

The Chair's Summary on the Forum for the Promotion of  
Public-Private Cooperation in the Mekong Region  
The Second Mekong-Japan Meeting  
Tokyo, Japan, 9 November, 2011

1. The Government of Japan hosted the Second Forum for the Promotion of Public-Private Cooperation in the Mekong region in Tokyo, Japan, on November 9, 2011, participated by representatives of both public and private sector from Japan, the Kingdom of Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Republic of the Union of Myanmar, the Kingdom of Thailand and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam. In addition, other relevant international organizations, development partners and working level officials and business persons from the Mekong region countries visiting Japan under Japan-East Asia Network of Exchange for Students and Youths (JENESYS) Program, participated in the Forum.
2. Mr. Ryuji Yamane, Parliamentary Senior Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs, made the opening remarks in which he expressed sincere appreciation for the strong support and solidarity demonstrated by the government and people of the Mekong region countries in the wake of the Great East Japan Earthquake. He recognized that such expression of tremendous goodwill and warm sentiments are testimony to the close relationship between Japan and the Mekong region countries. Mr. Yamane also emphasized Japan's commitment to the development of the Mekong region and the progress made in implementation of the "Tokyo Declaration" and "Action Plan 63," adapted at the 1<sup>st</sup> Mekong-Japan Summit in 2009. Mr. Yamane stated that flood damage in the Mekong region, including the current flood in Thailand, caused extensive damage and highlighted the need to strengthen efforts in the areas such as supply chain, disaster prevention and environment.
3. Also in the opening session, Mr. Kouhei Watanabe, a Special Advisor of ITOCHU Corporation, spoke from the perspective of Japanese private companies operating in the Mekong region. He stressed that the Mekong region countries, with continued economic growth, have become a significant partner for Japanese companies and emphasized the importance to further enhance public-private cooperation in order to promote region's economic growth.
4. In the Forum, the participants appreciated Japan's continued efforts to promote public-private cooperation in the Mekong region. The participants reaffirmed the necessity to utilize public-private cooperation to strengthen Japan-Mekong cooperation as well as ensure economic prosperity of the region. The participants also expressed their will to make efforts to expand the existing public-private joint dialogues in each country, including Mekong-Japan Industry and Government Dialogue. The participants appreciated

the progress on “Mekong-Japan Economic and Industrial Cooperation Initiative (MJ-CI) Action Plan,” adapted at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Mekong-Japan Summit last year and expected steady implementation of the Action Plan. The participants welcomed the active participation of private companies in the public-private joint dialogue and expressed their expectation that the dialogues would further improve business environment in the region.

5. The participants appreciated the explanation by the representatives of the Mekong region countries regarding present situation and reforms conducted by the Mekong region countries to improve investment environment. The participants expected that more Japanese companies would invest in the Mekong region countries as business and investment environment improve.
6. The participants reaffirmed the recognition that enhanced connectivity in the Mekong region will contribute to enhancing ASEAN Connectivity and hence will assist ASEAN to achieve competitive growth, integrate production networks, enhance intra-regional trade, attract investments and promote deeper ties among ASEAN people. In this regard, the participants reemphasized the necessity to fulfill the missing links along the East-West Economic Corridor (EWEC) and the Southern Economic Corridor (SEC), particularly the missing link in Myanmar, and transform them into full fledged economic corridors. The participants also acknowledged the importance of building basic physical infrastructures which will lay the foundation for economic development. In this context, the participants appreciated Japan’s contributions to the development of EWEC and SEC and hoped for the continuation of assistance towards the region.
7. In addition to the hard infrastructure, the participants reaffirmed the importance of the soft infrastructure, such as institutional and human resource developments as well as managing the hard infrastructure. In this regard, the participants also stressed the need to implement cross border transport and trade facilitation as well as strengthen capacity building and human resource development. The participants appreciated the fact that Japan has put forth particular efforts on institutional development and human-resource training, and its intention to further strengthen these kinds of assistance in the future. Recognizing the above mentioned points, Japan expressed its intention to further explore the possibility of Public-Private Partnership (PPP) with a view that active participation of private sector is indispensable for the sustainable development of the region.
8. The participants recognized the key role Japanese companies play in the supply-chain of industries in the Mekong region and stressed the importance of Mekong-Japan cooperation on disaster management issues.
9. Lastly, the participants recognized the importance of comprehensive development in the Mekong region and emphasized that the development in the Mekong region should be a model for development which reinforces regional integration, achieves sustainable

development compatible with conservation of the environment. The participants highly appreciated the presentations by local authorities and private sectors of Japan on environmentally friendly industries. Japan reaffirmed the importance to collaborate with private sector to tackle the environment and climate change issues and expressed its intention to commit to “A Decade Toward the Green Mekong” Initiative.

