



**JOINT STATEMENT  
SIXTEENTH  
BRUNEI DARUSSALAM-INDONESIA-MALAYSIA-PHILIPPINES  
EAST ASEAN GROWTH AREA SUMMIT  
(16<sup>th</sup> BIMP-EAGA SUMMIT)**

**27 May 2025  
KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA**

1. We, the Leaders of Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines gathered for the 16<sup>th</sup> BIMP-EAGA Summit on 27 May 2025 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia under the Chairmanship of the Philippines. The Summit was chaired by His Excellency Ferdinand Romualdez Marcos Jr., Head of Government of the Philippines.
2. We are delighted with the remarkable progress BIMP-EAGA has made since its inception in 1994. Celebrating over 30 years of robust cooperation and camaraderie, we express heartfelt gratitude and hope for continued and lasting collaboration.
3. We welcome the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary video of BIMP-EAGA and may this serve as a constant reminder of our past efforts and guide for our future actions for a stronger BIMP-EAGA.
4. We are inspired by BIMP-EAGA's steadfast economic growth, which continues to thrive despite global challenges. In 2023, BIMP-EAGA's GDP reached USD 401.6 billion, contributing 18.2% to the combined GDP of its four member countries. From 2017 to 2023, inter- and extra-EAGA exports (excluding intra-EAGA trade) totaled USD 674 billion, while cumulative foreign direct investment inflows surpassed expectations at USD 93.4 billion. During the same period, domestic tourist arrivals in EAGA (excluding Brunei Darussalam) reached an impressive 593.4 million. Although foreign visitor numbers were comparatively lower, they remained a crucial driver of the subregion's economic growth. We reaffirm our unwavering commitment to implementing effective measures that will further accelerate trade, investment, and tourism across BIMP-EAGA.
5. We take immense pride in the transformative progress achieved from 2017 to 2025 under the BIMP-EAGA Vision (BEV) 2025, where advancements in connectivity, food basket, tourism, environment and sociocultural and education strategic pillars have not only strengthened cross-border ties but also unlocked new avenues for sustainable economic growth across the region. These milestones stand as a testament to our shared vision and collaborative spirit to building a stronger and prosperous future for member countries.

6. To sustain the growth momentum of the subregion, we adopt the BIMP-EAGA Vision (BEV) 2035 Guiding Framework which will define BIMP-EAGA's development path over the next decade. We recognize the current challenges faced by the subregion, including economic disparities, infrastructure gaps, and environmental vulnerabilities. By embracing social inclusivity, fostering openness, ensuring alignment of policies and initiatives, and building resilience against future uncertainties, we can unlock shared economic prosperity and promote sustainable development for all communities within BIMP-EAGA.
7. We underscore the critical importance of regional connectivity as a driver of economic growth and social inclusion across the subregion. We welcome the progress made under the Priority Infrastructure Projects (PIPs), with a total of 217 projects. Notably, 60 projects have been 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.
8. We commend the active engagement of BIMP-EAGA states, provinces, and local governments in the 6<sup>th</sup> BIMP-EAGA Chief Ministers, Governors, and Local Governments Forum. Recognizing their vital role in advancing subregional cooperation, we call for sustained support and enhanced initiatives to strengthen trade, tourism, investment, and cross-border collaboration across BIMP-EAGA.
9. We recognize that the connectivity pillar has delivered outstanding results, with the transport sector leading the charge through transformative infrastructure development by constructing, upgrading, and expanding important facilities while establishing seamless multimodal linkages. We look forward to the operationalization of an integrated approach to advancing the newly reconfigured, expanded and interlinked BIMP-EAGA economic corridors. An integrated approach will enhance economic corridors as networks, deliver benefits to marginalized areas, and unlock third-generation investments—boosting connectivity and driving vibrant economic activities. Meanwhile, the digital landscape across the subregion has undergone a remarkable leap forward, accelerating regional digital integration and paving the way for a smarter, more connected future.
10. Additionally, we commend BIMP-EAGA's transformative progress in strengthening energy security and infrastructure, delivering tangible results such as expanded rural electrification, the upcoming Renewable Energy Certificate Framework, backed by the BIMP-EAGA-Republic of Korea Cooperation Fund (BKCF) funding, as well as the BIMP-Power Integration Project. Since 2017, we have accelerated regional integration by modernizing cross-border trade rules, simplifying regulations, and improving the investment climate supported by pivotal initiatives like the Time Release Study and the landmark One Borneo Quarantine Initiative. Trade and commerce have been enhanced through high-impact trade fairs, business matching platforms, and

targeted promotional campaigns, with MSMEs playing a central role in driving economic growth. The BIMP-EAGA Statistical Information Webpage serves as a platform for reference that captures the subregion's remarkable journey toward prosperity and connectivity.

