

# PROCEEDINGS

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Regional Seminar on

## ASEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY: Sharing Perspective, Knowledge and Experience

Mekong Institute, Khon Kaen, Thailand  
September 19, 2016





**REGIONAL SEMINAR ON**

**ASEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY (AEC):  
SHARING PERSPECTIVE,  
KNOWLEDGE and EXPERIENCE**

**Khon Kaen, Thailand**

**September 19, 2016**



Sponsored by the Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF)  
Implemented by Mekong Institute (MI)

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) becomes reality in 2015, it announces the significant progress for implementing ASEAN Blueprint 2015 on regional economic integration in the past decade with enhanced competitiveness, integrated production networks, increased trade and investment and deeper ties among ASEAN people. Meanwhile, the Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS) Economic Cooperation Program, launched in 1992, comprising China and five ASEAN countries – Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Vietnam and Thailand, has also improved both in terms of physical and non-physical connectivity in the sub-region with shared insights and valuable lessons to ASEAN for achieving AEC goals 2015.

With the significant progress for regional cooperation under the ASEAN and GMS frameworks, however, crucial challenges remained, including involvement of private sector, physical and non-physical barriers to regional trade and investment, and financing development. Therefore, recognizing the regional economic integration as a dynamic on-going process, the ASEAN Blueprint 2025 was launched to continue the journey realizing a deeply integrated and highly cohesive ASEAN economy from 2016 to 2025, while GMS is also carrying on its strategic framework 2012-2022. In view of the challenges, both strategic frameworks emphasized the involvement of private sector through policy support and capacity building for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) which are considered as the engine of economic development.

Against this background, the Mekong Institute (MI), with support from the Government of Japan, designed a two-year project covering a series of capacity development activities to promote business linkages and information network for SMEs, members of provincial and local Chambers of Commerce and Industries (CCI) and Business Associations along the Southern Economic Corridor (SEC) in four bordering Mekong as well as ASEAN countries, namely Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia, and Vietnam. As part of the program, the regional seminar was organized to share perspective, knowledge and experience of AEC in connection with the development context of GMS and Economic Corridors, particularly Southern Economic Corridor (SEC).

The event was organized on September 19, 2016 at the residential training center of MI in Khon Kaen, Thailand, bringing together speakers and participants from international and regional organizations, respective ministries of commerce and industry, think tanks, banks, and representatives from private sector, in addition to members of the Southern Economic Corridor (SEC) Project Steering Committee from Cambodia, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam along SEC and the close project stakeholders from Japan and India.

The proceedings summarized the key outputs of the seminar on: 1) significance and impact of AEC and implementation progress in CMTV as envisaged in the AEC Blueprint 2025; 2) updated information on regional and sub-regional trade, cross-border trade, trade facilitation, SME development, financing development and others relevant issues in the integration process; 3) shared innovative ideas and information that facilitates the development of SEC through enhancing competitiveness of SMEs.



## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AAAA	Addis Ababa Action Agenda
ABIS	ASEAN Business and Investment Summit
ACIA	ASEAN Comprehensive Investment Agreement
ADB	Asian Development Bank
AEC	ASEAN Economic Community
AFAS	ASEAN Framework Agreement on Services
AFTA	ASEAN Free Trade Area
APSC	Political-Security Community
ASCC	ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ASEAN-BAC	ASEAN Business Advisory Council
ASSIST	ASEAN Solutions for Investments, Services and Trade
ATIGA	ASEAN Trade in Goods Agreement
ATR	ASEAN Trade Repository
BA	Business Association
BCIM	Bangladesh, China, India and Myanmar Initiative
BIMSTEC	Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi Sectoral Techno-Economic Cooperation
CBTFA	Cross-Border Transport Facilitation Agreement
CCI	Chamber of Commerce and Industry
CIC	Cambodian Investors' Club
CLMV	Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Vietnam
CWEA	Cambodian Women Entrepreneurs' Association
ESCAP	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
EWEC	East West Economic Corridor
FTA	Free Trade Agreement
GMS	Greater Mekong Sub-region
HRD	Human Resource Development
IAI	Initiatives of ASEAN Integration
JAIF	Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund
LDC	Least Development Countries
MI	Mekong Institute
MIEC	Myanmar-India Economic Corridor
MPAC	Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity
MSME	Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprise
MNC	Multi-national Corporation
MRA	Mutual Recognition Agreements
NSEC	North South Economic Corridor
NID	New Industry Development
NTFC	National Transport Facilitation Committee
NTM	Non-tariff Measures
NTR	National Trade Repository
ODA	Official Development Assistance
PPP	Public Private Partnership
RCEP	Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership
ROO	Rules of Origin
SCP	Self-Certification Program
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SEC	Southern Economic Corridor
SED	Sustainable Energy Development
SEZ	Special Economic Zone
SIDBI	Small Industries Development Bank of India
SME	Small and Medium-sized Enterprise
SPV	Special Purpose Vehicle

TPP Trans-Pacific Partnership  
TTF Transport and Trade Facilitation  
TTRI Training for Trade and Research Institute  
UNCDF United Nations Capital Development Fund  
YEAC Young Entrepreneurs' Association of Cambodia



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## 1. BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

### 1.1 BACKGROUND

As the much-anticipated 2015 ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) becomes a reality, the Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS) prepares itself for the myriad of opportunities and challenges accompanying this transformation into single market. The centrality of the ASEAN Community has put it in connectivity with such sub-regional framework as the Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS) in regard to the contribution of GMS toward the aspirations of ASEAN.

As such, for the purpose of enhancing economic integration and regional linkages, the ASEAN has endorsed the ASEAN Blueprint 2015 in 2003 and the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity in 2010, and moved forward with the strategic plan for the period 2016 – 2025. The enhanced ASEAN Connectivity has assisted the ASEAN countries in increasing competitiveness, promoting economies of agglomeration and integrated production networks, enhancing trade and investments, accelerating regional integration and deeper ties among ASEAN people. In this nexus, the GMS Economic Cooperation Program, which was launched in 1992, has improved both physical and non-physical connectivity in the sub-region that can share insights and valuable lessons to ASEAN to support the AEC goals.

The importance of ASEAN is strongly recognized in the program-wide strategies of the GMS with the fact that regional cooperation was a potent means toward collective action in overcoming constraints unique to member countries.

The AEC Blueprints have spurred a greater sense of urgency to accelerate economic integration. And the ASEAN Blueprint 2025 has provided broad directions through

strategic measures for the AEC from 2016 to 2025. To this end, AEC Blueprint 2025 aims at achieving the vision of an AEC by 2025, which is highly integrated and cohesive, with enhanced connectivity and integrated with the global economy.

It is envisaged that the continued efforts to develop the strategic linkage and interface between ASEAN and GMS have been made in order to deepen the partnerships, given the larger geographical coverage and synergy emerged in the region and sub-region. ASEAN makes available a broader regional framework in which the sub-regional cooperation programs can carry out its work as the ASEAN and GMS activities share the similar purposes and pursue collaborative development as a fundamental objective.

Although the regional cooperation under the ASEAN and GMS frameworks has made a significant progress over the past decades, the crucial challenges, including involvement of private sector, physical and non-physical barriers to regional trade and investment, and financing, can be seen.

In view of the challenges facing the private sector involvement, particularly in development of regional trade and investment along the GMS economic corridors, it is noted that small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) dominate the economies in most countries, and impediments to the growth of SMEs vary.

The constraints include rising production costs, low competitiveness, and inadequate policy framework and support. Indeed, SMEs lack access to finance, appropriate technology, and markets. In addition, inadequate infrastructure has become a major bottleneck to private sector investments; while public sector investment in infrastructure development is still on going. Also, the development of the GMS economic corridors is strongly in need of further harmonized regulations, procedures, and standards in transport and trade

facilitation towards open market and globalized perspectives.

In the light of AEC development framework and its implementation in the post 2015-milestone period, Mekong Institute (MI) is organizing a regional seminar cum workshop titled 'ASEAN Economic Community (AEC): Sharing Perspective, Knowledge and Experience' in connection with the development context of GMS and Economic Corridors, particularly Southern Economic Corridor (SEC).

The seminar cum workshop is part of the two-year Project on "Enhancing Competitiveness of Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs) along the Southern Economic Corridor (SEC) of the ASEAN Mekong Sub-region" for ASEAN cooperation funded under the Japan ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF).

