

AGREED MINUTES OF THE FIRST MEETING OF THE PHILIPPINES-MALAYSIA JOINT COMMITTEE ON ASSISTANCE FOR THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC ADVANCEMENT OF MUSLIM FILIPINOS

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INTRODUCTION

- 1.The First Meeting of the Philippines-Malaysia Joint Committee on Assistance for the Socio-Economic Advancement of Muslim Filipinos was held in Manila, Philippines on 27 May 1996.
- 2.The Philippine side was led by the Hon. Rodolfo C. Severino, Undersecretary of Foreign Affairs. The Malaysian side was led by H.E. Tan Sri Ahmad Kamil Jaafar, Secretary-General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The delegation lists appears as Annex A.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

- 3.The Meeting adopted the Agenda which appears as Annex B.

BUSINESS ARRANGEMENTS

- 4.The Meeting was held in Plenary and formed three Working Groups namely: the Working Group on Islamic Banking and Tabung Haji, Working Group on Education and Entrepreneurial Skills and Working Group on Trade and Investment.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE MEETING

- 5.The Meeting recognized the importance of bilateral cooperation for the socio-economic advancement of Muslim Filipinos and welcomed the establishment of the Joint Committee. Both sides also recognized the need for a focal point to facilitate the implementation of such cooperation.
- 6.The Meeting agreed to recommend to the Joint Commission that the Joint Committee be given the mandate to meet intersessionally.

ON ISLAMIC BANKING AND HAJ MANAGEMENT

- 1.The Philippine side expressed its desire to learn from Malaysia's experience in Islamic banking and Haj management.
- 2.The Malaysian side indicated its willingness to share experiences in these fields. The Malaysian side sought clarification on the procedure for the setting up of an Islamic bank in Mindanao and requested the Philippine Government to identify the areas of expertise required so as to enable Tabung Haji and Bank Islam to offer the necessary assistance in the field of Islamic banking. The Malaysian side also sought clarification with regard to the Philippine Government's position on the management of Haj activities in the Philippines and informed the Philippine side that Tabung Haji is willing to share its expertise in the field of Haj management.

3.The Working Group in its deliberations considered matters pertaining to Malaysia's participation in Al Amanah Islamic Investment Bank, opening of a branch of Bank Islam Malaysia or alternatively a finance company, establishment of an Islamic insurance company and training in Islamic banking and Haj management. The report of the Working Group appears as Annex C.

EDUCATION/ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS

10.The Philippine side conveyed to the Malaysian side the current exchanges and linkages between educational institutions of the two countries. The Philippine side stressed the need for an overall framework to guide such exchanges.

11.The Malaysian side indicated that it was prepared to offer the following programs to the Philippines:

- (a) The exchange of graduate students and academic officials to conduct research in the areas of community health, biochemical and microbiology;
- (b) Joint research in the field of material science (magnet and superconductor), solar energy and microwave instrument; and
- (c) exchange of officials between the Universities whereby cooperation could be undertaken as an alternative to sabbatical leave or technical training.

12.The Malaysian side indicated that it is also ready to offer the following programs:

- (a) various short term training programs such as basic automation, television and radio repair works, domestic wiring and building technology at Pusat Giat Mara (MARA Training Center);
- (b) Two years of formal training of skills at the Institute Kemahiran MARA (MARA Training Institute). This is the extended version of the courses offered at Pusat Giat MARA, with the emphasis on English language and other important subjects.
- (c) Development of entrepreneurial skills with an emphasis on trainers' training under the scheme of Bimbingan Usahawan (Entrepreneurial Development).

13.The Working Group agreed to consider cooperation in the following areas: (a) expansion of linkages between academic institutions;

- (a) expansion of linkages between academic institutions;
- (b) establishment of Malaysian Studies Center;
- (c) establishment of a palm oil research center and a fruit research center;
- (d) upgrading of madrasah education; and
- (e) training of Islamic teachers and government executives from the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao

(ARMM).

14.The Report of the Working Group appears as Annex D,

TRADE AND INVESTMENT

14.The Philippine side identified the following potential areas for investment in Muslim Mindanao: shipping, oil refining, food processing, fish canning, palm oil processing, wood products, ceramics, etc.

15.The Malaysian side indicated that assistance to Muslim Filipinos in the Southern Philippines would be more effective if the Philippine Government could provide a basic organizational structure to enable Malaysian entrepreneurs to channel their investment proposals for approval. In this regard, the Malaysian side proposed the setting up of a focal point to facilitate and coordinate investment activities.

16.The Philippine side agreed to study further the proposal of the Malaysian side for the establishment of such a focal point.

17.The Philippine side indicated that the focus of export trade should be on primary agricultural commodities, and processed agricultural products. The Philippines will organize and dispatch a trade Mission to East Malaysia in due time.

18.The Philippine side will provide the Malaysian side with the list of priority investments in the ARMM. The Report of the Working Group appears as Annex E.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUPS

19.The meeting adopted the report of the three Working Groups.

Manila, 27 May 1996

For the Government of the For the Government of Malaysia

Republic of the Philippines

(Sgd.) RODOLFO C. SEVERINO, JR. (Sgd.) TAN SRI AHMAD KAMIL JAAFAR

Undersecretary of the Secretary General of the

Department of Foreign Affairs Ministry of Foreign Affairs

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