



**JOINT STATEMENT
TWENTY EIGHTH BIMP-EAGA MINISTERIAL MEETING**

**14 NOVEMBER 2025
ISLAND GARDEN CITY OF SAMAL, DAVAO DEL NORTE, PHILIPPINES**

1. We, the Ministers of Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines gather in the Island Garden City of Samal, Davao Del Norte, Philippines on 14 November 2025 for the 28th Brunei Darussalam-Indonesia-Malaysia-Philippines East ASEAN Growth Area (BIMP-EAGA) Ministerial Meeting chaired by His Excellency Secretary Leo Tereso Magno, Signing Minister of the Philippines.
2. We note with appreciation that BIMP-EAGA has maintained steadfast economic growth despite challenging global conditions. In 2024, the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) at current PPP in EAGA was USD 1,343.14 billion, accounting for 18.03 percent of BIMP's GDP. Tourism continues to improve with arrivals increasing from 3.99 million in 2023, to 6.01 million in 2024 (increased by 51%). The increase significantly contributes to the growth of EAGA's economy. Domestically, investments declined to USD 11.2 billion in 2024, from USD 11.9 billion in 2023. BIMP-EAGA recorded its trade balance at USD 60.28 billion in 2023. We are committed to implementing effective measures that will accelerate the growth of trade, investment, and tourism in our subregion.
3. We take great pride in the substantial progress and significant achievements realized under the BIMP-EAGA Vision 2025 (BEV 2025). From its inception in 2017 through its culmination this year, the initiative has delivered concrete results across its five strategic pillars, namely Connectivity, Food Basket, Tourism, Environment and Sociocultural and Education, laying a strong foundation for the BIMP-EAGA's continued growth. The gross domestic product (GDP) stood at \$401.6 billion, accounting for 18.2% of the combined GDP of the BIMP-EAGA countries in 2023. The cumulative total of inter- and extra-EAGA exports (excluding intra-EAGA) from 2017 to 2019 reached \$242 billion, exceeding the target. Meanwhile, cumulative foreign direct investments (FDI) of EAGA stood at \$93.4 billion in 2017–2023. EAGA's share in total FDI of BIMP averaged 20% during the same period. The subregion recorded total domestic investments of \$64.1 billion during 2017–2023, averaging about \$9.2 billion annually.
4. We recognize that deepening regional connectivity is essential for unlocking shared economic potential and building a more socially inclusive subregion. We welcome the progress made under the Priority Infrastructure Projects (PIPs), with a total of 217 projects in May 2025, with 60 projects successfully completed, while 157 others are advancing through various implementation phases. These PIPs span key sectors, including transport infrastructure (roads, railways, bridges, inland transport, airports, and seaports), energy and power infrastructure, Information and Communications Technology (ICT), trade facilitation (covering CIQS, economic zones, and industrial parks), and urban and border town development. Under BEV 2025, significant progress was achieved in the construction, completion, upgrading, and expansion of vital infrastructure. A total of 541 kilometers of roads were built and rehabilitated, 145

km of railways were completed, and 2 new bridges were constructed between 2017 and 2023. To date, an additional 520,023 km of roads are in various stages of improvement and ongoing construction. In the same period, the construction and upgrading of 15 airports and 21 seaports and facilities were completed, and nine special economic zones in BIMP-EAGA economic corridors were established and operationalized.