10. The outcome of the Forum will be reported to the Third Mekong-Japan Summit which will be held on November 18 in Bali, Indonesia, and will be followed up at relevant fora between Japan and Mekong region countries.

(Reference: The Forum for the Promotion of Public-Private Cooperation in the Mekong region was first proposed by Japan at the First Japan-Mekong Summit in 2009. Following up on the commitment expressed at the Summit as well as recognizing the importance of private and public cooperation in the Mekong region, the Government of Japan held the first Forum last year in Tokyo.)

## Summary of Discussion: Working Groups

To further strengthen public and private partnership in the Mekong region, the participants addressed following issues in the working groups:

### (1) Enhancing ASEAN Connectivity

- The working group recognized the importance of increasing connectivity in the Mekong region to narrow economic gaps in the region. From this perspective, Japan expressed its will to promote assistance toward both hard and soft infrastructure in the region.
- The working group discussed the importance of addressing soft infrastructure in addition to hard infrastructure to facilitate logistics development in the Mekong region.
- The working group recognized that the development of East-West Economic Corridor and Southern Economic Corridor would strengthen connectivity in the Mekong region, and shared the recognition that enhanced economic corridors would also complement ASEAN Connectivity. The working group reaffirmed the necessity to address the missing links of the East-West Economic Corridor and the Southern Economic Corridor.
- The working group emphasized the importance of human resources development and appreciated Japan's continued assistance in the areas, such as training of logistics service providers.
- The working group reaffirmed the importance of creating a mechanism to reduce risks of private sector and expressed intention to further cooperate to strengthen institutional framework. The working group also stressed the need to utilize public and private cooperation to effectively promote infrastructure development.

### (2) Lessons Learned from the Reconstruction Efforts and Japan-Mekong Cooperation

- The working group appreciated explanation by the Japanese side on the effect of Great East Japan Earthquake on Japanese companies operating in the Tohoku region and measures taken by companies in response to the crisis.
- The participants reaffirmed the importance of the Business Continuity Plan (BCP) and shared the recognition to have effective BCP for private companies in the Mekong region countries. The participants recognized the importance of sharing knowledge and experience Japan has with regard to BCP with Mekong region countries.
- In response to the recent flood disaster in the Mekong region, the working group reaffirmed importance of the supply-chain network of Japanese companies in the Mekong region countries. The working group recognized the importance of strengthening disaster prevention capacity in the Mekong region countries as well as overcome vulnerability in the

region.

(3) Environment Related: “Environment/Urban Environment Improvement/ Water Resource Management,” “Energy”

- The working group shared the outcome of the Green Mekong Forum, co-hosted by the Government of Japan and Thailand on June 2011. Participants affirmed importance of progress in areas such as sustainable forest management, water resource management, disaster prevention and respond to disasters, and emphasized the importance for further development of the “public and private cooperation approach”.
- The working group confirmed the importance of conducting Public-Private cooperation with a view to improve environment and meet development needs in the Mekong region.
- The working group shared the view that Japan’s experience would be a good example for the Mekong region countries in developing energy sector, urban city, water management system through environment-friendly technology, people’s awareness of environment protection, and how to promote cooperation with private sector.
- The working group recognized that improvement of infrastructure and human resources development in the Mekong region.
- The Japanese localities and private sector explained their cooperation in areas such as robust and resilient community, ecological and economical city, and water supply management and reaffirmed that technical improvement attained through public-private cooperation approach has contributed to improvement of environment of the Mekong region countries.
- The working group shared experiences and lessons from great earthquake in Japan and possible implication to the Mekong region which also has a lot of natural disaster such as the recent flood in Thailand.

(End)