

**AGREED MINUTES OF THE FIRST MEETING OF THE VIETNAM-
PHILIPPINES JOINT COMMISSION FOR BILATERAL
COOPERATION Manila, 03-05 February 1995**

In accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding on the establishment of a Joint Commission for Bilateral Cooperation between Vietnam and the Philippines, the first meeting of the Joint Commission was held in Manila from 03 to 05 February 1995.

The Vietnamese delegation was led by H.E. Nguyen Manh Cam, Minister of Foreign Affairs. The Philippine delegation was led by H.E. Roberto R. Romulo, Secretary of Foreign Affairs. The lists of the two delegations appear as Annexes A & B.

The meeting was held in plenary and adopted the agenda, which appears as Annex C.

The leaders of both Delegations expressed their optimism that this meeting would further enhance bilateral relations between the two countries.

I. BILATERAL ISSUES

A. Trade and Investments

(1) The Philippine delegation noted that current trade volumes do not reflect the full potentials of Philippines-Vietnam relations. The Philippine side stressed the need to undertake specific measures to create a more favorable investment and trade environment. These measures include: (a) the lowering of trade barriers; (b) consistency and predictability in the formulation and implementation of policies, rules and regulations; (c) provision and exchange of information vital to trade; (d) more contacts between businessmen from both countries.

(2) The Vietnamese delegation noted that Vietnam-Philippine trade is not proportionate to the potentials as well as the expectations of the two countries. The delegation noted that the following factors restrain increases in the volume of trade: (a) the similarity of products between Vietnam and the Philippines; b) limited exchanges and contacts between business organizations; and (c) lack of adequate transport and communication links.

(3) The Vietnamese delegation said that their government has been streamlining procedures to encourage trade and investments. The delegation proposed the establishment of a Vietnam-Philippines Commercial Council which would link the two countries' Chambers of Commerce and Industry as well as Philippine participation in trade fairs, exhibitions and expositions. The Philippine side noted that the Vietnamese proposals could greatly enhance trade exchanges between the two countries.

(4) The Vietnamese delegation expressed its satisfaction that the

Philippines had already 11 projects in Vietnam, and hoped that there would be more joint ventures in the near future. The Philippine side stressed that more Philippine companies like San Miguel Corporation, which has expanded its operations, would increase their trade and investment activities in Vietnam if the reform measures indicated earlier would be in place.

(5) Both sides noted that Vietnam's entry into ASEAN, AFTA and WTO could facilitate trade exchanges with the Philippines and the rest of the region. The Philippine delegation expressed full support for Vietnam's entry into these regional and multilateral organizations.

B. Science and Technology

(6) The Vietnamese delegation noted that the Philippines has many good experiences in the scientific and technological fields and is pleased over the cooperation between the two countries in these fields. The delegation recognized Philippine contribution in the TCDC and UNDP-initiated programs which benefitted Vietnam.

(7) The Vietnamese delegation asked the Philippines to consider other forms of cooperation instead of those proposed in the Protocol Implementing the Agreement on Economic, Scientific and Technical Cooperation between Vietnam and Philippines for the years 1995-1996. The Vietnamese delegation proposed the signing of an agreement on Scientific and Technological Cooperation to facilitate direct contacts between scientists of the two countries.

(8) The Philippine delegation proposed joint activities especially in environmental management and protection, and the promotion of trilateral cooperation in carrying out these activities.

C. Education and Culture

(9) The Vietnamese delegation cited the need for Philippine assistance in education, particularly in English-language training, and proposed the signing of an agreement on cooperation between the two education ministries. The delegation informed the Philippine delegation that there is the possibility that the ASEAN-Japan Fund may be used for this purpose.

(10) The Philippine delegation assured the Vietnamese delegation of Philippine support for Vietnam's educational programs, including the training of officials involved in ASEAN-related activities, and technical officials in the agricultural sector. The Philippine delegation assured the Vietnamese delegation that the Philippines will discuss the possible use of a part of the ASEAN-Japan fund with Japan at the next Philippine-Japan Sub-Ministerial Meeting.

(11) The Philippine delegation informed the meeting that Vietnam had been given special slots in various initiatives of the Southeast Asia Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO).

(12) The Philippine delegation proposed the exchange of high-level visits

between education officials and the integration of Vietnam into ASEAN educational meetings, projects and exchanges. The ASEAN Cultural Fund could be used for this purpose.

D. Tourism Development

(13) The Vietnamese delegation requested the training of its tourism staff by the Department of Tourism. The delegation also proposed exchanges of visits, study tours, and joint promotional activities.

(14) The Philippine delegation emphasized the need to package and promote the Philippines and Vietnam as a single destination. The delegation also proposed the signing of a protocol on specific measures to implement the Tourism Agreement.

E. Agriculture

(15) The Vietnamese delegation proposed some concrete measures for the implementation of the MOU on Agricultural Cooperation such as the production and processing of bananas, coconuts, and vegetable seeds, and investments in poultry and animal husbandry.

(16) The Philippine delegation informed the Vietnamese side that the feasibility study on the establishment of the sugar factory by Victorias had already been completed. The factory operations may start within the year.

(17) The Philippine delegation expressed its desire to send trainees to Vietnam to acquire technology in aquaculture. The Vietnamese delegation would like to send trainees to the Philippines for training in fish breeding, and pearl and seaweed farming.

F. Defense Cooperation

(18) The Philippine delegation noted that the recent visit of Defense Minister Gen. Doan Khue reflected the new level of confidence between the Philippines and Vietnam. The delegation informed the Vietnamese side that Secretary Renato de Villa will visit Vietnam this year.

(19) The Vietnamese delegation proposed cooperation between the two interior ministries including high-level exchanges to cover law enforcement and crime prevention activities.

(20) The Philippine delegation acknowledged the need for exchanges between the interior ministries.

G. Labor and Social Welfare

(21) The Vietnamese delegation pointed out that Vietnam and the Philippines are both labor exporting countries. The delegation stressed the need to promote cooperation and exchange of visits between officials responsible for labor and social welfare.