Peter Styles
Deputy Chief Minister of the Northern Territory, Minister for Asian Engagement and Trade

Deputy Chief Minister hosts landmark talks with ASEAN representatives

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Increasing opportunities for local businesses through trade agreements, stronger transport links, a diversified range of exports and growing international investment in the Northern Territory across the natural resources, infrastructure and tourism sectors were among key points for discussion at today’s landmark meeting of Ambassadors and High Commissioners from nine of the Northern Territory’s closest neighbouring countries.

The Canberra-based Heads of Mission (HOMs) of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) are visiting the Territory together for the first time, as part of the inaugural Open Territory Program of events which is designed to raise the profiles of NT businesses, industries and services nationally and internationally.

Minister Styles said today’s high-level briefing is part of a packed program of meetings and tours the delegation will take part in today and tomorrow.

“This is a fantastic opportunity to talk face-to-face with representatives from some of our closest neighbouring nations and show them, in person, what the Territory has to offer,” Mr Styles said.

“The ASEAN countries represent a significant market for the Northern Territory’s exports and we can expect them to become even more significant and diverse in the future.

“This visit is a chance to discuss and promote the Territory’s political, economic and cultural engagement within our region and to explore trade prospects as well as promote Territory business, education, research collaboration, tourism and investment opportunities.

“The official visit aligns with the NT Government’s Asian Engagement, Trade and Investment Strategic Plan to strengthen ties within our region.

“It is also in line with the Country Liberals Government’s commitment to capitalise on our proximity to Asia to generate opportunities for Territorians, create jobs and deliver on our plan for a prosperous Territory economy for years to come.”

The delegation includes representatives from Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam.
ASEAN is a political and economic organisation of 10 Southeast Asian Countries. It was formed in 1967 by Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand and since then the membership has expanded to include Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam.

The delegates have a full program which includes briefings with the Department of Asian Engagement and Trade; the Northern Australia Development Office; Defence Force representatives; the Chamber of Commerce of the Northern Territory; the International Business Council; the Vice Chancellor of CDU and community business representatives.

They will also visit key locations including the National Critical Care and Trauma Response Centre, Menzies School of Health, Crocodylus Park and the Port of Darwin, as well as enjoying a boat cruise of Darwin Harbour.

“This timely visit will also give the ASEAN representatives the opportunity to preview arrangements for some of the major upcoming events as part of Open Territory,” Mr Styles said.

“These include; the Red Carpet Investment Forum, the Brunei-Indonesia-Malaysia-Philippines East ASEAN Growth Area (BIMP-EAGA) Ministerial meeting, The Australia-Asia Regional Chambers Forum, the Timor Leste Northern Territory Bilateral Forum and the Territory Expo.

“The Country Liberals Government is committed to working together with our closest neighbours for the mutual benefit of the region and to ensure a cooperative and prosperous relationship for the future.”

For more information on the Open Territory program visit www.openterritory.nt.gov.au.

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