11. We commend efforts to strengthen BIMP-EAGA's key commodities and recognize the coconut project's success in empowering farmers and promoting trade. We encourage similar models for other industries and highlight private sector initiatives such as the Farm Konekt project in improving production and market access. We welcome the new salt industry initiative under the Blue Economy Strategy, and support the integration of renewable energy to boost the agricultural sector. We call for full regional integration across agriculture and fisheries and urge private sector collaboration to drive sustainable and competitive development.
12. We are encouraged by the notable expansion of direct flights and new air routes which have significantly enhanced BIMP-EAGA's tourism sector, increasing visitor arrivals, boosting cruise tourism, and strengthening regional connectivity. We applaud the successful revival of previously suspended routes during the pandemic, demonstrating our collective resilience. Capacity-building initiatives have empowered local tourism operators through targeted workshops and skills training, particularly benefiting rural communities. We support the initial work for the potential expansion of the Sister Tourism Village into the Tourism Villages Network, and the establishment of the Experience BIMP-EAGA Tourism Website.
13. We strongly reiterate the importance of environmental sustainability and support mainstreaming sustainable management approaches in BIMP-EAGA through various initiatives including publication of case studies on sustainable ecotourism, agriculture and fisheries in BIMP-EAGA, engagement with communities, and publication of four Green City Action Plans (GCAPs) in Kendari, Kota Kinabalu, General Santos, and Kuching (Padawan). We take note of the ongoing implementation of GCAP projects. We support the implementation of the BIMP-EAGA Guidelines on Green Meetings, and the ongoing compilation of existing green and environmentally friendly practices amongst MSMEs.
14. We reaffirm our commitment to strengthening people-to-people connectivity as a cornerstone for enhancing subregional cooperation. The vibrant Budayaw Festivals showcase the diversity of creative expressions from cultural masters and artists, celebrate the richness of culture and arts, and foster understanding and solidarity in BIMP-EAGA. The biennial BIMP-EAGA Friendship Games unite athletes, promote goodwill and mutual understanding through the universal language of sports. We take note of the numerous in-country cultural and heritage events, and initiatives to nurture human capital through the human resource development strategy.
15. We recognize and commend the initiatives and efforts of the BIMP-EAGA Business Council (BEBC) for its dynamic leadership in driving trade, investment, and tourism growth in the subregion. We also express appreciation

to the private sector through the BEBC for their concerted actions and dedication in promoting cross-border economic activities within BIMP-EAGA and beyond. Additionally, we also commend the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry for organizing the 1<sup>st</sup> BIMP-EAGA Trade, Investment and Halal Conference, which is a strategic platform that enhances collaboration among BIMP business sectors, linking capital cities with the BIMP-EAGA focused areas.

16. We acknowledge the urgency to institutionalize BIMP-EAGA Facilitation Center (BIMP-FC). While we continue to work towards legalizing and establishing a fully functioning secretariat, we also see the need to strengthen the subregional mechanism to address the growing coordination gaps, and the technical needs of the cooperation program moving forward.
17. We acknowledge the Asian Development Bank (ADB), our Regional Development Advisor, for its invaluable partnership spanning many years. We are grateful for ADB's support across key sectors, including transport, energy, agriculture, and trade facilitation; analytical work on economic corridors, special economic zones (SEZs), and power integration; developing green and smart cities and the blue economy; building capacities of government officials in regional cooperation, tourism, and project management; and strengthening ASEAN and inter-subregional collaboration. We commend ADB for its excellent work in preparing the *Strategic, Spatial, and Socially Inclusive: An Integrated Approach to BIMP-EAGA Economic Corridor Development* report, which identified reconfigured, expanded, and interlinked economic corridors along with investment projects. We look forward to ADB's continued support in shaping the BEV 2035, reinforcing its invaluable role in defining our trajectory for the next decade.
18. We commend BIMP-EAGA for its continued efforts to align closely with ASEAN's strategic priorities and for serving as a complementary platform to advance ASEAN frameworks and initiatives. We note with appreciation that, through the Joint Plan of Action, the four secretariats, namely the ASEAN Secretariat, BIMP-FC, CIMA, and GMS, are strengthening coordination, particularly in key areas such as tourism, energy, and sustainable urbanization. This collaborative approach reinforces regional coherence and enhances the collective impact of subregional and ASEAN-wide efforts.
19. We deeply appreciate the strong support of our Development Partners. We thank the People's Republic of China for providing various trainings for BIMP-EAGA members, and for the provision of BIMP-EAGA China Cooperation Special Loan to interested countries. The year 2025 marks the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the People's Republic of China as BIMP-EAGA's development partner. We deeply appreciate the Republic of Korea for the 30 projects in connectivity, environment, tourism, agriculture and fisheries amounting to USD10 million from 2021-2024 that were approved under the BKCF. Moving forward, we remain committed to strengthening our collective efforts to enhance cooperation with our Development Partners.

20. We express our utmost gratitude to the Government of the Republic of the Philippines for effectively chairing this meeting and the Government of Malaysia for their warm hospitality and the excellent meeting arrangements.

### **List of Leaders**

1. His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah  
Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam
2. His Excellency Prabowo Subianto  
President of the Republic of Indonesia
3. His Excellency Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim  
Prime Minister of Malaysia
4. His Excellency Ferdinand Romualdez Marcos Jr.  
President of the Republic of the Philippines
5. His Excellency Dr. Kao Kim Hourn  
Secretary-General of ASEAN
6. His Excellency Masato Kanda  
President of Asian Development Bank