The event brought together speakers and participants from international organizations, think tanks, private sector besides members of the southern economic corridor (SEC) project steering committee from Cambodia, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam. During the course of the two-day seminar cum workshop, the participants shared perspective, knowledge, and experience in global and regional cooperation and integration, particularly in the context of AEC, and the changing needs for the participating countries to mutually achieve AEC goals.

## 1.2 OBJECTIVES AND ANTICIPATED OUTPUTS

### OBJECTIVES

- To discuss about the significance and impact of AEC and implementation progress as envisaged in the AEC Blueprint 2025;
- To update and share information on regional trade, cross-border trade, Trade facilitation, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SME) development, Value chains and Industrial clusters / SME clusters, and others relevant issues in the integration process;
- To increase comprehensive awareness of AEC among the government officials and related stakeholders from private sectors of CMTV, development practitioners, and concerned stakeholders;
- To serve as an interactive platform for the project stakeholders to exchange innovative ideas and information that facilitates the development of SEC through enhancing competitiveness of SMEs.

### ANTICIPATED OUTPUTS

The anticipated outputs are:

- Identified AEC-based perspectives, action plans, and implementation programs and feedback of the participants;
- Identified innovative and programmatic ideas and actions, which are feasible to the JAIF-funded project in SEC;
- Enhanced networks of participants who are from the public, private and development sectors.



## 2. OPENING SESSION

### 2.1 WELCOME REMARKS



#### **Dr. Watcharas Leelawath**

Executive Director  
Mekong Institute (MI)

The regional seminar was inaugurated by Dr. Watcharas Leelawath with warm welcome to all distinguished speakers and delegates. He started with expressing his sincere appreciation to Japan government for supporting the regional seminar, which is part of the 2-year project titled “Enhancing Competitiveness of Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs) along the Southern Economic Corridor (SEC) of the ASEAN Mekong Sub-region”.

Dr. Leelawath went on saying that the design of the 2-year project was based on a rapid needs assessment conducted by MI along the SEC. The study indicated that, on one hand, following the formation of AEC 2015, the launch of new ASEAN blueprint 2025, and the GMS economic corridor development plan, the SEC is considered as one of the most important economic corridors containing vast potentials for further economic development and regional economic integration. The development of SEC will not only boost the cross-border trade between GMS countries, but will also widen the markets to ASEAN as well as the global markets. SMEs have been proved as the driving force for regional economic development.

However, on the other hand, the study identified that due to limited capacity in

utilizing information and management thereof and incomplete institutional support systems, SMEs of the four countries have not been able to take full advantages of the opportunities and benefits from various FTAs under ASEAN and GMS frameworks,

Therefore, the project planned to enhance the capacity of the SMEs along the SEC developing the SME-clusters, business research and trade promotion, so as to participate in regional and global value chains by taking full advantage of various regional agreements on trade and investment facilitation.

In foreseeing the opportunities and challenges, the seminar offered an important platform to the stakeholders along SEC and the region to share the growing economic strengths under ASEAN blueprint 2025, experience in implementing ASEAN blueprint 2015, diagnose the significant influencing factors hindering the regional economic integration under ASEAN and GMS, and identify the obstacles, opportunities and strategies for enhancing SME development. Dr. Leelawath stressed that the forum would help CMVT countries reach common views on how the governments and regional development agencies could help businesses benefit from these regional economic agreements so as to facilitate cross-border trade and develop a closer community-based region.

At last, Dr. Leelawath again thanked all speakers for sharing their valuable experience and view to the seminar, thanked all delegates for their proactive participation, comments and suggestions. The last but not the least, a special appreciation went to the JAIF for supporting the entire program.

## 2.2 OPENING REMARKS–Marking Dynamic Mekong Region



### Mr. Daisuke Hiratsuka

President

Bangkok Research Center (BRC),  
Bangkok Institute of Developing Economies-  
Japan External Trade Organization  
(IDE-JETRO), Thailand

Mr. Daisuke Hiratsuka commenced the introductory session with three questions to raise the issues on the Mekong regional development, i.e. 1) how can the Mekong region develop together? 2) can local firms and SMEs benefit from globalization? 3) why AEC is necessary and what other necessary strategies are needed to be applied?

Mr. Hiratsuka stressed that transportation cost in cross-border trade is considered the key parameter of inclusive regional development that helps narrowing the development gaps between countries/regions, given the fact that transportation cost determines the geographic movement of manufacturing sectors between countries and regions while motivated by the cheaper workforce.

However, in reality, the transportation cost in cross border trade is still high either between high industrialized countries, such as USA and Canada, or low industrialized countries, such as Thailand and Laos. The high transportation cost and associated border barriers restrict value in cross-border trade.

To reduce the transport cost and enhance the cross border trade, many countries and regions initiated cooperation agreements to

facilitate the cross-border trade aiming at simplification of border and customs procedures including documentation, approvals and permits, inspection which in turn reduce travel time and associated various overhead costs.

In a globalized world with production and operations processes largely fragmented firms are often required to be specializing in a particular part of the supply chain/ process. Such specialized fragmentation provides more business opportunities through technological innovation and economies of scale and eventual high profitability.

However, only a small amount of handful firms (3%) are exporting to benefit from the globalization and most of them are large scale of local firms but not SMEs. Therefore, SME-clusters development could be one way out to group SMEs together to enhance SMEs' export capacity and bargaining power while participating in the global value chain.

In addition to SME-clusters development, digital economy and information and communication industry are growing rapidly with opportunities for young entrepreneurs operating SMEs to participate in service supply chains.

In this context, along with policy support for trade facilitation and SME-clusters development, a new approach may need to be worked out to promote and support the start-ups in digital industry by sub-contracting with large private enterprises or through public-private partnership (PPP) to participate into the global value chains.

At the end, Mr. Hiratsuka encouraged all delegates to share their thoughts to the seminar and wished the workshop all the success with fruitful ideas leading to further development of the Mekong region.

## 2.3 Keynote Speech



### H.E. Sok Siphana

Advisor to the Royal Government of Cambodia

H.E. Sok Siphana remarked the seminar as an important and useful platform for stakeholders of the region to discuss how SMEs could become a benefitting factor to the AEC. He started with acknowledging invitation by MIto attend the event and a generous support from JAIF to implement the project.

He went on sharing the progress of the AEC upto date and his views on the way forward of ASEAN and Mekong Sub-region cooperation.

### AEC Blueprint 2025 and its implementation progress and results

H.E. Sok Siphana mentioned that 2016 is the inaugural year of the AEC where the ten Southeast Asian countries are now fully integrated into an ASEAN Community. In this context, he illustrated with the annual GDP and growth rate achieved by ASEAN through important economic initiatives which in turn has been recognized as a significant contribution to the global growth. With a combined GDP standing at USD 2.43 trillion as of last year, ASEAN is firming up the region's position as a global growth centre. ASEAN's real GDP grew at a robust rate of 4.7% in 2015, and it is projected to grow by 4.5% in 2016 and 4.8% in 2017 respectively amidst increasingly challenging global conditions.

ASEAN has also demonstrated an impressive performance in trade and investment.

ASEAN's total merchandise trade remains resilient, standing at USD 2.28 trillion in 2015, with intra-regional trade accounting for the largest share at 24% or USD 545 billion. Foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows to ASEAN stood at USD 120.0 billion last year, with the services sector as the largest contributor at 62.5%. Intra-ASEAN FDI inflows also accounted for the largest share of FDI inflows to the region. Tourism wise, ASEAN received 108.9 million international visitors last year, an increase of 7.3% from 2014.

The significant progress on the tariff liberalization and elimination in ASEAN countries has also been made to date. An overall 96.01% import duties of all ATIGA tariff lines were eliminated, of which 99.2% for the ASEAN-6, including Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand; and 90.9% for the CLMV, meaning Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Viet Nam. By 2018, the percentages of tariff elimination for ASEAN, ASEAN-6 and CLMV will be at 98.67%, 99.20% and 97.81% respectively.

