BIMP-EAGA and IMT-GT Regions:
Trade, Investment, and Foreign Tourists Increase Significantly

Langkawi, 28 April 2015 – Indonesia is committed to the growth and development of equitable and inclusive economic regions in the framework of the sub-regional economic cooperation of Brunei Darussalam-Indonesia-Malaysia-Philippines - East ASEAN Growth Area (BIMP-EAGA) and the Indonesia-Malaysia-Thailand – Growth Triangle (IMT-GT).

This is the joint statement of the Heads of State at the 11th BIMP-EAGA Summit and the 9th Indonesia Malaysia Thailand-Growth Triangle (IMT-GT) Summit in Langkawi, Kedah, Malaysia today (28/4). Vice President Jusuf Kalla led the Indonesian delegation at this meeting.

“The Vice President welcomed the establishment of the new pillar in the BIMP-EAGA sub-regional economic cooperation, namely Socio-Cultural and Education, particularly cultural relations and human resources in the BIMP-EAGA sub-regional economic cooperation, which needs to be strengthened,” said Director General of International Trade Cooperation, Bachrul Chairi, who was also present at the Summit after attending the 26th ASEAN Summit in Malaysia.

This agreement is also hoped to increase trade activities. In the 2009-2013 period, the total trade value in the BIMP-EAGA sub-region increased 70% to USD 166 billion, total investment nearly tripled to USD 14.8 billion, with the number of foreign tourists increasing by 60% to 5.1 million visitors in 2013 compared to 2009.

The same can be said for the IMT-GT sub-regional economic cooperation, contributing significant transactions for the advancement of trade. The total IMT-GT trade value in 2012 reached 491 billion, amounting to 25% of ASEAN’s trade total.

The Heads of State agree that the BIMP-EAGA and IMT-GT sub-regional economic cooperation are building blocks in realizing the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC), which will fully go into effect by the end of 2015. “The Heads of State are promoting the role of the Regional Governments and regional businesses to actively be involved in taking advantage of this sub-regional economic cooperation,” asserted Bachrul.

The agriculture and fisheries sector were also important issues that became the topic of discussion. The agriculture and fisheries play an important role in reducing the economic development gap in the region and boosting mutually beneficial trade.
A Discussion on Framework

Moreover, Bachrul said that trade facilitation is much needed to increase trade activities in border regions.

“We are discussing the framework of cooperation between Malaysia and Thailand in customs, immigration, and quarantine to increase the flow of goods and people in border regions while still prioritizing the element of security.

The IMT-GT Heads of state welcome the plan to hold the 3rd BIMP-EAGA and IMT-GT Trade Fair and Business Leaders’ Conference in October 2016 in Makassar, South Sulawesi, Indonesia and expect the active participation of all stakeholders, particularly SMEs in the BIMP-EAGA and IMT-GT region to make the exhibition a success.

“We continue to promote and facilitate the full involvement of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in the exhibition as an effort to increase their capacity, access to funding, and market access for SMEs,” he added.

Also present accompanying Vice President Jusuf Kalla were a number of Ministers, the Governor of Aceh, the Governor of Riau, the Governor of North Sulawesi, and the Governor of West Kalimantan.

The BIMP-EAGA and IMT-GT Sub-regional Economic Cooperation

The BIMP-EAGA and IMT-GT sub-regional economic cooperation was established in 1994 comprising 14 provinces in Indonesia, namely West Kalimantan, East Kalimantan, South Kalimantan, Central Kalimantan, North Sulawesi, South-East Sulawesi, South Sulawesi, Central Sulawesi, West Sulawesi, Gorontalo, Maluku, North Maluku, Papua, and West Papua.

Meanwhile, the IMT-GT sub-regional economic cooperation was established at the first IMT-GT Ministerial Meeting on 20 July 1993 and encompasses ten of Indonesia’s provinces, namely Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam, North Sumatra, West Sumatra, Riau, the Riau Islands, South Sumatra, Jambi, Bengkulu, Bangka Belitung, and Lampung.

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