

Secretary Karl Chua's message on the signing of the Grant Agreement for the Programme for the Urgent Improvement of Socioeconomic Infrastructure in Bangsamoro

The National Economic and Development Authority sincerely thanks the Government of Japan for its continued support of the Philippines' peace agenda. Through the continuous commitment of both countries, many opportunities were pursued towards the promotion of peace and development in Mindanao. At the end of the 1st quarter of 2022, our partnership has resulted in the completion of eight projects, with a total cost of PHP 1.14 billion, under the Japan-Bangsamoro Initiatives for Reconstruction and Development (J-BIRD) while four more projects began implementation in the previous Japanese fiscal year.

The signing of the Grant Agreement for the *Programme for the Urgent Improvement of Socioeconomic Infrastructure in Bangsamoro* will further strengthen the cooperation between our two governments. Through the rebuilding and improvement of the techno-vocational training centers and the construction of farm-to-market-roads, we expect more accessible economic opportunities as people are empowered through skills development and enrichment and improvement of market trade.

As we transition into a new administration, the Philippine Government maintains its steadfast commitment to fully realize the gains of our partnership with the Government of Japan. We look forward to implementing future projects and peace initiatives in pursuit of our goal of peace and development under the Bangsamoro Development Plan 2023-2028.