Though AEC has not been transformed into a single economic entity by January 1, 2016, it is quite clear that remains a "work-in-progress" for some time. The Lao PDR's successful chairmanship of the 28th and 29th ASEAN Summits in last two weeks has marked another major milestone in this. All the initiatives that have been adopted or put in place will serve as a foundation to effectively implement the AEC Blueprint 2025. These include the adoption of sectoral work plans under the various AEC Sectoral Ministerial Bodies to operationalize the strategic measures outlined in the Blueprint. He stated that the broad directions for the AEC for the next ten years are in place and the momentum is on. The action driven vision ASEAN Post-2015 is quite clear to lay out succinctly the progressive community building works leading ultimately toward ASEAN full integration.

### ASEAN and Mekong Sub-region Cooperation

When it comes to the Mekong Sub-region, H.E. Sok Siphana believed that the five Mekong countries, with their strong economic potentials, are recognized as a dynamic region and even as one of the world growth centers.

He stressed that access and exposure to FDI, foreign trade, modern ways of doing business, and sophisticated professional practices, among others, are important contribution that the AEC will bring to the Mekong sub-region. The ASEAN Summit and Related Summits in Vientiane in 2016 have had significant impact on the AEC as a whole but more so for SMEs in the Mekong countries. He highlighted a few initiatives of ASEAN, which he believed can bring immediate benefits to SMEs in both regions.

#### 1) Information hub and tools

- The ASEAN SME Service Centre Web Portal [www.aseansme.org](http://www.aseansme.org), an information hub for MSMEs operating in the region; and the ASEAN SME Academy ([www.asean-sme-academy.org](http://www.asean-sme-academy.org)), a self-help and self-paced online learning tool for SMEs comprising guidelines on a number of best practices in doing business;
- SMEs that are in the export business, could access the ASEAN Tariff Finder website which is a no-cost web-based tariff search facility (<http://tariff-finder.asean.org/>);
- The National Trade Repository (NTRs) through which all ASEAN Member States will link their information to the ASEAN Trade Repository (ATR) will provide a one-stop online database containing all ASEAN trade and customs related information for the private sector in the region, once fully operationalized;
- SMEs that seek to explore business opportunities in ASEAN can access this link (<http://assist.asean.org>) which is a portal for ASEAN Solutions for Investments,

Services and Trade (ASSIST). This service is aimed at delivering practical solutions to help businesses address their concerns and difficulties while doing business in the region.

#### 2) Private sector advocacy and networking

On the role of the private sector in advocacy and networking, he pinpointed a very positive trend. On one hand, more and more ministers and officials have recognized the meaningful involvement of the private sector in achieving optimal outcomes for the AEC. The AEC Blueprint 2025 explicitly highlights the greater involvement of the private sector in the AEC's work. Various business forums and summits, or sideline events and similar gatherings are rising to provide the networking platform for the private sector, such as the ASEAN Business Advisory Council (ASEAN-BAC), which has recently held the 2016 ASEAN Business and Investment Summit (ABIS 2016). On the other hand, entrepreneurs from various Mekong countries are getting themselves organized to better prepare to participate in these networking events. He has also provided some success stories in Cambodia, where a lot of efforts have been undertaken by the Cambodian Chamber of Commerce, and other business associations, like the Young Entrepreneur Association of Cambodia (YEAC), the Cambodian Women Entrepreneur Association (CWEA), the Cambodian Investor Club (CIC), and the CEO Master Club, to build and enhance the capacity of their members to tap these networks.

#### 3) ASEAN Connectivity

Moving on, H.E. Sok Siphana mentioned that Mekong sub-region cooperation could also share the same benefit from the ASEAN connectivity in the last decade and onwards to 2025. In the last decade, the ASEAN Connectivity, both physical and non-physical, has assisted the ASEAN countries in



many ways including increased competitiveness, promotion of economies of agglomeration and integrated production networks, enhanced trade and investments, and the last but not the least, deeper ties among ASEAN people. In addition, the adoption of the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity 2025 (MPAC 2025) by the ASEAN leaders at the last ASEAN Summit marks another significant step toward making the regional connectivity vibrant.

#### 4) Cooperation with other development partners

H.E. Sok Siphana emphasized that all the achievements highlighted previously were not done only by ASEAN member states, but also with the contribution of ASEAN's various Development Partners, such as China, Japan, Korea and others who stimulated regional growth and advanced the ASEAN Community agenda.

In addition, once the advanced stage of negotiations of the Regional Economic Comprehensive Partnership (RCEP) concluded, it will be a modern, comprehensive, high-quality and mutually beneficial economic partnership agreement for ASEAN to benefit from.

In conclusion, H.E. Sok Siphana stated that there was no doubt that the AEC has had positive effects on the overall economic growth of the Mekong countries and it has contributed to narrow their development gaps and facilitated their smooth integration into the ASEAN Community. As a "work in progress", more work need to be carried on, but he expressed confidence for the growth with a clear work agenda cut out for next decade.

H.E. Siphana ended his remarks with best wishes to the seminar in carrying out the interesting discussions.

### 3. SESSION I: ASEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY (AEC) BLUEPRINT 2025

Session one was commenced with a keynote presentation by Dr. Watcharas Leelawath, the Executive Director of Mekong Institute (MI), who introduced the general progress and results of the interrelated ASEAN agreements while implementing AEC blueprint 2015, as well as, challenge and opportunities toward the AEC blueprint 2025. It was followed by panel discussion to share perspectives from Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Thailand respectively.

#### 3.1 Session Keynote Presentation- AEC Blueprint

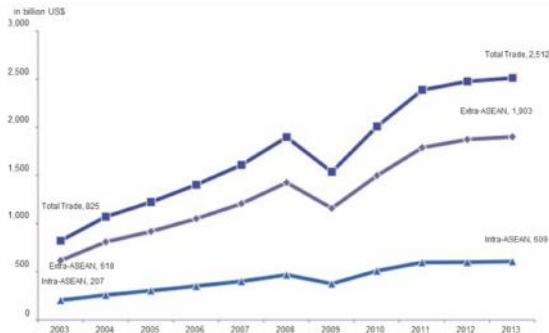


**Dr. Watcharas Leelawath**  
 Executive Director  
 Mekong Institute (MI)

Dr. Watcharas Leelawath firstly reviewed the first pillar of AEC blueprint 2015 - a single market and product base with free flows of goods, services, capital, investment and skilled labors by examining the ASEAN Trade Performance trend in last decade in terms of Trade in Goods in value and percentage of GDP. He pointed out that the intra-ASEAN trade accounted for 24% of total ASEAN trade, which was much lower than the proportion of intra-EU trade up to 64%. This data implied that firstly, the goal of single market and product base was too high to reach by 2015; secondly, more work need to be done to reinforce the implementation of the related ASEAN agreements so as to

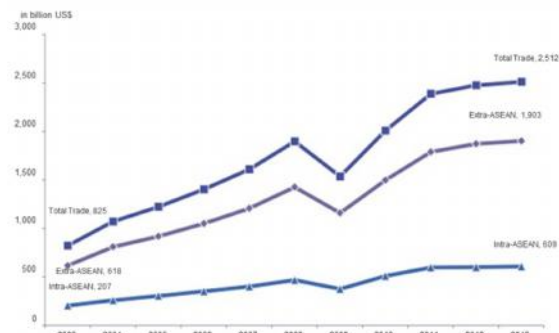


increase the proportion of intra-ASEAN trade. Thirdly, ASEAN's trade data in 2008 falling down for 25% indicated the risk that ASEAN countries relied too much on the orders of western developed countries.



In 2013, the region's total trade moderated at US\$2,512 billion, slightly higher than the previous year's level of US\$2,476 billion. Extra-ASEAN trade continued to account for three-fourths of ASEAN's total trade.

Trend of ASEAN (Trade in Goods)  
Source: ASEAN Economic Community Chartbook 2014



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Trend of ASEAN (Trade in Goods, percentage of GDP)  
Source: ASEAN Economic Community Chartbook 2014

The blueprint 2025 comes just in the right time to adjust the goal of AEC 2015 to be more realistic with five interrelated and mutually reinforcing characteristics, namely: (i) A Highly Integrated and Cohesive Economy; (ii) A Competitive, Innovative, and Dynamic ASEAN; (iii) Enhanced Connectivity and Sectoral Cooperation; (iv) A Resilient, Inclusive, People-Oriented, and People-Centred ASEAN; and (v) A Global ASEAN. The blueprint 2025 has incorporated the commitments of CLMV (Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam) set up for 2015 and will also put more effort to help SMEs to well participate in global value chain.

