



Press Release

Indonesia-Malaysia-Thailand Growth Triangle : IMT-GT

Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board (NESDB)

14th IMT-GT Senior Officials' and Ministerial Meeting
Indonesia-Malaysia-Thailand Growth Triangle (IMT-GT)
4-6 September 2007
Songkhla, Thailand

Thailand hosted the 14th IMT-GT Senior Officials and Ministerial' Meeting (SOM) on 4-6 September 2007 in Muang Songkhla, Songkhla Province, Thailand.

The Ministerial Meeting was held on 6 September 2007. The Indonesian delegation was led by Police General Da'i Bachtiar, Special Envoy of the President of the Republic of Indonesia. The Malaysian delegation was headed by Dato Seri Shahidan Kassim, Chief Minister of Perlis and Mr. Sawanit Kongsiri, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, headed the Thai delegation.

The concurrent meetings of the Senior Officials' Meeting, the governor and Chief Minister Forum and the IMT-GT Joint Business Council (JBC) were held during 2-5 September 2007. The meetings were attended by about 400 delegates from the three countries.

The Ministerial Meeting aimed to follow up and speed up the implementation of the IMT-GT Roadmap for development 2007-2011 as well as to monitor and discuss the work progress under the Roadmap. The Meeting has agreed on the following issues:

1. **Accepts the following provinces as proposed by Thailand** namely, Chumphon, Ranong, Surat Thani, Krabi, Phang Nga and Phuket as new members of the IMT-GT. This makes all 14 provinces of Southern Thailand become member areas of the IMT-GT which will enhance the opportunities and potential of the Southern provinces of Thailand.

2. **Supports the progress of the establishment of the Center for IMT-GT Subregional Cooperation (CIMT)**. Currently attached to the Economic Planning Unit of Malaysia which will burden the operating costs of the Center in the first 5 years. The center will be at Selangor State and will carry on the coordinating and consultation work with IMT-GT institutions, and facilitating implementation and monitoring of priority projects of the Roadmap.

3. **Acknowledges the progress made by the Joint Business Council (JBC)** that is the arrangement of 3 meeting during the year which 2 major

events were proposed to be carried out in 2008 namely, the establishment of 3 IMT-GT Plaza in Malaysia (Bukit Kayu Hitam, Port Dickson) and Thailand (Pattalung) and the undertaking of the visit IMT-GT year 2008.

4. Acknowledges the progress on the implementation of the Roadmap by the 6 working groups which are as follows:

1) **Infrastructure and transportation.** Major projects include (1) the Bukit Bunga-Buketa bridge which is scheduled to be completed by December 15, 2007 to commemorate the 50 year of Thailand – Malaysia relation. (2) to speed up the agreement on transport facilitation of trade and people between Thailand and Malaysia which will enable Thai trucks to go through to Singapore whereas Malaysia could transport to Laos and Myanmar. (3) cooperation on transport linkages particularly on air link with the provision of incentives on the waiver or reduction of landing and take-off fee encouraging low cost airlines to provide increasing services such as the use of Subang airport by Riau airline.

2) **Trade and investment.** The forthcoming events are the SME Conference and Trade Expo expected to be held on 6-9 December 2007 at Penang, Malaysia. Other project is the cooperation on the establishment of the special economic zone at Sadao-Bukitkayu Hitam in which the FS on the Thai side is at the draft final stage. Progress is also made concerning the investigation of the existing agreement on the solution to double taxation among the three countries.

3) **Tourism.** It was agreed that the Visit IMT-GT year 2008 will be the major IMT-GT tourism event in 2008. The grand opening will be held at Hatyai during 11-20 January 2008 followed by tourism promotion events such as sports, social and cultural activities to be held in the three countries for the whole year.

4) **Halal products and services (HAPAS).** The initial remarkable progress is the Halal laboratory network which is the cooperation between the Halal Science Center, Chulalongkorn University and the Halal Science Center, Bogor Agricultural University, Indonesia and the Halal Product Research Institute of Putra University, Malaysia. Also the international Halal Symposium will be held in November 2007 in Malaysia and in 2008 in Indonesia. This cooperation will tap on the huge market of about 1.8 billion US dollars of Halal products as well as opportunities on Halal minimarts, Halal logistics, Halal tourism and Halal health products.

5) **Human resource development.** Major progress includes the acceleration on the agreement to promote mutual recognition of skills for enhanced labor mobility in the IMT-GT areas. Other important cooperation is the strengthening of the UNINET by the establishment of the secretariat office in order to coordinate the activities between universities in the IMT-GT areas.

6) **Agriculture, agro-based industry and environment.** The major project include the creation of website on fisheries data (Indonesia) and cattle breeding center (Thailand).

5. **Acknowledges the study by ADB** on the IMT-GT Connectivity Corridor which involve the study on essential infrastructure for economic linkages along the economic corridor identified in the Roadmap. Key Proposals include the improvement of 4 lane road linking north-south corridor of Sumatra. The study will pave the way for enhancing the potential of new member areas such as the Ranong-Phuket-Aceh corridors.

6. **The 3rd IMT-GT Summit** will be held on 19 November 2007 in Singapore as a parallel meeting of the 13th ASEAN Summit.

7. **Indonesia will host the next IMT-GT SOM and MM** either in Banda Aceh or in Palembang 2 weeks after ramahdon.