5. We commend the active participation and leadership of BIMP-EAGA states, provinces, and local governments in the 7th BIMP-EAGA Chief Ministers, Governors, and Local Governments Forum (CMGLF). Their strong commitment and collaboration continue to play a pivotal role in translating subregional strategies into concrete local actions, fostering inclusive growth, and advancing the overall objectives of BIMP-EAGA cooperation. Area-based initiatives of subnational governments, such as the cooperation between Sarawak, Malaysia and Brunei Darussalam; Sarawak, Malaysia and Indonesia; Lahad Datu, Sabah, and Tanjung Silopo of Sulawesi, Indonesia are complementing the CMGLF's efforts to promote cross-border activities and implement economic corridors in BIMP-EAGA. We encourage the subnational level to pursue subnational cooperation, including through bilateral or cross-border fora to encourage complementary initiatives and strengthen people-to-people linkages across the subregion.
6. We look forward to the operationalization of the newly reconfigured, expanded, and interlinked BIMP-EAGA economic corridors following the adoption by the Leaders, which is essential to transform the subregion with dynamic corridor networks, extend benefits to underserved areas, and unlock third-generation investments - ultimately boosting connectivity and stimulating vibrant economic growth.
7. We appreciate the ongoing reviews to make the existing Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) on air, sea, and land transport linkages attuned to current market realities, expand connectivity, and benefit more players in the EAGA routes. We commend the revival of the BIMP-EAGA Transport Private Sector Forum this year, marking a significant step to enhance cooperation between key industry stakeholders. We strongly encourage closer collaboration with the private sector in securing the long-term sustainability of air, sea, and land transport routes. We welcome the revival of air routes for Pontianak-Kuching and Bandar Seri Begawan-Balikpapan, and the Kuching-Singawang bus route, fostering enhanced movement of people and goods between these countries. We look forward to the conduct of feasibility studies, which will ensure that transport planning and pipeline development are anchored on market demand and financial viability. We look forward to the conduct of a study on the economic viability of the Mindanao–North Sulawesi linkage, with the end goal of establishing sustainable, market-driven, and regularly scheduled air and short-sea services.
8. We acknowledge the significant progress in addressing digital disparities through a robust pipeline of projects and the continuous expansion of BIMP-EAGA's Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Infrastructure. We further commend the private sector's involvement through BIMP-EAGA ICT CEO Forum for its pivotal role, evidenced by its actionable recommendations, the identification of new private sector-led initiatives, and the signing of MoUs for new projects. In alignment with these advancements, we endorse the renaming of the BIMP-EAGA "ICT Infrastructure Cluster" to "Digital Cluster," and "ICT CEO Forum" to "Digital Alliance". As a way forward, we task the Digital Cluster and the Digital Alliance to design and roll out targeted capacity-building and training programs on digital transformation, signifying the commitment to harness emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence to drive regional development. Through digital collaboration, member countries will be able to share best practices, co-develop digital infrastructure, and promote cross-

border e-commerce and innovation ecosystems. Capacity development will be pursued to accelerate the digitalization journey of the subregion, adapt to rapidly evolving digital trends, and align with the ASEAN Digital Economy Framework Agreement for harmonization of digital trade rules that will foster regional integration and unlock the significant potential of the digital economy.

9. We take note of the finalization of the draft Terms of Reference of the Brunei Darussalam-Indonesia- Malaysia-Philippines Power Integration Project Task Force as a first step to assess and evaluate cross border electricity trading. We acknowledge the completion of the Renewable Energy Certificate (REC) System for BIMP-EAGA Countries Project funded under the BIMP-EAGA Republic of Korea Cooperation Fund (BKCF), which is expected to scale up clean energy investments and cross-border REC transactions. Malaysia remains committed to strengthening cross-border energy integration, particularly through grid harmonization and power export initiatives that contribute to the realization of the Trans-Borneo Power Grid, in line with the broader vision of the ASEAN Power Grid. These efforts will help the BIMP-EAGA region transition toward a low-carbon future and advance the goals of the Paris Agreement.
10. We acknowledge and commend the ongoing measures in trade facilitation across the subregion such as the One Borneo Quarantine Initiative (OBQI) and encourage the quarantine working group to expedite its implementation. We further recognize the significant progress achieved in streamlining rules, regulations, and procedures on customs, immigration, quarantine, and security (CIQS), which are pivotal in enhancing and boosting the efficiency of BIMP-EAGA's trading systems. These are pivotal instruments in addressing a complex array of operational challenges that directly impact the seamless flow of goods, the mobility of people, the cross-border provision of services, and the integrity of our shared border and maritime security. We welcome the finalization of the Trade Facilitation Cluster's Terms of Reference, which will provide a clear framework for enhancing cooperation to promote the cross-border flow of goods and people.
11. We support the proposal to establish a Working Group on Economic Zones (EZs) under the Trade and Investment Facilitation and Promotion Cluster, recognizing SEZs as strategic platforms for attracting investment and boosting regional competitiveness. We commend the enhanced data accessibility of the BIMP-EAGA Statistical Webpage and data dissemination with the continued annual publication of the Statistical Information Brief. We welcome the extended scope of work in providing broader coverage of data to include all CWGs. We acknowledge the important role of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in driving economic growth, trade, investment, and job creation in the subregion, and recognize their tangible contribution through the successful integration of 257 MSMEs into regional supply and value chains.
12. We acknowledge the progress in strengthening BIMP-EAGA's core commodities and commend the milestone agreement between Wasan Milling Co. Sdn Bhd of Brunei Darussalam and the Municipality of Narra, Palawan in the Philippines. This strategic cooperation exemplifies the kind of scalable, investment-driven model that can empower local farmers and enhance regional trade. To build on this momentum, we advocate for stronger support and alignment from other BIMP-EAGA clusters to reinforce regional efforts. We reaffirm our commitment to advancing regional integration in agriculture and fisheries through inclusive value chains, climate-resilient systems, and private sector-led innovation. We continue to call upon the private sector to deepen its collaboration in driving sustainable and competitive development across BIMP-EAGA.

