

THE VTM @ APEC 2002 INTRODUCTORY PROGRAM  
"ALL ABOUT US" PROJECT

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I) WHO WE ARE

Greetings from Brunei Darussalam!! I am Mr. Lim Kok Shien, an educator and representative from Universiti Brunei Darussalam. My email address is [kslim@fbeps.ubd.edu.bn](mailto:kslim@fbeps.ubd.edu.bn). Working together with me are 3 other participants; an educator, Dk Hj Norulazidah Pg Hj Omar Ali and two other students, namely John Tse Tow and Marzalenie Hj Omar.

I'm Dk Hj Norulazidah Pg Hj Omar Ali, also an educator, currently working with the Department of Economics, Universiti Brunei Darussalam. My email address is [norul@fbeps.ubd.edu.bn](mailto:norul@fbeps.ubd.edu.bn).

My name is John TSE TOW. I am one of the representatives from Brunei Darussalam. I am 19 years old, currently a first year student at the University of Brunei Darussalam doing Bachelor of Business Administration. Apart from studying, I also work part-time at CfBT, Borneo Outdoors (a British Education Service Centre) as a Course Instructor. I am heavily involved in debating; taken part in a number of competitions and recently, my team won the Inter-faculty Debating Competition in my university. On top of that, I have been involved in a few overseas youth exchange programmes. However, I am really still very excited about meeting and working with new people around the world especially through the VTM. Below, is my email, please feel free to contact me. [jotsetow@hotmail.com](mailto:jotsetow@hotmail.com)

Hello everyone! My name is Marzalenie Haji Omar. I am a first year student in the University of Brunei Darussalam doing Bachelor Of Public Policy and Administration. I'm also a part time instructor at CFBT, Borneo Outdoors. I am 19 years old. I love public speaking and debating. This is my second international APEC involvement (AYSF) and I am really looking forward to be in this next one! So can't wait to meet you! Here is my email. [Baby\\_529@hotmail.com](mailto:Baby_529@hotmail.com).

## PICTURES OF EVERYONE



From left to right: Dk Norul, Kok Shien, John, Marzalenie

Our University first opened its door to the first intake of 176 local students in October 1985. In 1994, it moved to a new campus located close to the coast, with a commanding view of the South China Sea with a population of about 3,000 students.

Today, the University has established an international reputation through the quality of its conferences, seminars and programmes offered, especially in the field of Tropical Rain Forest Studies, Petroleum Geoscience and Education.

As part of its expansion programmes, and in line with the needs of business and industry, the new courses are proposed in response to the country's National Development Plan and in particular to the provision of financial center, a tourism industry and for the down-streaming of petro-chemical industry.

## II) WHERE WE ARE

Before I start introducing my lovely and peaceful country, Brunei Darussalam, I would like to present you with a map on where it stands.

### Map of Brunei



### An introduction to Brunei

Brunei Darussalam, well-known as *the Abode of Peace* is located in the north-eastern corner of Borneo Island, surrounded by East Malaysian states, Sabah & Sarawak and the South China Sea. It is small in size, with an area of 5,765 square kilometers.

Lying in the equatorial region, it has an equatorial monsoon climate with average temperature ranging from 27°C to 33°C. Brunei has a small population of less than 0.4 million of which Malays made up 2/3 of the population. The rest of the population is made up of 6 other indigenous groups, Chinese, Indians and expatriates.

The official religion in the country is Islam and its political system is based on "Malay Islam Monarchy". Bahasa Melayu (Malay language) is the official language in the country although English is widely spoken among the nations. Being a monarchy, Brunei is ruled by His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Wauddaulah. the 29th ruler of Brunei.

Brunei has established good relationships with other countries and has made herself a member of APEC, ASEAN, the United Nations and other international organizations. The country had the honour to be the host of APEC 2000 last year.

Brunei's main source of revenue is from its exports of oil and gas. It is the third largest producer of oil in South East Asia and world's fourth largest producer of liquefied natural gas. Beside oil and gas production, Brunei has also branched into primary production such as fruit farming, rice production, fisheries, etc.

The beauty of Brunei has attracted lots of tourists from all parts of the world. The country is famous for its natural rain forest and for those who love mother nature, I would strongly recommend them to *visit Kuala Belalong in Temburong district* - where you can have a canopy walk and *Sungai Liang Recreation Park in Belait district* - unspoiled natural rainforest with rare species of flora and fauna. There are also numerous natural waterfalls, hot springs, coral reef, beautiful beaches, which interested tourists could explore.