Dr. Leelawath touched upon the implementation progress of the ASEAN Trade in Goods Agreement (ATIGA), ASEAN Framework Agreement on Services (AFAS), ASEAN Comprehensive Investment Agreement (ACIA) and Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRAs) respectively under the first pillar of AEC blueprint 2015 and highlighted the key measures to be further improved in blueprint 2025.

Dr. Leelawath introduced that most of the measures under the pillar one - a single market and product base- will be continually implemented in the blueprint 2025 under the first strategy- a Highly Integrated and Cohesive Economy.

- He emphasized that with the implementation of ATIGA, while tariff rates of most goods have been reduced to zero, the utilization rate of preferential tariff remained quite low by enterprises due to costly compliance of Rules of Origin (ROO) and low capacity to access information. The work need to be carried on in blueprint 2025 to simplify the Implementation of the ROO and self-certificate scheme, minimize trade protection and compliance costs in dealing with Non-Tariff Measures (NTMs), and disseminate tariff preferential Information widely via various forms such as training activities, printed materials and websites.
- When it comes to AFAS, Dr. Leelawath took the telecommunication sector as an example that the roaming cost while traveling in intra-ASEAN has been reduced by 20% in the past five years but it is still very expensive. He then pointed to the fact that more investment, especially foreign direct investment (FDI) should be attracted to the services sectors. Liberalized services and reasonable competitiveness will eventually lead to the reduction of services costs in ASEAN.

- In order to liberate and facilitate trade in services, MRAs was established to facilitate mobility of eight types of professionals/ skilled labor in ASEAN and work towards the adoption of best practices on standards and certifications. However, the implementation of MRAs is constrained by domestic regulations which slowed down the progress of liberalization of people movement. The regulatory barriers include complex requirements and procedures for employment visas and passes, language proficiency requirements and licensing regulations of professional bodies. The 2025 blueprint will be further improvements to existing MRAs and will consider the feasibility of additional new MRAs, to reinforce the implementation of MRAs so as to facilitate the mobility of professionals and skilled labour in the region.
- As for ACIA, he briefly introduced that the four principle measures of ACIA – liberalization, protection, promotion and facilitation will be carried on in blueprint 2025.

Regarding the third pillar –equitable economic development addressed in blueprint 2015, Dr. Leelawath emphasized the important role of SMEs as the engine of growth that contributes to attracting employees in ASEAN. Therefore, more focus will be given to SMEs and also the less developed CLMV countries in blueprint 2025 under the fourth strategy - a Resilient, Inclusive, People-Oriented and People-centred ASEAN to narrow the development gaps and enhance SMEs' ability to enable benefits from the regional integration.

The last but not the least, ASEAN will continue to make steady progress on integrating the region in to the global economy through FTAs and regional comprehensive economic partnership agreements (RCEPs) with China, Japan,

Republic of Korea, India, Australia and New Zealand.

### 3.2 Panel Discussion I: AEC Blueprint 2025 - Reflections from Cambodia, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam (CMTV)

#### Moderator:

- **Dr. Watcharas Leelawath**, Executive Director, MI

#### Panel speakers:

- **Mr. Suon Vichea**, Director, Trade Training and Research Institute, Ministry of Commerce, Cambodia;
- **Ms. Nguyen Thi Phuong NGA**, Ministry of Industry and Trade, Vietnam;
- **Mr. Vitat Vajropala**, Director, Bureau of Trade Capacity Enhancement, Department of Trade Negotiations, Ministry of Commerce, Thailand;
- **Mr. Aung Kyi Soe**, Joint Secretary General, Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI), Myanmar;

#### Topic I: AEC Blueprint2025 - Implementation Progress and Results in Cambodia



#### Mr. Suon Vichea

Director  
 Trade Training and Research Institute  
 Ministry of Commerce  
 Cambodia

Mr. Suon Vichea introduced to the audience, the Training for Trade and Research Institute (TTRI), a full-fledged department of Ministry

of Commerce of Cambodia established in early 2014 with the aim to enhance the capacity of government officials of Cambodia through trainings so as to better implement the multilateral and regional agreements. Another role of TTRI is to provide trade related research services to MoC, related to the public and private stakeholders as well as to development partners.

Mr. Vichea mentioned that with the government's strong commitment at policy level, Cambodia has done well to implement the AEC blueprint 2015. Some significant progresses have been made for the free flows of goods, services, capital, investment and skilled labors under the pillar one.

- In terms of **Trade in Goods**, ATIGA has been implemented in Cambodia to reduce tariff rate to zero and eliminate non-tariff barriers for the most of the goods. Trade facilitation has been much improved in Cambodia in terms of customs automation and single window, and procedure cost for import and export. Significant improvements have also been made in National and ASEAN Trade Repositories, automation for Certificate of Origin (CO) and business registration, SPS database etc. With the entire endeavor, Cambodia achieved about USD 4 billion trade value with ASEAN and about USD 6 billion with ASEAN+6 in 2013 with around 7% annual growth rate. However, many challenges still remained in non-tariff barriers from other member countries, high logistics cost in domestic, and long-time procedure required to Cambodian exporters. All this lead to unbalanced export and import for Cambodia, e.g. out of Cambodia's total trade value with ASEAN and ASEAN+6, export value accounted only for 30% and 35% respectively. Therefore, more work need to be done for AEC blueprint 2025.
- Regarding the **Trade in Services**, Cambodia opened almost all sectors. While implementing the AFAS, Cambodia has reduced the limitation on market access and national treatment, maximized the potential contribution of the services sector to economic development and growth. The obvious achievements can be seen in telecommunication sector, where the international call and internet cost has been dramatically decreasing. In the tourism sector numbers of tourists are also increasing. In financial sector, international payments and transactions perform well in Cambodia. Other improvements can also be found in education and health care sectors. Cambodia's export value in services has reached to USD 3 billion in 2015.
- Under the ACIA, Cambodia has created favorable **Investment environment** to attract, maintain and protect both foreign and domestic investors. The Cambodian Law on Investment (LoI) provides incentives significantly on the import duty and tax on profit, up to a maximum of 9 years. The majority of investments are in the infrastructure and industrial sectors which together account to 76% of total investments in the last five years. The amount of investments in Cambodia increased by 18% year-on-year to USD 4.6 billion in 2015, when the local investments amounted for 69% of total investments. Among foreign investors, Chinese investors accounted for the majority of investments made while together with other Asian investors they accounted for almost 90% of total foreign investments made. In the following decade, Cambodia government encourages more investments into agriculture and light manufacturing sectors and more investors from other ASEAN countries.

- When it comes to **capital market and financial sector**, Cambodia government has made significant adjustments to support market-driven financial sector in the past decade. Banking sector and microfinance in Cambodia is booming with about 36 commercial banks, 11 specialized banks and 34 microfinance institutions as of 2014. Nevertheless, along with the past achievements, risks remained with the exchange rates caused by dual currency system, especially for micro-finance institutions who relied very much on foreign funds and loan in dollar. In this regards, Cambodia government is now working on cleaning bad loans, and encouraging more use of sole currency in Riel to control the stabilization of financial market. Cambodia will continually implement AEC financial sector-related strategic measures with all other ASEAN countries to stabilize the interrelated financial market in Cambodia and ASEAN in the next decade.

In addition, Mr. Vichea shared the progress of SME development and capacity buildings. Cambodia has been implementing various policies under SME Development Framework to create conducive environment for SME development and assist SMEs to integrate into global networks. To realize the AEC blueprint 2025 - A Competitive, Innovative, and Dynamic ASEAN, Cambodia is in the process of adopting a new competition law, promoting development of SME-clusters, special economic zone (SEZ), human resource capacity building, and research and development for technology transfer and application to reinforce the competitiveness of SMEs to seize the benefits of AEC.

At the end, Mr. Vichea calls for all ASEAN countries to put effort together to further eliminate the non-tariff barriers, share the technologies, enhance capacity of human resources, stabilize the financial market so as

to pave the way for SME development as well as for a highly competitive, integrated and inclusive AEC.

