

**AGREED MINUTES OF THE  
2<sup>ND</sup> WORKING GROUP MEETING ON TOURISM OF THE  
INDONESIA-MALAYSIA-THAILAND GROWTH TRIANGLE (IMT-GT)**

**Renaissance Hotel, Melaka, Malaysia  
9 – 10 May 2008**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

1. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Working Group Meeting on Tourism of the IMT-GT was held at Renaissance Hotel, Malacca, Malaysia on 9 – 10 May 2008. About 60 delegates from Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand comprising both the public and private sectors participated in the Meeting. The full list of participants is attached in **ANNEX 1**.
2. The Indonesian Delegation was led by H.E Mr. Ir. Firmansyah Rahim, Director-General of Tourism Destination Development, Department of Culture and Tourism, Indonesia; the Malaysian Delegation was led by H.E Dr. Junaida Lee Abdullah, Director of the Policy, Planning and International Division, Ministry of Tourism, Malaysia; and the Thailand Delegation was led by H.E Dr. Sasithara Pichaichannarong, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Tourism and Sports, Thailand.

**II. AGENDA ITEM 1: OPENING REMARKS OF THE CHAIRPERSON AND THE HEAD OF DELEGATIONS**

3. H.E Dr. Junaida Lee Abdullah, the Head of Malaysia's Delegation, welcomed all participants to the historical city of Melaka, Malaysia. She informed that Malaysia has taken several measures to strengthen tourism cooperation within IMT-GT area. For this purpose, two workshops were organised between the senior government officials and private sectors of the three countries i.e. Workshop to Develop Tour Packages for the IMT-GT Area held from 6-8 May 2008 and an Expert Group Discussion on Medical Tourism for IMT-GT Area from 10-11 May 2008.

The full speech of H.E Dr. Junaida Lee Abdullah is attached as **ANNEX 2**.

H.E Dr. Sasithara Pichaichannarong, the Head of Thailand's Delegation (HOD), expressed her appreciation and thanks to the host country for the warm hospitality extended to her and the Thai delegation. She mentioned that Thailand has given high priority to this sub-regional cooperation within the framework of IMT-GT and Joint Development Strategy (JDS). In addition, Thailand National Strategy has listed the IMT-GT area as a region rich in biodiversity and ethnic cultures.

She also stressed that the Thailand National Strategy for Southern Regional Development is giving emphasis on the following:

1. Sustainable tourism development particularly for the Phuket, Phang-nga and Krabi area where tourism is the main source of income;
2. More opportunities for economic growth in particular strengthening cooperation within the JDS and IMT-GT framework linking Songkhla-Penang-Medan and IMT-GT framework linking together Songkhla-Penang-Medan and also Ranong-Phuket-Acheh;
3. Upgrading local communities' qualities of life: health and hygiene, higher education and standard of living;
4. Human resource development, initiating local people involvement in various tourism activities which can generate income such as homestay services; and
5. Protection and conservation of natural resources and environment.

The full speech of H.E Dr. Sasithara Pichaichannarong is attached as **ANNEX 3.**

H.E Mr. Ir. Firmansyah Rahim, the Head of Indonesian Delegation thanked Malaysia for the hospitality accorded to the Indonesian Delegates. He stressed the importance of sub regional cooperation in the tourism sector as it played a significant role in the development of the region. He supported the promotion of IMT-GT area as a single destination and the implementation of the action plans as outlined in the IMT-GT Roadmap for Development (2007-2011).

The full speech of H.E Mr. Ir. Firmansyah Rahim is attached as **ANNEX 4.**

### **III. AGENDA ITEM 2: ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

6. The Agenda was adopted without any amendment.

### **IV. AGENDA ITEM 3: BUSINESS ARRANGEMENT**

7. The Meeting was convened in plenary.  
The three countries have nominated members for the Drafting Committee as follows:

Indonesia:

- i. Mr. Frans Teguh
- ii. Mr. Hafiansyah Mege

Malaysia:

- i. Dr. Norain Othman
- ii. Mr. Muhammad Reza A. Sudirman

Thailand:

- i. Ms. Prapa Tantasuparuk
- ii. Ms. Phanphimol Chayajitchawat

The report of the meeting will be drafted and coordinated by CIMT.

## **V. AGENDA ITEM 4: BRIEFING BY THE ASEAN SECRETARIAT**

8. Mr. Eddy Krismeidi Soemawilaga of the ASEAN Secretariat updated the meeting on the development of the ASEAN Tourism cooperation since the inception of the ASEAN Tourism Agreement in 2002. He also explained the institutional mechanism as well as the activities and initiatives undertaken to promote the Roadmap for Integration of Tourism Sector, joint promotion activities as well as finalising the ASEAN Mutual Recognition Arrangement on Tourism Professionals. He also informed the Meeting about the NTOs-STOM consultations with regard to the prospect of implementing the ASEAN Open Skies Agreements with dialogue partners.

