

**Second ACMECS Summit Declaration**  
**Bangkok, Thailand**  
**3 November 2005**

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We, the Heads of Government of the Kingdom of Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the Union of Myanmar, the Kingdom of Thailand and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam gathered in Bangkok for the Second ACMECS Summit in the spirit of the Bagan Declaration to build good neighbourliness among member countries, to promote peace and stability in the region, to reduce economic disparities and to promote sustainable development in the border areas of our countries.

We warmly welcomed the Socialist Republic of Vietnam's first participation in the ACMECS Summit, recognizing its indispensable role in realizing the vision and objectives of ACMECS.

We agreed on the importance of taking a forward-looking approach in our cooperation in order to lay a strong foundation for meeting the future needs of our region. Encouraged by the significant progress made in various sectors of cooperation, we agreed to deepen cooperation in areas of high priority. We agreed to collectively address in a timely manner the threat posed by newly emerging and re-emerging diseases to the region's human security and economic development. We agreed to bring in more technology to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of ACMECS wherever possible and appropriate. We also agreed to take measures that would strengthen ACMECS.

### **1. Deepening cooperation in areas of high priority**

In the **Trade and Investment Facilitation** sector, we have witnessed increases in both the volume and value of trade, as well as increasing interaction between our business sectors since the creation of ACMECS. We welcomed Thailand's offer to allow tariff-free import into Thailand of all agricultural products produced under the Contract Farming scheme. We further agreed to:

- Remove existing barriers to trade and investment within the region by improving the regulatory infrastructure and promoting common standards, with particular emphasis on the establishment of One-Stop Service and customs cooperation at border checkpoints.
- Establish wholesale markets and distribution centres in the border areas for which joint studies have been completed and agreed upon.
- Encourage and support the role of the ACMECS Joint Business Council as a driving force of business sector cooperation in our region.
- Encourage and support the organisation of joint trade and investment promotion activities by government and business sectors.

In the **Industrial and Agricultural Cooperation** sector, we agreed to:

- Accelerate cooperation on contract farming by setting up as soon as possible joint bilateral working committees to discuss measures to encourage long-term investment, cultivation and cross-border transportation of agricultural products for mutual benefit, including the conclusion of MoUs on Contract Farming.
- Develop and implement a comprehensive energy plan to enhance the energy security of the ACMECS region, with emphasis on exploring the development of bio-fuels as an alternative source of energy and utilizing the region's abundant hydropower and on possible development of regional power grids.
- Promote a favourable business environment, including enhancing tax incentives as well as rules and regulations, to encourage private sector participation in the establishment of industrial estates/special economic zones in the border areas.

In the **Transport Linkages** sector, we noted with satisfaction the progress in several bilateral projects, namely:

- Route No. 48 (Koh Kong to National Route No. 4)
- Route No. 67 (Siem Reap to Anlong Veng to the Thai border)
- Route No. 78 (Ban Lung – Oya Dav to the Vietnamese border)
- Chiang Khong – Houay Sai – Luang Nam Tha – Boten –Route
- Huaikon - Pak Beng – Udomxay – Tay Trang - Dien Bien Phu – Hanoi Route
- Bridge over the Mekong River connecting Mukdahan and Savannakhet
- Nong Khai – Tha Na Leng Railway Project
- Bridge over the Huang River
- Feasibility study on the construction of a bridge across the Mekong at Houay Sai – Chiang Khong
- Study on the development of Savannakhet airport
- Second Thailand – Myanmar Friendship bridge across Mae Sai river
- Mae Sot/Myawaddy - Thinganyinaung Route

To expedite progress in the regional transportation network, we agreed to:

- Focus on building a multi-modal transportation network among member countries, with priority on “missing links” in the GMS Economic Corridors. In this regard, we welcomed Thailand's offer to provide financial support to develop the Myawaddy – Kawkaeik route.
- Enhance air linkages to facilitate multi-destination travel along the Heritage Necklace circuit, which comprises Siem Reap (Cambodia), Luang Prabang (Lao PDR), Bagan (Myanmar), Sukhothai (Thailand), and Hue (Vietnam).
- Promote more transportation linkages to connect our region's natural heritage sites, including Tonle Sap, Lphi, Mt. Popa, Khao Yai and Halong Bay.
- Utilise existing routes and corridors in the ACMECS countries by implementing existing ASEAN and GMS Framework Agreements on Goods in Transit and Cross-border Transport and implementing Protocols, Annexes to facilitate the movement of Goods and People.

