	Regional politics	US terminates India's designation as a Generalised System of Preferences (GSP) beneficiary
Apr-19	Regional politics	US demands a trade balancing deal with Japan
Jun-19	Regional politics	ASEAN adopts <i>ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific</i>
Jul-19	RCEP	27th round. Three services annexes (telecommunications, financial and professional) completed
Sep-19	RCEP	Ministers agreed to <i>"conclude negotiations"</i> this year
Sep-19	RCEP	28th round. Chapters on trade in goods, intellectual property, trade remedies and legal and institutional complete
Nov-19	RCEP	India announces withdrawal from RCEP process
Nov-19	RCEP	Negotiations for text-based components complete in 2019; with commitment to sign final agreement in 2020
Dec-19	Regional politics	US and PRC strike a "Phase One" deal in bilateral trade war
Dec-19	Regional politics	US-Japan trade agreement negotiations complete
Dec-19	Regional politics	WTO Appellate Body becomes inquorate due to US vetos on new appointments
Feb-20	Regional politics	COVID-19 spreads around the world
Apr-20	RCEP	29th round. Negotiations shift to "virtual" mode due to COVID-19 crisis.
May-20	Regional politics	Chinese trade coercion of Australia begins
Nov-20	RCEP	RCEP signed at ASEAN Virtual Summit

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