## Topic II: ASEAN Economy through Trade, Investment and Production Network- Myanmar's Perspective



### Mr. Aung Kyi Soe

Joint Secretary General  
 Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI),  
 Myanmar

Mr. Aung Kyi Soe laid out his presentation into two points on overall Myanmar trade and investment information and Myanmar's perspective towards AEC 2025.

### Overall Myanmar Trade and Investment

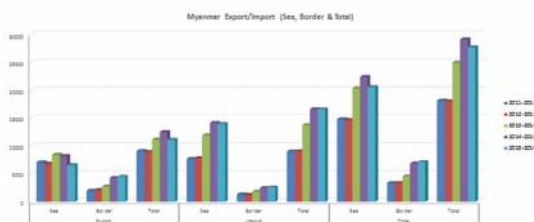
Starting with a overview of trade and investment data of Myanmar in the past two decades, Mr. Aung Ki Soe stated that as of August 2016, the total FDI reached around USD 9,481 million. In terms of yearly approved amount of foreign investment, the top five industrial sectors are oil and gas, transport and communication, manufacturing, real estate and power in 2015-2016 (source: Directorate of Investment and Company Administration, Myanmar, August 2016). Examining the data by country, Singapore (USD 4,246 million), China (USD 3,323 million), the Netherlands (USD 438 million), Malaysia (USD 257 million), and Thailand (USD 236 million) invested the most in Myanmar.

In the period of 2015-2016, Myanmar has realized USD 27,714.826 million for total trade



in value, increased by 52.5% in last five years. Among total trade value, 40% were from export of which border export accounted for 40%.

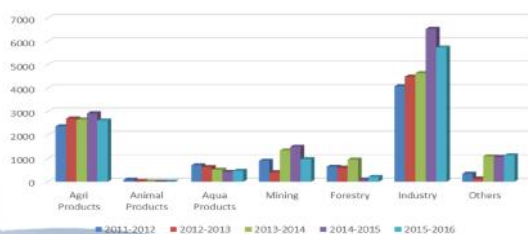
**Myanmar Export/Import during 2011-12 to 2015-16 August**



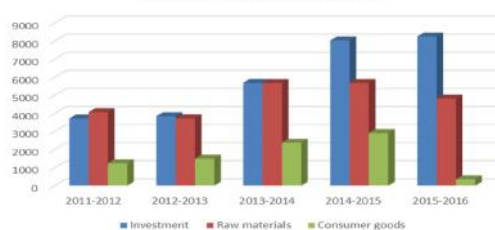
Comparing the trade between Myanmar with EU and other ASEAN countries, the data from MoC showed that Myanmar-ASEAN trade (USD 10,432.53 million) is 15 times of Myanmar-EU trade (USD 676.341 million) in 2016. Nevertheless, the Myanmar-EU trade grew rather fast in past five years with over 63% of increase since 2011, while Myanmar-ASEAN trade increased by 20%. Besides, it can see another trend that Myanmar-EU trades are becoming more balanced comparing export and import value while export proportion of Myanmar-ASEAN trade has decreased from 53% to 38% in five years.

With regards to the trade by products, the top five exporting products were mainly in the category of Industry, agri-products, mining, aquatic products, forestry and animal products. As for the importing products, investment materials increased sharply by 122% from 2011 to 2016. Raw materials and consumer goods trades increased from 2011 to 2014 but decreased from 2015 to 2016.

**Myanmar Export by Products**



**Myanmar Import by Products**



Mr. Soe further identified the position of Myanmar in the trade and investment of ASEAN. Myanmar mostly contributed to ASEAN's total export in terms of agricultural products and fuels and minerals. In terms of FDI inflow, Singapore, Indonesia, Thailand and Malaysia shared the largest part of recipient, while Myanmar and Laos were the smallest recipient.

**Things to consider for AEC from Myanmar perspective**

In order to maximize the benefit from AEC, he suggested each ASEAN country should identify its comparative advantage. For Myanmar, its comparative advantage would be the large local market, abundant natural resources, and young labor force. He conveyed great confidence to the new Myanmar government and looked forward to the reforms to be taken place in order to improve regulatory environment of doing business and attract more FDI in Myanmar. Moreover, he also called for all ASEAN countries to join hands to reach the goal of ASEC which will finally lead the integrated region to the global economy. He requested that ASEAN countries with high-income should provide assistance to the low-income countries in every aspect.

At the end of the presentation, Mr. Soe expressed his appreciation to MI for implementing the South Economic Corridor (SEC) project to develop and promote SME clusters at the provincial level. He believed that both of the SEC project and the Dawei investment project will create more opportunities for local business of Myanmar which will lead to more job opportunities for



Myanmar young labors and greater returns to investments.

Topic III: 20 Years of Participation of Vietnam in ASEAN and the Implementation Progress to Achieve AEC



**Ms. Nguyen Thi Phuong Nga**  
 Ministry of Industry and Trade  
 Vietnam

In her presentation, Ms. Nguyen Thi Phuong Nga reviewed the Vietnam's achievements in trade and investment after 20 years of participation in ASEAN. She shared implementation progress and results of Vietnam under AEC blueprint 2015, explored opportunities and challenges for Vietnamese SMEs towards AEC 2025, and the initiative measures to support SME development.

**Vietnam's achievements after 20 years of participation in ASEAN**

Ms. Nga illustrated that the total trade value of Vietnam has increased by 14.5% over past 20 years from 1995 to 2015.

	1995	2015	Annual growth rate
Export	1 bil. USD	18.3 bil. USD	13.4%
Import	2.3 bil. USD	23.8 bil. USD	17.1%
Total Trade	3 bil. USD	42.1 bil USD	14.5%

For FDI inflow, Ms. Nga introduced the number of projects and capital which has invested by eight countries from ASEAN plus Korea and Japan as of December 2015.

Korea, Japan and Singapore were ranked as the top three investing countries in Vietnam with a total of over 9,000 valid investment projects.

No	Investor	No. of project	Total registered investment capital (Mil. USD)
1	Korea	4,944	44,900,59
2	Japan	2,883	38,410,86
3	Singapore	1,526	34,716,33
7	Malaysia	23	13,417,03
11	Thailand	15	7,360,01
20	Brunei Darussalam	81	1,845,79
30	Indonesia	45	396,34
32	Philippines	73	328,61
49	Laos	10	75,10
52	Cambodia	12	52,62

Source: Foreign Investment Agency, MPI Viet Nam

**Implementation progress and results of Vietnam under AEC blueprint 2015**

In this sub-topic, Ms. Nga highlighted the progress and results which Vietnam has made in meeting some measures under the four pillars of AEC blueprint 2015.

- 1) Pillar one –single market and production base
  - **Trade in goods:** i) Following the ATIGA into force in 2010, significant progress has been made on tariff elimination. ASEAN has totally shared 95.99% of tariff lines on average at the ATIGA rate of 0%. In details, ASEAN-6 stood at 99.20% of share while 90.86% for CLMV of which Vietnam shared 95.5% in 2015 right after Singapore and will reach 98.27% of share by 2018; ii) the non-tariff barriers have been further removed with enhanced transparency, improved regional rules, regulations and standards, especially for MSMEs; iii) Vietnam has also streamlined and simplified the administrative regulatory regimes, document requirement and import/export procedure by setting up online information hub and paperless system; iv) customs procedures has been further integrated and simplified, e.g. Vietnam joined in the rank of Brunei,

Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines and Singapore in implementing the entire or some parts of National Single Window (NSW) regime, as well as some pilot projects of self-certification programs for Rules of Origin.

- **Trade in Services.** With strong commitment to implement the AFAS, Vietnam has reduced the restrictions on market access and national treatment to four prioritized service sectors, namely, tourism, E-ASEAN, healthcare and logistic service. Meanwhile, Vietnam has also broadened the coverage to other sensitive services sectors including finance and banking, telecommunication and distribution by fulfilling the WTO requirements.
- **Investment environment.** Following the ACIA, Vietnam broadens the scope of investors and has already improved the regulations to treat investors equally no matter what their nationalities are. A dispute settlement mechanism has also established in Vietnam to facilitate the sustainable environment of investments.

## 2) Pillar two –competitive economic region

The framework for Pillar two aims to enhance the regulatory environment of intellectual property, competition and consumer protection, and connectivity in terms of infrastructure development and energy co-operation. Ms. Nga emphasized Vietnam's engagement in the last area for connectivity. Vietnam participated in infrastructure projects initiated under ASEAN and GMS to promote multimodal transport network in this region. In terms of energy co-operation, Vietnam joined ASEAN electricity network to promote clean coal technology and recycle energy so

as to ensure energy security and effective usage of energy and sustainable energy development.

