

JOINT STATEMENT

THE 29th MINISTERIAL MEETING OF INDONESIA-MALAYSIA-THAILAND GROWTH TRIANGLE (IMT-GT)

Friday, 29 September 2023

1. We, the IMT-GT Ministers, held our 29th Meeting on 29 September 2023 in Batam, the Republic of Indonesia, under the chairmanship of H.E. Airlangga Hartarto, Coordinating Minister for Economic Affairs, the Republic of Indonesia. The meeting was attended by H.E. Rafizi Ramli, Minister of Economy, Malaysia, and H.E. Julapun Amornvivat, Deputy Minister of Finance, Kingdom of Thailand.
2. We emphasise our commitment to sustainable development in the subregion through extensive collaboration. Marking the 30th anniversary of IMT-GT subregional cooperation at the 15th IMT-GT Summit with the theme "*Learning from the Past, Shaping IMT-GT Cooperation in Turbulent Times*", we draw valuable insights from Leaders' guidance as a compass for our collaboration. We commend the outcome of the High-Level Panel Forum to mark thirty (30) years of the IMT-GT Anniversary.
3. We are pleased with the progress of the economic recovery in the subregion. Subregional trade has surged 17.6% from USD 618 billion in 2021 to USD 727 billion in 2022, reflecting positive growth. Furthermore, the tourism sector has demonstrated a steady recovery, rebounding from 0.5 million international visitors in 2021 to an impressive 19.1 million visitors in 2022, approaching the pre-pandemic level. However, total investment in the subregion declined from USD 58.5 billion in 2021 to USD 33.2 billion in 2022. We remain inspired to move forward with unwaveringly commitment to achieve a resilient economic recovery, nurturing sustained growth, and attract more investment to the subregion.
4. We express our concerns on the multitude of global issues that could potentially impact subregional development, including but not limited to climate change and extreme weather events including the El Niño, uneven post-COVID recovery and growing inequalities, geopolitically driven supply chain disruptions and restructuring, digital information, demographic shifts, and growing imperative for green transition. We reaffirm our resolve to strengthen resilience in the subregion through joint initiatives and closer cooperation. We urgently call upon all stakeholders to proactively incorporate these challenges into their initiatives, fostering collective efforts towards sustainable solutions.
5. We applaud the key initiatives that have contributed to the advancement of our subregion's agricultural sector, including enhancing capacity-building programmes and adopting agriculture technology. We commend the ongoing

projects aimed at enhancing food security including through smart agriculture farming and production in the subregion. We urge collective action to accelerate the adoption and application of technology in agriculture, enhancing productivity, minimise the negative impacts on the environment, and addressing climate and supply chain-related and other challenges. We emphasise the importance of cross-working group collaboration to establish resilient food systems, in alignment with the Blue, Green, and Circular Economy principles. As the main Palm Oil producing countries, we encourage the effort to expedite the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Palm Oil Cooperation to empower our smallholder as part of the global palm oil supply chain and strengthen our strategic commodity in the subregion to cope with global regulations that could hinder trade and harm our smallholder.

6. We extend our appreciation for the significant progress in IMT-GT halal and services cooperation. The 431,888 certified halal manufacturers and service providers, alongside the training of 68,247 halal professionals until 2021, demonstrates our commitment to develop our halal economy. The support extended to 8,919 Small and Medium Enterprises by 2021 has empowered them to become export-oriented enterprises. We welcome the inception of technology-driven projects such as Halal Blockchain, Online Halal Registration Systems, and Halal Integrated Information Systems in advancing IMT-GT halal cooperation. We call for continued collective efforts to elevate the position of IMT-GT halal industry and entrepreneurs in the global market. We encourage relevant stakeholders to actively showcase our halal products at international fora, strengthening the visibility of IMT-GT.
7. We commend the progressive recovery of our subregion's tourism sector, which attracted international tourists in 2022. We encourage the advancement of thematic tourism routes to align with our vision to establish IMT-GT as single tourism destination. To this end, we note with appreciation the conclusion of the Self-Drive Tourism and Themed Trails programmes by the Working Group on Tourism. We also take note of the progress in implementing the Visit IMT-GT Year campaign and look forward to accelerating the implementation of MoU on Geoparks and the promotion of eco-tourism networks. We encourage the Working Group to strengthen collaboration with other sectors and local governments to support sustainable tourism. We highly appreciate the support and collaboration by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) in several training programmes, as well as in the Tourism Communications Plan and Toolkit project.
8. We applaud the notable progress made in the development of Physical Connectivity Projects within our subregion. These projects contribute to facilitating the smooth mobility of people and goods across borders, enhancing regional cooperation and economic growth. We urge all stakeholders to actively promote projects that would strengthen trilateral connectivity and the linkages of the six economic corridors. Additionally, we emphasise the importance of

