



Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines - East ASEAN Growth Area

**2ND SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES DEVELOPMENT (SMED) WORKING GROUP
MEETING & BIMP-EAGA INTEGRATED CULTURE EXPO 2014**

Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam
18 - 22 June 2014

**WELCOMING REMARKS BY
YANG MULIA HAJI KHAIRUDDIN BIN HAJI ABDUL HAMID
DEPUTY PERMANENT SECRETARY
(DEVELOPMENT OF INDUSTRY AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP)
MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY AND PRIMARY RESOURCES**

BISMILLAHIR RAHMAN NIRRAHIM

Distinguished Head of delegation from Indonesia and Chairman of the BIMP-EAGA SME Development (SMED) Working Group Meeting, Mr. Meliadi Sembiring;

Head of delegation from Malaysia, Ms. Irene Joibi;

Head of delegation from Philippines, Mr. Ibrahim Guiamadel;

Head of BIMP-EAGA Facilitation Centre, Ms. Susanna Chew;

President of BIMP-EAGA Business Council (BEBC), Pg Yura Kesteria bin Pg Setia Negara Haji Yusuf;

Senior Government Officials;

Exhibitors from the EAGA Countries;

Distinguished guests and delegates;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

Assalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh and a very good morning to all of you.

Alhamdulillah, we are grateful to Allah the Almighty for His gracious blessing in allowing us to gather here and giving me an honour to officiate the Opening Ceremony of the 2nd Small and Medium Enterprises Development (SMED) Working Group Meeting & the Launching of BIMP-EAGA Integrated Culture Expo 2014 here in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam.

First and foremost, on behalf of the government of His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam, I would like to extend a warm welcome to all of you to Brunei Darussalam, our *Abode of Peace*.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

BIMP-EAGA is seen as important building block for further political, social and economic integration of the ASEAN region. As the establishment of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) 2015 draws closer, it is important for BIMP-EAGA to ensure the long-term credibility, viability and sustainability of BIMP-EAGA by strengthening convergence initiatives through existing growth corridors within the sub-region, to promote sub-

regional cooperation in trade, investment, and the tourism sector, with a view of contributing to the region's goal of realizing AEC 2015.

As we all aware, BIMP-EAGA being the largest sub-regional grouping in ASEAN by virtue of its geographical coverage and one of the most important sub-regional groupings in terms of economic size, we are in a position to offer enormous synergy for accelerating economic integration in ASEAN. In marking the 20th year of BIMP-EAGA, it is therefore, our commitment to further strengthen our co-operation within the overall context of narrowing development gaps in the EAGA-region in changing our perspective from focusing on merely an intra to extra trade, investment and tourism outward market orientation - BIMP-EAGA as one unit exporting to the rest of the world.

Toward achieving these objectives, I believed that partnerships, engagements and commitments of EAGA stakeholders, both the public sector and BIMP-EAGA private sectors especially through BIMP-EAGA Business Council (BEBC) should be combined to create greater economic opportunities in developing the competitiveness of SMEs the EAGA region.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This 2nd BIMP-EAGA SMED Meeting is crucial since we will be looking back at what we have done in the past years as a sub-region, as a working group, and to some extent, as a country. I am sure this meeting will chart another concerted action and prioritise deliverables to further enhance the development of SMEs in the BIMP-EAGA region and to support the BIMP-EAGA long-term objectives of establishing BIMP-EAGA as a regional food basket and promoting BIMP-EAGA as a premiere ecotourism destination.

In this opportunity, I would like to convey my message as follows: ‘Let us together as One Community in BIMP-EAGA and ASEAN continue to collaborate in developing enabling mechanism to provide opportunities for SMEs; establish an exchange platform on a common issues in development of SMEs; and enhance cooperation in the key areas through the implementation of the BIMP-EAGA and ASEAN Community Blueprints by showing a clear vision of building the ASEAN Community in 2015 with the three pillars: political and security, economic and social-cultural communities’.

In closing, allow me to express my sincere thanks to the Entrepreneurial Development Centre, Ministry of Industry and Primary Resources as the organizer of the 2nd BIMP-EAGA SMED Meeting and BIMP-EAGA Business Council (BEBC) Brunei Darussalam as co-organizers of the BIMP-EAGA Integrated Culture Expo 2014 for all the hard work they have put together in making this meeting and expo successful.

To all the meeting delegates, I wish you all a very fruitful and successful meeting. I look forward in hearing more initiatives will be taken by the SMED Working Group to spur SME growth in the EAGA-region.

WABILLAHITAUFIK WALHIDAYAH, WASALAMUALAIKUM WARAHMAATULLAHI
WABARAKATUH.

Thank you.

[NOTE: After the Opening Remarks by GOH, Remarks by SMED Chairman and Remarks by BEBC President, all of them will be invited again to the stage for the Official Opening of the Meeting and Launching of the Expo.]

GOH:

With the kalimah BISMILLAHIRAHMANNIRRAHIM, I declare this 2nd Small and Medium Enterprises Development (SMED) Working Group Meeting & BIMP-EAGA Integrated Culture Expo 2014 open]