## 3) Pillar three– equitable economic development

The pillar three comprises two elements - the Initiatives for ASEAN Integration (IAI) for CLMV and SME Development with the aim to narrow the development gap between ASEAN 6 and CLMV through various capacity building projects. Vietnam has benefitted from those projects with enhanced capacity for better implementing the measures of AEC. The vital improvement has also been made to better facilitate SMEs to easily access market, information, finance, technology, and skilled human resources. Moreover, participation in regional production and distribution network so as to seize the opportunities of AEC.

## 4) Pillar four – Integration into Global Economy

Pillar four emphasized ASEAN's external economic relations and participation in global supply networks. As one of the ASEAN Member States (AMS), Vietnam has also addressed its policy to benefit from the FTA ASEAN +1 and RCEP. In addition, Vietnam has also expanded its relations with the USA, EU, Canada and Russia. International best practices and standards were adopted in Vietnam in production and distribution to proactively participate in global supply networks.

## Opportunities and challenges for Vietnamese SMEs toward AEC Blueprint 2025

Towards the new AEC blueprint 2025, Ms. Nga has foreseen the opportunities in the following decade.

- Market will be expanded to wider industries as well as geographic regions with further elimination of tariff rates and non-tariff barriers;
- SMEs' competitiveness will be enhanced with regional integration which will lead to broader market with easier access to lower prices of goods and services;
- Comparative advantages will be highlighted for each AMS reflecting different foreign investment interests, which will also increase productivity of labor.
- Financial and capital market will also be further liberalized and more stabilized.

Along with opportunities, Vietnam has also prepared for the challenges from competitive pressure in terms of cheap labor force; low capacity of Vietnamese enterprises will be benefitted from FDI and so on.

#### **Initiative measures to support SME**

In the last part of presentation, Ms. Nga emphasized the initiatives which Vietnam has been pursuing to support SME development. In addition to reviewing and improving the regulation system to increase transparency and enabling investment environment, Vietnam has also started focusing on long-term capacity building for Vietnamese businesses and labor to enhance awareness of AEC and learn how to access key information to be better prepared and thus to participate in AEC.

#### **Topic IV: Progress of Thailand for Implementing AEC 2015 and Moving Forward to AEC 2025**



**Mr. Vitat Vajropala**

Director  
 Bureau of Trade Capacity Enhancement,  
 Department of Trade Negotiations  
 Ministry of Commerce  
 Thailand

Mr. Vitat Vajropala began his presentation by comparing the characteristics between AEC blueprint 2015 and 2025. He reviewed the objectives, opportunities and challenges of each characteristic under AEC blueprint 2025.

Firstly, he questioned that what AMS should do to realize the ASEAN integration as one production base. Thailand along with other six ASEAN countries has realized 100% of tariff line elimination for inclusive list, however, some agri-products are still in the high sensitive list, e.g. rice, corn and cassava in Thailand. Thailand and the most of AMS has set up various NTMs to protect its domestic agriculture sector from competitiveness. For instance, Thai government is mostly reluctant to release licenses for enterprise importing rice, meanwhile, provide subsidies to rice farmers to enhance the rice export.

Secondly, however, Mr. Vajropala warned that the protection would not last for long due to the government's commitment to implement AEC 2025. But he also believed that threats coming from opening the market are also a good chance to force rice farmers, traders and the government to make changes in order to survive from the

high competition. On one side, farmers and traders will need to explore innovative ways and new technology to change the low rice productivity situation and maintain the high export volume while increase revenue. On the other hand, government will need to adjust related regulations to facilitate rice trade with fair competition, such as reduction of double taxation, strengthening of governance through greater transparency in the public sector and engagement with the private sector, adopting appropriate methods to monitor business transactions and exchange information in accordance with the international standards. All these efforts will lead rice sector to healthy and smooth transformation towards AEC 2025.

Regarding the goal of connectivity and sectoral cooperation, he introduced that Thailand has been participating in various infrastructure projects initiated under ASEAN and GMS transport network and regional information and communication network. With all the improvement, he then encouraged enterprises to take advantage of e-commerce to build wider business network, enhance its competitiveness with faster transactions and low labor cost, and participate in different sectors and market in ASEAN region and beyond.

He ended the presentation with the brief introduction of progress of Thailand to the goal of "Global ASEAN" that Thailand is implementing the negotiation of RECP and applying TPP to further participate in global market.

## ❖ Comments and suggestions

- To realize the full integration of AEC, it requires more sincerity from ASEAN member states (AMS) to deepen and smooth the regional cooperation mechanism and process, and more determination to implement their commitments to achieve the strategic goals of AEC blueprint at national level. The principle for implementing AEC Blueprint 2025 should be "bear and share" - each AMS should bear their responsibilities so that all ASEAN members could share the common benefit as a whole. More specifically, each AMS should bear more responsibilities on speeding up trade facilitation while share more benefits by applying advanced ICT.
- The key success factors in full integration of AEC also include engaging appropriate stakeholders into different level of initiatives vertically either at international, regional, sub-regional, national and local levels, or horizontally include inter-governmental organizations, governmental agencies, private sectors, universities and think tanks. Mekong Institute has been playing a unique and important role to link the local and national level stakeholders with regional and international level of stakeholders to put force together to create and improve the enabling environment for better regional and sub-regional economic integration.
- In order to enhance AEC integration, more efforts should also be given to the other two fundamental blueprints of ASEAN- ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC) and ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC). AEC could only be realized with a peaceful and stable political and social environment and closer ties among peoples created by the latter two blueprints. One way is to establish an ASEAN identifiable through education by reducing hateful memories and emotions in the history but addressing more social, cultural and economic ties of ASEAN peoples and countries.



## 4. SESSION II: CROSS-BORDER TRADE AND TRADE FACILITATION IN SEC

The session two invited representatives and experts from international and regional development organizations, such as ADB, MI, UNCDF, SIDBI to update and share information and experience on regional trade, cross-border trade, trade and transport facilitation, SME development, value chains and industrial clusters / SME clusters, and financing development for SMEs and other issues in the integration process. This session give participants a chance to exchange innovative and practical ideas, models and experiences that SEC project could learn from to better facilitate the development through enhancing competitiveness of SMEs.

### 4.1 Session Keynote Presentation– Cross Border Trade and Trade Facilitation



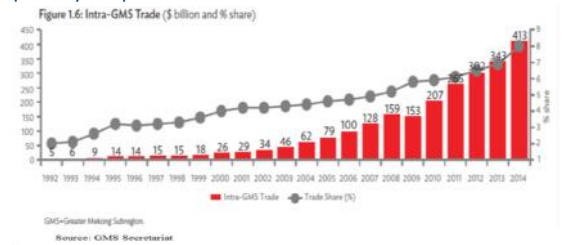
**Ms. Kanya S. Sasradipoera**  
Senior Trade Specialist  
Southeast Asia Department  
Asian Development Bank (ADB)-  
Thailand Resident Mission

In the keynote presentation, Ms. Kanya S. Sasradipoera introduced the general trends and patterns of GMS trade in the past 20 years, and then specifically reviewed the trade and trade facilitation along the Southern Economic Corridors (SEC) as well as

GMS's contribution to AEC in trade and facilitation.

### GMS Trade: Trends and Pattern

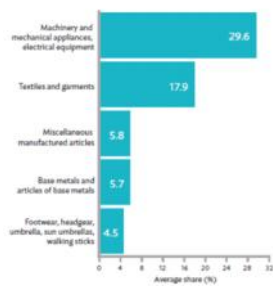
The trade data demonstrates that the Intra-GMS trade value has increased dramatically from USD 5 billion in 1992, when the GMS economic cooperation was initiated, to USD 413 billion in 2014. The data also indicated that the proportion of intra-GMS remained low with only 8% comparing with extra-GMS trade. It implied that GMS is getting more open for trade and becoming the heart of economic development with high growth rate. The vital achievements reflected the impact of GMS economic cooperation in policy improvement in six countries.