collaborative efforts to simplify rules and regulations governing cross-border activities and promote knowledge exchange.

9. We appreciate the progress within the IMT-GT trade and investment framework, including the growth of cross-border markets and innovative barter trading approaches. We also appreciate the progress in Special Economic Zones (SEZ), Time Release Study, and database compilation, all of which are vital for facilitating smooth cross-border trade and the movement of people. We commend significant progress in implementing IMT-GT Rubber Cities and Rubber Industry Cooperation. Moving forward, we encourage the Working Group on Trade and Investment (WGTI) and Project Implementation Team (PIT) on Rubber Cities and Rubber Industry cooperation to strengthen private sector engagement, expedite innovative subregional projects, promote research and development (R&D) quick-yielding program to increase domestic natural rubber consumption. We also support IMT-GT stakeholders in exploring cooperation with Rubber Research Centre and Agency domestically and internationally to develop downstream rubber industries and foster economic prosperity in the subregion.
10. We emphasise the pivotal role of digital transformation in empowering policymakers and businesses to harness the potential of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR). We appreciate the progress achieved in projects under subregional digital transformation cooperation, including initiatives for digital immersion, improved connectivity, and the development of a robust 5G ecosystem for commercial use. We call upon all stakeholders to prioritise enhancing digital literacy in the subregion, and equipping Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises with the essential skills needed to participate in the digital economy. Furthermore, we resolve to ensure that our technological advancements align with broader environmental and societal goals. However, while we acknowledge the tremendous opportunities that lie before us, we must also recognise the need for concerted efforts to maximise the benefits of digitalisation. Collaboration among the IMT-GT countries becomes crucial in developing policies and frameworks that foster a conducive environment for digital innovation, ensuring data privacy, cybersecurity, and building robust digital infrastructure that spans our subregion.
11. We reaffirm our commitment to reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions in the subregion towards targets outlined in the IMT-GT Sustainable Urban Development Framework (2019 – 2036) and the 26th United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26) in 2021. To this end, we reaffirm our commitment in implementing projects and programme such as the Integrated Waste Management Facility in Padang city, peatland and mangrove restoration, the Low Carbon Cities 2030 Challenge Programme, capacity building for marine oil spill response, and the Oil Spill and Tarball Management initiative. We also urge stakeholders to seek financial and technical support from IMT-GT development and strategic partners to accelerate project implementation by aligning them with the Implementation Blueprint 2022-2026.

12. We emphasise the importance of enhancing our human resources to thrive in the 4IR. We underscore the vital role of IMT-GT's Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) network in supporting industrial development through demand-driven skill training, capacity building, and knowledge exchange programme. We urge further collaboration across Working Groups (WGs), including with IMT-GT JBC and IMT-GT UNINET, focusing on talent development, maximising return on investment, and prioritising R&D.
13. We recognise the pivotal role of IMT-GT UNINET as the advocate for sectoral working groups, linking academic expertise and research to the broader IMT-GT community and the progress of UNINET's projects and collaborations with IMT-GT stakeholders. We encourage IMT-GT UNINET to expand its membership to include polytechnic institutes and other private universities. We congratulate IMT-GT UNINET members on the signing of an MoU for cooperation with Kurukshetra University of India to advance cooperation between IMT-GT and India, the first IMT-GT development partner.
14. We acknowledge the exemplary efforts put forth by local governments in driving projects under the Green Cities Mayor Council (GCMC) and Green Council (GC) initiatives. We took note the successful 6th GCMC and GC in Ipoh, Perak, Malaysia. We strongly encourage member cities, provinces, and states to further enhance their collaboration, recognising the vital role of subregional cooperation in achieving our shared goals. We call upon Chief Ministers and Governors' Forum (CMGF) to fortify collaboration with IMT-GT stakeholders, particularly IMT-GT JBC and UNINET to strengthen cooperation among local governments within each economic corridor for a greener and more prosperous future.
15. We highly appreciate the commitment of IMT-GT Joint Business Council (JBC) to play a more active role in the IMT-GT cooperation. To strengthen private sector engagement in the subregion, we request IMT-GT JBC to reinvigorate cooperation and mechanisms to tap more business opportunities and explore collaboration with Working Groups to implement viable projects alongside local governments.
16. We acknowledge the steadfast commitment of ADB as our Development Partner for almost two decades. ADB has provided technical assistance and strategic guidance in advancing economic corridors development and SEZ cooperation to expand trade routes, improve supply and value chains, foster value-creating trade built on IMT-GT's infrastructure network, and promote inclusive growth in border areas. We also recognise ADB's wide-ranging support to IMT-GT in promoting green recovery through liveable and smart cities, sustainable transport and e-mobility, and green financing; supporting tourism revival; fostering oceans health and the blue economy through knowledge sharing, strategy development and mobilising resources; building capacities of IMT-GT government officials and knowledge sharing; and deepening cooperation with ASEAN and subregions. We request ADB to