The full presentation of Mr. Eddy Krismeidi Soemawilaga of ASEAN Secretariat is attached as **ANNEX 5**.

9. The Meeting proposed that the ASEAN Secretariat to be a permanent member of the IMT-GT Tourism Working Group as an observer. This would facilitate closer collaboration between the ASEAN Secretariat and the IMT-GT Secretariat which has been established recently.

The Meeting also agreed that the current Chairperson of the TWG should present the IMT-GT report to the ASEAN NTOs next meeting.

## **VI. AGENDA ITEM 5 (DISCUSSION): TOURISM PROGRAMME**

### **5.1 Tourism Development**

#### **5.1.1 Visit IMT-GT Year 2008**

10. Dr. Norain Othman of JBC Malaysia reported that the events identified for the Visit IMT-GT Year 2008 are being implemented with four programmes organised successfully in Malaysia. She hoped member countries would participate more actively in the future events to be organised.

The Meeting agreed to encourage industry players to participate more in the IMT-GT events and to ensure that the local communities also benefit from such events.

11. The Meeting agreed that the IMT-GT Year should not be limited to the year 2008 but should be extended as the IMT-GT Celebration Year covering the period until 2011.

For this purpose, Thailand was requested to set-up a task force to identify events especially signature events.

#### 5.1.2 Development of Tourism Master Plan for IMT-GT

12. Malaysia informed that the UNWTO expert, Mr. Erik Holm-Petersen, has submitted his initial assessment of the IMT-GT region. Member countries were requested to study the Executive Summary and to send any comments directly to him for his consideration.

#### 5.1.3 Medical Tourism

13. Malaysia informed the Meeting that the Expert Group Discussion on Medical Tourism would be held on 10-11 May 2008 with confirmed participation from Indonesia (2), Malaysia (12) and Thailand (6).

In view of the IMT-GT region's potential to promote wellness and rehabilitation, the Meeting agreed to change the title 'Medical Tourism' to 'Health Tourism'

#### 4. Homestay Network for IMT-GT

14. Indonesia informed that the Sumatera International Travel Fair would be held from 30 May – 1 Jun 2008 and would include a workshop on homestay. Speakers from Thailand and Indonesia have been confirmed. Malaysia has been requested to identify a speaker for this purpose.

In addition, the ASEAN Secretariat was requested to present a paper on Homestay Programmes Standard for the region.

#### 4. Development of Rest Areas

15. Ms. Noormariani Baba and Mr. Abdul Jalil Hj. Abdul Samad from PLUS Expressway Berhad presented their companies' experience in developing and maintaining rest areas along the express highways in Peninsular Malaysia.

The full presentation from PLUS Expressway Berhad is attached as **ANNEX 6**.

The meeting also noted that caravans, motor-homes as well as other car vehicles could be used to promote autoventure programmes in the respective IMT-GT areas.

#### 4. IMT-GT Air Linkages

16. The Meeting noted the absence of air linkages between Sumatera and Southern Thailand and requested ASEAN Secretariat to bring this

issue to be considered at the forthcoming ASEAN NTOs-STOM Consultations.

#### 4. Student Exchange Programme for Tourism

17. Malaysia informed that it had organised a Student Tourism Programme, where some of its activities could be extended to include students' participation from Indonesia and Thailand.

Indonesia also informed that the ASEAN Youth Tourism Students Summit will be held in Bali on 24 September 2008 and this event has been included under the Visit IMT-GT Year 2008.

#### 5.1.8 Cooperative Training Programme for Tourism Industries

18. The Meeting agreed to drop the Agenda.

## **5.2 Marketing and Promotion**

### 5.2.1 Outcome of the "Workshop on Developing Tour Packages for the IMT-GT Area"

19. The Workshop was held from 6-8 May 2008 at Melaka, Malaysia. The purpose of this workshop was to identify tour operators and travel agents from each country who are interested and committed to sell IMT-GT packages.

The Workshop concluded with the following resolutions:

1. To consider a brand name for IMT-GT tour packages- possibly 'Nusantara';
2. To consider a common Air Pass initiative between airlines operating in the region;
3. To consider and adopt the proposed tour packages for the short, medium and long haul market;
4. Respective countries to appoint their lead agents to manage all the related business arrangements for the IMT-GT travel bookings;

5. To consider funding from MITTAS for the development of a bookable website to sell the approved IMT-GT packages and production of promotional materials;
6. To initiate the establishment of air linkages between southern Thailand and Sumatera as there is none at the moment;
7. To implement the proposed tour packages in phases and give greater focus on high potential markets;
8. To have a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the participating agents of the three countries to agree on the terms and conditions relating to fulfilment, pricing, payments, vouchers, complaint, prepayments, etc;
9. Respective countries to prepare the promotional materials for the launching of IMT-GT packages based on the agreed terms and conditions;
10. To target the launching of the short-haul packages at the Thailand Travel Mart (5-9 June, 2008) and the medium and long haul packages within two months' time; and
11. Thailand to consider the hosting of the next workshop to finalize the IMT-GT packages with the private tour operators and airlines on 22-24 May, 2008 in Krabi, Thailand.