And then Ms. Sasradipoera analyzed the trade structure by products in the past two decades. She compared the top five products exported and imported in the period of 1995-2004 and 2005-2015. The graphs indicated that machinery and mechanical appliances and electrical equipment stood at the top of five exported and imported commodities in GMS. In particular, its export share has increased for 10% over the past 20 years. Same 10% of increase can also be seen in the share of imported mineral products. Among the top five products, except of fifth position, other four showed similar trade structure over past 20 years. In export list, transport associated products defeated footwear-kind as the fifth ranking in last decade, while optical and photographic equipment replaced textiles and garment into the import list. The changes demonstrated a good sign that GMS has been moving from manufacture base to high technology hub.



Figure 3.1A: GMS—Top Five Exports, Average Share (%), 1995-2004



Source: GMS Secretariat

Figure 3.1B: GMS—Top Five Exports, Average Share (%), 2005-2014

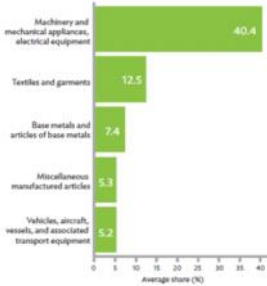


Figure 3.1C: GMS—Top Five Imports, Average Share (%), 1995-2004

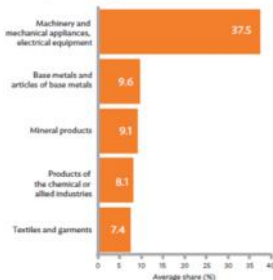
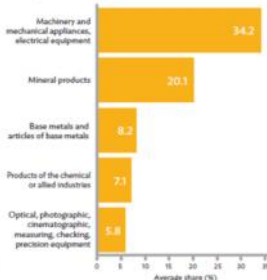
GMS=Greater Mekong Subregion.  
Source: ADB estimates using data from UNCOMTRADE.

Figure 3.1D: GMS—Top Five Imports, Average Share (%), 2005-2014



has rapidly increased by 57%, 73% and 212% in terms of vehicles for goods, passengers and private use respectively in five years from 2010 to 2014. Accordingly, the import value to Vietnam increased by 17%, while export from Vietnam increased by 234% in four years from 2011 to 2014. The graph showed the trends that transport is rather balanced but Vietnam exports more in value to Cambodia in recent years. The border trade shared 17.19% of total bilateral trade between Vietnam and Cambodia in 2014.

As for the border of Poipet- Arranyapraphet, the transport increased by about 40% from 2013 to 2014, correspondingly, trade value raised by 26%. The border trade accounted for 13.78% of total trade between Cambodia and Thailand. Through the graph, it can be noticed that a great deal of vehicles and import value flew into Cambodia but very less out (the import value of Cambodia was 18 times higher than export value in 2014). In summary, Cambodia showed trade deficit at both borders with Thailand and Vietnam.

### Trade and Transport Facilitation along the Southern Economic Corridors (SEC)

Prior to the second part of presentation, Ms. Sasradipoera mentioned that unlike the national level of trade data, which is easily accessed through various online sources, the data for cross-border trade at border and its provincial level is very limited, sometimes is outdated or less relevant. This is mainly because the informal trade was not possible to record even though it has been the significant part of cross border trade.

Nevertheless, with the Cross-Border Transport Facilitation Agreement (CBTFA) fully ratified last year, the national transport facilitation committees (NTFC) have now submitted some border trade data. Ms. Sasradipoera has then looked into the limited data of two key borders areas at Mocbai-Bavet (Vietnam -Cambodia) and Poipet-Arranyapraphet (Cambodia-Thailand), and drawn the rough trade pattern along SEC.

At border of Mocbai- Bavet, the total number of vehicles in and out of Vietnam

Regarding the trade facilitation along SEC, Ms. Sasradipoera mentioned that in theory, all four SEC countries – CLMT - are part of trade facilitation and transport arrangements under ASEAN and GMS, but unfortunately none of them has not yet implemented. But still, in reality, overall reform on trade related issues are continuing, such as Customs reform and modernization, SPS, trade policy etc, to strengthen the monitoring and evaluation of transport and trade facilitation. The concrete progress has been made at the two borders by CVT countries along SEC as below:

- Poipet–Arranyapraphet: exchanged Traffic Rights between Cambodia and Thailand with 40 permits and soon it will be expanded to 150 permits.
- Mocbai – Bavet: 300 permits under the bilateral transport agreement signed between Vietnam and Cambodia;

- Established National Single Window, paperless customs automation system and faster border clearance at customs.

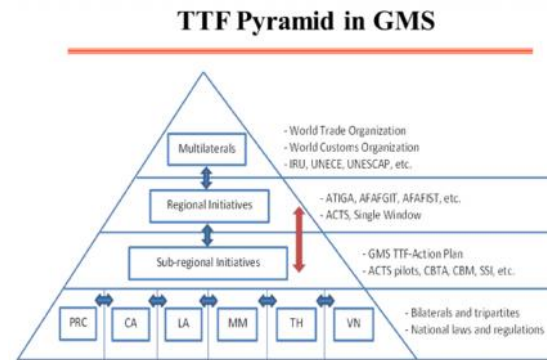
### GMS's Contribution to AEC through Transport and Trade Facilitation (TTF)

Five countries of GMS are also members of ASEAN. The total trade of 5 GMS shared 32% of ASEAN trade, and the last member of GMS - China - is also the trade partner of ASEAN.

Comparing to ASEAN, GMS is a smaller sub-regional group but with closer relations between members states. Therefore, the discussion among them can be more serious and focused, and they also can be more intended to implement projects. In this regards, GMS can contribute to AEC as i) delivery vehicles for hardware, e.g. infrastructure, (ii) test-beds for software, e.g. implementing the trade agreements, and (iii) promotion of inclusive growth via its sub-regional corridor approach which will allow all stakeholders including rural areas participating in the regional development.

In addition, Ms. Sasradipoera suggested that GMS can facilitate enhancing the awareness and implementation of ASEAN agreements, customize ASEAN initiatives to the needs of the subregional groupings (ASEAN plus), align GMS TTF initiatives with ASEAN TTF initiatives, contribute to consolidating TTF monitoring at the ASEAN level, maintain ongoing dialogues across subregions and with ASEAN on substantive TTF issues

**In conclusion**, Ms. Sasradipoera emphasizes the position and important role of GMS in the TTF pyramid, where the sub-region could not only deepen into national and bilateral level but also up to regional and multilateral level for TTF implementation.



More specifically, the GMS initiated CBTA and inked the landmark TTF agreements in 1990s, contributing to expansion of traffic rights and routes through bilateral/trilateral transport agreements, providing support to CLMVT in negotiating transport facilitation agreements. The GMS TTF Action Plan is increasingly aligning with ASEAN TTF initiatives by reviewing the CBTA to reduce “noodle bowl” of bilateral agreements, supporting acceleration of CLMV integration into ASEAN Customs Transit System (ACTS), conducting capacity building to strengthen Trade Facilitation related agencies, enhancing coordination among development partners committed to TTF in the GMS, while supporting CLMV to reap full benefits from AEC.

### 4.2 Panel Discussion II: SME Development and Financing: Sharing experiences

#### Moderator:

Mr. Madhurjya Kumar Dutta, Director, Trade and Investment Facilitation, Mekong Institute

#### Panel Speakers:

- **Dr. Jean Pierre A. Verbiest**, Policy Advisor, Mekong Institute
- **Mr. BhaskarJyoti Mahanta**, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Heavy Industry and Public Enterprises, Government of India

- **Mr. Paul Martin**, Regional Technical Advisor – Asia / Pacific, United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF)
- **Mr. Govindasamy Sampath Kumar**, General Manager and Regional Head, Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI), India

### Topic I: Southern Economic Corridors: Opportunities and Challenges for SMEs under the AEC



#### Dr. Jean Pierre A. Verbiest

Honorable Advisor to Mekong Institute Council

Based on various kinds of SMEs, the theoretical model of SME internationalization and enriched regional experiences, Dr. Jean Pierre A. Verbiest provided has developed deep insights in the challenges and opportunities for SMEs in the context of AEC and SEC development framework of GMS.