continue and expand its support for IMT-GT cooperation especially in accelerating implementation of the Implementation Blueprint 2022-2026.

17. We express our deep appreciation for the inclusion of the IMT-GT Summit as part of the ASEAN Summit programmes since 2005. This inclusion positions subregional cooperation as a vital part of regional integration and building blocks of the ASEAN Community, thus contributing to the wider international cooperation. We pledge to continue to align IMT-GT programmes and projects with ASEAN's frameworks and initiatives and be a factor in achieving our shared goals of economic development, social progress and regional integration for the benefit of our people and the region.
18. We acknowledge the progress of IMT-GT's cooperation with strategic partners. We applaud the cooperation between IMT-GT and UN-ESCAP through the launch of IMT-GT Transboundary Pilot Local Facilitation Project 2023–2024 and congratulate the cities selected for the pilot projects of this cooperation. To this end, we task Centre for IMT-GT Subregional Cooperation (CIMT), the Working Group on Environment, cities, and relevant stakeholders to prepare the project for implementation. We are pleased to note the progress in the implementation of projects and programmes with Institute for Global Environmental Strategies/Centre Collaborating with UNEP on Environmental Technologies (IGES/CCET) on integrated solid waste management in Padang city. We urge relevant stakeholders to finalise the preparation for the project on energy efficiency with Danish Energy Efficiency Partners (DEEP) and IMT-GT halal blockchain with the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB).
19. We look forward to the finalisation of Plan of Action between IMT-GT and the Republic of India and the implementation of its early harvest projects. We call upon all stakeholders to actively engage with potential partners and contribute to the continued advancement of subregional cooperation.
20. We extend congratulations on the occasion of the 10th Anniversary of the establishment of CIMT. CIMT plays a pivotal role in fostering subregional collaboration, orchestrating key undertakings of the IMT-GT Implementation Blueprints, and forging alliances with emerging partners. We extend our gratitude and appreciation to the Director of CIMT and the management team, whose tenure will come to an end in December 2023, for their hard work and dedication in advancing IMT-GT cooperation. Therefore, we task IMT-GT Senior Officials to process the new management team according to the IMT-GT Policy and Practice Manual (PPM) to ensure a smooth transition.
21. We agree to convene the 30th IMT-GT Ministerial Meeting and related Meetings in Malaysia in 2024.
22. We express our sincere gratitude to the Government of the Republic of Indonesia for chairing the 29th IMT-GT Ministerial Meeting and excellent arrangements of the meeting.

23. The Meeting was attended by

H.E. Airlangga Hartarto, Coordinating Minister for Economic Affairs, the Republic of Indonesia

H.E. Rafizi Ramli, Minister of Economy, Malaysia

H.E. Julapun Amornvivat, Deputy Minister of Finance, Kingdom of Thailand

Hon. Mr. Winfried Wicklein, Director General, Southeast Asia Department, Asian Development Bank

Hon. Ms. Kanchana Wanichkorn, Director of Sectoral Development, ASEAN Economic Community, the ASEAN Secretariat