13. We applaud the initiative to expand the tourism villages network and promote tourism villages as destinations to empower local communities, and look forward to a fully operational “Experience BIMP-EAGA Tourism Website”. We are encouraged by the numerous tourism-related programs and activities undertaken in the subregion and continue to call for stronger tourism-transport convergence to expand routes.
14. We reiterate the paramount importance of environmental sustainability as a foundational pillar for long-term prosperity in BIMP-EAGA. Our commitment to economic development must be intrinsically linked with the responsible stewardship of the subregion's rich and diverse natural resources. We commend the significant and proactive commitment to sustainable urban development through the Green Cities projects in Kendari, Kota Kinabalu, General Santos and Kuching (Padawan). These projects are not merely infrastructural upgrades but represent a forward-thinking strategy to integrate environmental stewardship with economic growth. We look forward to the formal cooperative arrangement between Malaysia and the Philippines for the Twin Peaks Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Project: Mt. Apo and Mt. Kinabalu.
15. We commend the programs and initiatives in sociocultural development, human resource development and youths and sports development in the subregion. We are encouraged by the numerous Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) events and research conferences held within BIMP-EAGA. We applaud the recently concluded Budayaw Festival held in Puerto Princesa, Palawan, as a platform to showcase the rich cultural tapestry in our subregion. We look forward to the commencement of the BIMP-EAGA Youth Bus Program to be held on 22 November - 7 December 2025, which among others, aims to nurture youth as ambassadors of the subregion by bringing in identity, cultural and social aspects.
16. We endorse the BIMP-EAGA Vision 2035 (BEV 2035) document which will provide the strategic direction for BIMP-EAGA towards greater heights over the next ten years. With our new vision “Socially inclusive, Open, Aligned and Resilient (S.O.A.R) BIMP-EAGA for Shared Economic Prosperity and Sustainability”, we are committed to overcoming subregional challenges through aligned policies and enhanced resilience. This integrated approach is key to achieving shared prosperity and sustainable development across BIMP-EAGA. We look forward to its adoption during the Special BIMP-EAGA Summit in 2026.
17. We commend the proactive initiatives and continuous efforts of the BIMP-EAGA Business Council (BEBC) and other private sector stakeholders in promoting trade, investment, and tourism within the subregion and beyond. We further encourage greater participation from the Chambers of Commerce and other key industry players in the BEBC, in alignment with the strategic pillars of BIMP-EAGA. We also congratulate the BEBC, in collaboration with the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the National Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Brunei Darussalam, for the successful organization of the 2nd BIMP-EAGA Trade, Investment, and Halal Conference in Brunei Darussalam. We laud the BIMP-EAGA Transport Private Sector Meeting (BETPSM) for co-organizing the 1st Borneo International Maritime Week 2025, in Bintulu, Malaysia carrying the theme "Gearing Towards a Sustainable Maritime Logistics Hub for BIMP EAGA" strengthening regional connectivity. We take note of the new convergence project proposals including the BIMP-EAGA (BEC) Connect Card, BIMP-EAGA Cross-Border E-Wallet Integration, and the Sungai Tujuh E-Commerce Consolidation Hub, which are vital in narrowing development gaps within the EAGA subregion and in promoting inclusive and equitable growth.