In the **Tourism Cooperation** sector, we agreed to:

- Promote cultural tourism including development of a Buddhist Trail to foster a better appreciation of our shared cultural heritage.
- Organise ACMECS cultural festivals in member countries in order to increase awareness of the cultural richness and diversity of our peoples.
- Promote sustainable tourism, standardisation of services and implementation of plans for the region to become the ACMECS Quality Tourism Destination.
- Promote ACMECS human resource development in tourism, particularly with regard to the Heritage Necklace programme.
- Raise awareness of and provide safety and security for tourists coming to ACMECS countries.
- Strengthen community-based tourism development and empower local people to help eradicate poverty through tourism.
- Provide incentives for investment in tourism facilities along identified routes to promote land travel among ACMECS countries.
- Encourage more activities by the private and public sectors under the Five Countries One Destination concept.
- Proceed with the ACMECS Single Visa scheme, with Cambodia and Thailand undertaking a pilot project to work out the practical details.
- Cooperate in joint tourism marketing and promotion;
- Encourage and facilitate travel and the use of multi-modal transportation networks to promote tourism among member countries
- Conduct feasibility studies on cultural, historical and eco-tourism in ACMECS countries

In the **Human Resource Development** sector, we agreed to:

- Welcome Thailand's additional offer of 100 fellowships for training on Public Health and Alternative Energy for the year 2006-2007.
- Encourage networking of universities and institutions among member countries.
- Welcome partnership cooperation between Thailand and Vietnam in promoting Human Resources Development, including capacity building for vocational training and training of the trainers programmes, both in the public and the private sectors.

## **2. Public Health**

In recognition of the potential threat to human lives as well as to economic development posed by newly emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases and diseases related to water, hygiene and food quality and the need to enhance regional preparedness for and effectiveness in tackling such threats, we agreed to:

- Endorse the establishment of public health as a new sector of cooperation under ACMECS.
- Undertake concrete collective measures to prevent a regional pandemic of avian influenza as outlined in the ACMECS Leaders' Declaration on Partnership in Combating Avian Influenza and Other Infectious Diseases.
- Establish a network of public health agencies to promote information sharing, provide early warning and cooperate on capacity building.

- Identify areas of cooperation and necessary measures to contain transborder diseases and mitigate their impact.

### **3. Bringing in technology**

To enhance efficiency in all areas of ACMECS cooperation, we agreed to apply information and communications technology wherever possible and appropriate, including through:

- Developing an IT system to facilitate the ACMECS Single Visa scheme.
- Exploring the use of e-approval at border checkpoints to facilitate trade and cross-border transportation.
- Exploring the use of telemedicine and e-learning to provide people in remote areas with greater access to quality health care and education, respectively.

### **4. Strengthening ACMECS**

To promote even closer relations and good neighbourliness, we agreed to continue the establishment of sister cities in the border areas to encourage joint activities between local authorities and to promote people-to-people contact.

We agreed to task our Ministers to update the Plan of Action to reflect Vietnam's membership and the present circumstances, priorities and needs of member countries.

We agreed to establish mechanisms to facilitate and coordinate the work of ACMECS, including through:

- Setting up, with the assistance and support of Thailand, the official ACMECS website as a "virtual secretariat" to coordinate the work of ACMECS.
- Establishing a Coordination Working Group whereby ACMECS Embassies in Bangkok shall meet bi-monthly for regular communication and coordination.
- Encouraging closer informal coordination at the working level among the relevant agencies.

In advancing ACMECS, we reaffirm the self-help principle to make best use of existing resources while, in line with the Millennium Development Goals, our readiness to work in partnership with Development Partners. We also stress the need to ensure complementarity between ACMECS activities and those in other subregional frameworks.

### **5. Third ACMECS Summit**

We warmly welcomed Vietnam's offer to host the next ACMECS Summit and unanimously agreed that the Third ACMECS Summit would take place in Vietnam in late 2007.

We endorsed in full the conclusions of and the Joint Statement agreed by Ministers on 5 August 2005 in Siem Reap, Cambodia.

For the Kingdom of Cambodia



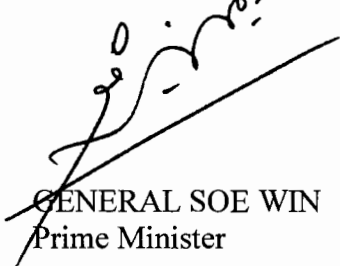
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