

PRESS STATEMENT

SIGNING OF THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING ON ESTABLISHING AND PROMOTING EFFICIENT AND INTEGRATED SEA LINKAGES AND THE MOU ON CROSS-BORDER MOVEMENT OF COMMERCIAL BUSES AND COACHES WITHIN THE BIMP EAGA REGION ON 02 NOVEMBER 2007 IN SINGAPORE

1. The Ministers in charge of Transport of Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines signed today two memoranda of understanding on Establishing and Promoting Efficient and Integrated Sea Linkages and on Cross-Border Movement of Commercial Buses and Coaches within the Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines East Asian Growth Area (BIMP-EAGA).
2. The two memoranda were signed at the Raffles City Convention Centre on the sidelines of the 13th ASEAN Transport Ministers Meeting in Singapore. Signatories to the memoranda were H.E. Pehin Dato Abu Bakar Apong for Brunei Darussalam, H.E. Mr. Jusman Syafii Djamal for Indonesia, H.E. Dato` Sri Chan Kong Choy for Malaysia and H.E. Gen Leandro R. Mendoza (Ret.) for the Philippines.
3. The BIMP-EAGA region was established in 1994 as a sub-regional economic grouping with the objective of enhancing trade, tourism and investment in the identified growth areas.
4. Under the MoU on sea linkages, the participating countries agree to undertake various measures to ensure the commercial viability and sustainability of shipping services within the region on Designated Priority and Pioneer routes including granting preferential port tariffs, promoting new and existing shipping services and exchange of information on best practices governing Non-Convention ships.
5. The MoU on Cross-Border Movement of Commercial Buses and Coaches allows for cross-border carriage of passengers by buses and coaches between the member countries as well as in transit through the territory of other member countries on designated disembarkation points/routes.
6. These two memoranda mark a significant advance in the development of transportation links in the BIMP-EAGA region. These are in addition to the MoU on Expansion of Air Linkages signed during the 3rd BIMP-EAGA Summit in Cebu, Philippines on 12 January 2007.
7. The signing of these key agreements on land, sea and air linkages underscores the recognition of the BIMP-EAGA sub-region as a test-bed for ASEAN initiatives pursuant to the decision of the 3rd BIMP-EAGA Summit. The objective is to accelerate the economic integration of ASEAN as envisioned under the ASEAN Economic Community.