The full report of the Workshop to Develop Tour Packages for the IMT-GT Area is attached as **ANNEX 7**.

Since the tour operators from Thailand were unable to attend this workshop, it was proposed that Thailand to host a follow-up workshop so that the tour operators from Indonesia and Thailand could meet up with them to finalise the proposed IMT-GT tour packages.

Thailand agreed to host the follow-up workshop to develop tour packages for the IMT-GT Area in Hadyai, on 22 May 2008.

#### 5.2.2 Directory/Travel Guide Book on 3-Star Hotels

20. Malaysia and Indonesia have already submitted the list to Thailand for further action. The directory will be produced by Thailand and distributed to member countries.

#### 5.2.3 Proposal by MITTAS to Promote and Market IMT-GT

21. MITTAS through its representative Mr. Henry Hutabarat, has been asked to present the proposal on the RM200,000 funding to Thailand as the lead country for ASEAN tourism.

#### 5.2.4 Establishment of Taskforce on Marketing and Promotion for IMT-GT Tourism

22. The Meeting agreed to combine the Agenda 5.2.3 and 5.2.4.

Mr. Henry Hutabarat informed that the Chairman of MITTAS was unable to attend this Meeting but has agreed to allocate its funds for IMT-GT promotional and marketing efforts.

The Meeting requested Thailand to set up a task force to consider the need to brand the IMT-GT tour packages for promotional purposes and to consider the possibility of using MITTAS's fund to set-up a booking engine to facilitate e-booking and production of promotional materials for the IMT-GT tour packages.

#### 5.2.5 IMT-GT Celebration Year of 2009

23. The Meeting agreed on the importance to continue the tourism programmes and events for the promotion of the IMT-GT Area. For this purpose, it has been agreed to plan activities and events at least 2 years in advance to promote the IMT-GT Celebration Year.

### **VII AGENDA ITEM 6: OTHER MATTERS**

24. ADB welcomed the various initiatives to develop the IMT-GT area and assured member countries of its commitment to support and fund tourism development in this sub-region.

Indonesia reiterated the importance of establishing air linkages between Sumatera and Southern Thailand.

Member countries have been invited by Thailand to participate in the Thailand Travel Mart from 5-9 June 2008 in Bangkok, Thailand where Malaysia and Indonesia have been allocated 15 booths each. Malaysia will be confirming its participation soon.

Indonesia offered to host and organise the launching of IMT-GT Celebration Year 2009.

Dr. Hassan Ibrahim of CIMT informed that a concept paper on Energy and Environmental programme for the IMT-GT framework would be circulated to member countries to raise awareness on the need to adopt a sustainable approach to tourism development.

### **VIII AGENDA ITEM 7: CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION OF THE REPORT**

25. The Meeting considered and adopted the Minute of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tourism Working Group Meeting as presented by CIMT. The Heads of Delegation signed the agreed minutes of the meeting in a brief signing ceremony.

#### **IX AGENDA ITEM 8: DATES & VENUE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

26. Thailand agreed to host the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tourism Working Group Meeting in Thailand in 2009. The dates and venue will be duly informed to the other two member countries.

#### **X AGENDA ITEM 9: CLOSING REMARKS OF THE CHAIRPERSON AND THE HEAD OF DELEGATIONS**

27. The Head Indonesia Delegation, H.E Mr. Ir. Firmansyah Rahim, mentioned that it was his first meeting in the IMT-GT cooperation. However he expressed confidence that the cooperation would prosper to further benefit the tourism industry and the population of IMT-GT at large. On behalf of the Indonesian Delegation, he thanked the Chairperson and Ministry of Tourism Malaysia for the excellent management of the meeting and taking good care of his Delegation during their stay in Malacca.

28. The Head of Thailand Delegation, H.E Dr. Sasithara Pichaichannarong, expressed her appreciation to the Chairperson for her excellent conduct of the meeting, and on behalf of the Thailand Delegation thanked Malaysia for the excellent organising of the Meeting and the other related events.

29. The Head of Malaysian Delegation, and Chairperson, H.E Dr. Junaida Lee Abdullah, thanked the active participation of member countries and hoped that the agreed decisions will be quickly implemented to expedite the development of the tourism industry in the IMT-GT area so that peoples living in this region will benefit from its growth.