18. We welcome the revival of the BIMP-EAGA Media Forum as an important platform to deepen public awareness and understanding of BIMP-EAGA cooperation. We commend the active participation of BIMP-EAGA information officers and media partners, and note their renewed commitment to revitalize the BIMP-EAGA Media and Communicators Association as a dynamic mechanism for coordinated public information, proactive storytelling on subregional initiatives, and strengthened collaboration among government communicators and the private media across the subregion.
19. We recognize the importance of strengthening coordination, implementation, and monitoring of existing and new BIMP-EAGA initiatives through a central secretariat. We reiterate the urgency of resolving the institutionalization and legalization of BIMP-FC to ensure its readiness to serve as full-fledged secretariat particularly in supporting the preparation and implementation of BEV 2035.
20. We greatly appreciate ADB's role as Regional Development Advisor and its enduring partnership with BIMP-EAGA for more than two decades. ADB's support spans transport, agriculture, energy, and multi-sector projects alongside robust analytical work on economic corridors, SEZs and energy connectivity. It has played a pivotal role in developing green and smart cities, piloting smart tourism, advancing the blue economy, enhancing customs cooperation, and mobilizing resources. ADB's technical expertise has strengthened ASEAN and inter-subregional collaboration, while building the capacity of BIMP-EAGA officials in regional cooperation and project management. We are especially grateful for ADB's technical guidance in crafting the BIMP-EAGA Vision 2035, which charts our strategic path for the next decade and reinforces our commitment to inclusive, resilient, and sustainable growth. We look forward to ADB's continued and expanded support as a strategic partner and regional advisor to BIMP-EAGA.
21. We reaffirm our support for closer cooperation with ASEAN, recognizing BIMP-EAGA as a key building block for ASEAN integration and community building. We seek to align our initiatives with the ASEAN Community Vision 2045, the IAI Work Plan V (2026–2030), and the ASEAN Blue Economy Framework to advance sustainable fisheries, responsible marine resource use, resilient coastal communities, and sustainable tourism development. We welcome the successful convening of the BIMP-EAGA Senior Officials–ASEAN Secretariat meeting and welcome progress under the Joint Plan of Action among the ASEAN Secretariat, BIMP-FC, CIMT, and GMS. Together, these efforts ensure BIMP-EAGA's meaningful contribution to ASEAN's agenda over the next two decades.
22. We reiterate our intention to upgrade our level of engagement with Australia as BIMP-EAGA Development Partner and anticipate the finalization of the Frameworks of Economic Cooperation of BIMP-EAGA and Australia and Japan. We are pleased with the successful conduct of the 16th BIMP-EAGA and China - Senior Officials Meeting on 13 November 2025 which reviewed progress under the current BIMP-EAGA-China Cooperation Plan of Action, and reaffirmed the shared commitment to deepen practical, results-oriented collaboration between BIMP-EAGA and China. We appreciate the support from the Republic of Korea (ROK) and look forward to the outcomes of the 6th BIMP-EAGA-ROK Senior Officials Meeting to be held on 20 November 2025. We thank ROK for the funding support to thirty-seven projects in connectivity, environment, tourism, and agriculture and fisheries, under the BKCF amounting to USD 10 million approved from the first to the fourth BKCF calls (2021-2024) and an expected USD 3.5 million from the 5th BKCF call (2025).

23. We express our profound gratitude and sincere appreciation to the Government of the Philippines for the warm hospitality, gracious hosting, and excellent arrangements extended to all delegates, which greatly contributed to the success of the meeting.

List of Signing Ministers

His Excellency Secretary Leo Tereso Magno
Chairman
Mindanao Development Authority
PHILIPPINES

His Excellency Harris Ibrahim
Deputy Permanent Secretary (Trade and Industry)
Ministry of Finance and Economy
BRUNEI DARUSSALAM

His Excellency Agus Trenggono
Consul General
Consulate General of the Republic of Indonesia in Davao
REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA

His Excellency Dato' Nor Azmie bin Diron
Secretary General
Ministry of Economy
MALAYSIA