Another must go is the *Kampung Ayer (the floating village - Venice of the East)* where houses are built on stilts in water. The only mean of transportation here is by boat. As an Islamic state, tourists should not missed the chance of visiting the Omar Ali Saifuddien Mosque, located right in the centre of Bandar Seri Begawan (its capital city) and the Jame' Asr Hassanal Bolkiah Mosque.

Another tourist site that should not be missed is the mini Disneyland amusement park, Jerudong Park, which is located about 15 kilometers from the city centre. Under its new management, a small entrance fee is now being charged to replace its free-of-charge ride when it was first opened.

Brunei is also richly endowed with cultural heritage and is well known for her silver-smiting, bronze tooling, Malay weaponry and cloth weaving especially the gold-threaded textile called the "Jong Sarat".

Some good websites for more references include

[http://www.lonelyplanet.com/destinations/south\\_east\\_asia/brunei/](http://www.lonelyplanet.com/destinations/south_east_asia/brunei/).

<http://www.brudirect.com/>

[www.brunei.gov.bn](http://www.brunei.gov.bn)

[www.ubd.edu.bn](http://www.ubd.edu.bn)

[www.brunet.bn](http://www.brunet.bn)

## **Brunei-Mexico Trade Relation and Economic Cooperation**

Trade relation between Brunei and Mexico has been very insignificant. Brunei's exports to Mexico in 1999 were BND233, 000 (0.005% of Brunei's total exports) and imports from Mexico in 1999 was BND98, 000 accounted to 0.004% to Brunei's total imports. Some of the reasons that could explain such insignificant trade relationship are:

- Lack of mutual contacts between Brunei and Mexico.
- Lack of Brunei-Mexico trade infrastructure.
- Information pertaining to trade and investment for the two countries are not easily available. Acquiring such information might involve huge costs such as time and money.

However for the year 2000, Brunei's imports from Mexico have increased to BND855, 000 (0.04% to Brunei's total imports). Brunei's exports for that year on the other hand, have dropped to BND100, 000 (0.001% of Brunei's total exports)

Brunei is still very much dependent on oil and gas. To ensure sustainable economic development Brunei has been trying to diversify its economy away from oil and gas. Potential industries include agriculture, fishery and manufacturing. Brunei's economic diversification strategy and her emphasis on promoting the private sector as well as the Small-Medium industries could provide opportunities for Mexico and Brunei to substantially increase their economic cooperation and trade.

Brunei's exports to Mexico include chemicals and garments while imported items from Mexico are food, manufactured goods and transport equipment. Based on APEC trade facts and figures, Mexico's principal exports are passenger motor vehicles, crude petroleum, telecommunications equipment, equipment for distributing electricity and televisions. Items with potential for Mexico to export to Brunei are passenger motor vehicles. Brunei, on the other hand, could increase its export of textiles and garments to Mexico. Brunei and Mexico could increase bilateral economic cooperation through investment and joint ventures. Areas with potential for investment and joint ventures are human resource development, small-medium industries and oil and gas downstream activities.

Trade relations between Brunei and Mexico may not be significant however we still hope that through this project, we may be able to find out more information about each other's economy and strengthen trade ties.

## **WHAT WE HOPE TO LEARN**

When we were preparing the report for this project, we have encountered difficulties in getting information on trade between Brunei and Mexico. However through the assistance of the Ministry of Industry and Primary Resources we are able to get some import and export data on both countries. From the findings, we would like to raise several questions:

1. Why is there a big drop in Brunei's exports to Mexico?
2. According to data on Brunei's imports from Mexico, among the imported commodities is food. Brunei puts very heavy emphasis on the imports of 'halal-food'. The definition of 'halal' in the context of food is food that is permissible to consume by Muslims. We would like to know if the food that Brunei is importing from Mexico is 'halal'?
3. What is the Muslim population in Mexico, if any?
4. Is there any websites where we can get Mexico's trade information such as custom duties, tax etc?

We hope we will get the funding to go to the APEC 2002 Mexico and will be able to see and understand Mexico better. We are looking forward to strengthening our relation with Mexico not only in trade but also in other aspect such as student and staff exchange programme.