#### SMEs and AEC

Dr. Verbiest mentioned that within ASEAN, vast majority of firms, particularly in Cambodia, Lao PDR and Myanmar, are SMEs (more than 90%). AEC creates a single production and consumer market, thus a seamless region (ADB, ASEAN 2030 study), can offer SMEs the opportunity to: (i) access the larger ASEAN consumer market, and (ii) enter regional production chains and international production networks. But with AEC, SMEs face stronger competition and the need to raise their competitiveness and move up the value chain, which has already

been happening in Cambodia and Vietnam with faster growth of electronics export than older ASEAN countries.

To enable SMEs to benefit and grow under the AEC, on one hand, efficient transport networks and logistics, good trade facilitation and quality growth supporting domestic policies play a major role.



On the other hand, SMEs need to explore the opportunities through all tiers of production networks while well position itself with comparative advantage and competition. To do so, firstly, it is crucial to understand the types of SMEs and focus of AEC. Dr. Verbiest stressed that in the context of AEC, the growth strategies mainly focus on domestic, extrovert, exporting kinds of SMEs. In AEC, production networks were organized around flagship companies who govern positions and roles of firms in the network, where the lower tiers of firms (SMEs) can find opportunities as price-breakers and capacity buffers, e.g. Compaq case and Taiwan computer producers. Thus, for the second step, these firms need to enhance its specialization, productivity, and links to upgrade skills and knowledge (Plummer and Chia) in order to meet the requirements and needs.

#### Internationalization of SME and SME development in SEC

Furthermore, Dr. Verbiest introduced three theoretical models for internationalization of







clustering way for Banteay Meanchey and KohKong; Given the potential in agriculture and agro-processing, promoting a BEZ similar to the Ubon-Champasak model may be the way to support SMEs;

- Infrastructure links to Thailand is in good condition but border crossing facilities and TTF still needs much improvement;
- Agro-processing could be done in Cambodia where land and labor is cheaper but major improvements in logistics cost and trade facilitation including improvement of customs procedure are needed to make Cambodian SMEs competitive.

3) **Central SEC:** Dawei – Bangkok – Aryanarathet- Phnom Penh – Bavet – MocBai – Ho Chi Minh City (HCMC)

- This is the major SEC sub-corridor with large potentials for SME development. It links the two major hub ports – Laem Chabang (Thailand) and Saigon / Vung Tau (Vietnam) which further directly connects to major industrial hubs and international production networks base in Thai Eastern Seaports and HCMC industrial area. Using the route Through Thailand, Vietnam and Cambodia could better participate in global value chain (GVC);
- Cambodia with its lower wage structure has huge potential particularly for SMEs to benefit from this proximity. In Cambodia, several SEZ/BEZ already being developed in Poipet, Phnom Penh and Bavet/Manhattan;
- Logistics costs and import and export costs and processing time in Cambodia are much higher than Thailand (Ksoll and Brimble). Cambodia has also faced trade deficit with less export to Thailand and Vietnam.

In collusion, SME development requires alignment of cluster environment, soft and hard infrastructure, and sensible domestic policies.

**Topic II: Dynamics of ASEAN-India Relations with Special Reference to India's North East**



**Mr. Bhaskar Jyoti Mahanta**

Joint Secretary  
Ministry of Heavy Industry and Public Enterprises  
Government of India

In his presentation, Mr. Mahanta traced back the historical similarities and connectivity between India and ASEAN countries and highlighted the missing but impartible role of North East Region linking India with ASEAN. He looked into the cooperation progress under India's new Acting East policy and finally concluded with the way forward.

**Historical linkage and cooperation millstone**

Mr. Mahanta believed that the relations between ASEAN countries and India has deep rooted in the past thousands years' history. With the launch of the Look East Policy (LEP) in 1991, India has put efforts to surge for partnership with most of ASEAN countries in Southeast Asia at various levels. Ever since pursuing LEP till 2009, various initiatives have been made to solidify the sub-regional cooperation, including:

- South Asia Growth Quadrangle Initiative,
- Kunming Initiative,

- Bangladesh China India Myanmar (BCIM) Initiative,
- Mekong Ganga Cooperation,
- Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi Sectoral Techno-Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC)

Although above initiatives have not been fully realized for various political reasons, there remains huge potential for growth by the partnership with ASEAN.

### India - ASEAN Partnership

As India upgraded its policy from the Look East Policy (LEP) to the Act East Policy (AEP) in 2014, the importance of the North East Region of India has been growing to link India with ASEAN while negotiating the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP). However, the trade between India and ASEAN has been on the decline which only realized 65% of target for trade value in 2015, though the investments from ASEAN has reportedly been robust. There is a hope that concluding the long negotiation of RCEP by the end of 2016 will certainly help to boost trade relationship.

During the negotiation period for RCEP, India has been expressing active cooperation intention with ASEAN as below:

- Three concrete proposals on digital connectivity, optical transmission network, e-networks for tele-medicine and tele-education and GPS-aided geo-augmented navigation has been recently presented in Vientiane ASEAN Submit;
- A USD 100 million budgeted proposal to set up Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) for public-private-partnership (PPP) in four CLMV countries is under development;
- The contribution to the Science and Technology (S&T) has been increased by India from USD 1 to 5 million USD to forge new links with ASEAN to promote co-operation in S&T, particularly in the

domain of renewable energy, space, and ICT.

- Three funds, namely ASEAN-India Cooperation Fund, Science and Technology Fund and Green Fund are in operation to finance a variety of projects on trade and investment, food, agriculture, tourism and ICT etc. Action Plan for 2016-2020 has been adopted in August 2015;
- India-ASEAN connectivity projects have been started quite some time and need to be completed at the earliest. Deadline for completion of the Kaladanmulto-modal transport project in Myanmar and the trilateral highway linking India, Myanmar and Thailand are 2019 and 2018 respectively. These two projects are important to connect with South East Asia via the North East Region of India which will have a vital impact on the development of the region;
- The ASEAN India Study Centre was inaugurated in August 2016 in North Eastern Hill University.

### Roads Ahead for North East India

With this strong intention and the existing issues in ASEAN, Mr. Mahanta had foreseen bright potentials from the India-ASEAN cooperation. He suggested India and its partners should work more closely on the areas stated below to enhance the regional development.

- Private sector in India needs to wake up to seize the great opportunities of GMS. North East (NE) India can act as the perfect staging point for trade and investments in Myanmar;
- The Research and educational institutes and university of NE could play an important role to forge the partnership across the border, such as setting up campuses in the neighboring countries and offering scholarships to students from Myanmar;
- In health care sector, India could particularly offer its services to GMS by

setting up institutions in NE along with a network of infrastructure in India's eastern region;

- As for Energy, the NE India and Myanmar share great possibility of mutual trade relationship, which means NE India could supply GMS with power in exchange for Gas and Oil.
- A NE India –GMS PPP Organization could also be set up to implement projects, facilitate trade and manage shared resources.

### Conclusion

At last, Mr. Mahanta concluded the presentation with three recommendations:

- The sincere and strong commitment of India, Myanmar, Lao PDR and Thailand are the key to fulfill the final target of real economic and development corridors in both India and ASEAN;
- The two international routes - Myanmar-India Economic Corridor (MIEC) and Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway and its extension to Lao PDR and Cambodia - are very important to unlock the trade potential linking the NE India to utilize the fertile natural resources in Myanmar and join the ASEAN production network in Thailand and other GMS countries.

### Topic III: New Approaches to SME and Entrepreneurship Financing in ASEAN



#### Mr. Paul Martin

Regional Technical Advisor – Asia / Pacific  
United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF)

Mr. Paul Martin began the presentation with a brief introduction to the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), which is the only UN organization mandated to provide loans and grants in Least Development Countries (LDCs) through the world. In this region, UNCDF works with CLM countries. Besides, UNCDF also incubates various financial and development models using Official Development Assistance (ODA) as a way to access sources of public and private money.

UNCDF's finance models are strongly relevant to the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA), a new global framework for financing development post-2015 adopted by UN in 2015 and the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Initiatives.<sup>1</sup>

To well explain the AAAA, Mr. Martin presented the graph as below to show the action areas and actors network for financing development. He emphasized that domestic resource mobilization is central to the agenda as well as aligning private investment with sustainable development, along with public policies and regulatory frameworks to set the right incentives.

<sup>1</sup> Annual Report 2015: Making Finance Work for The Poor, UNCDF 2016.



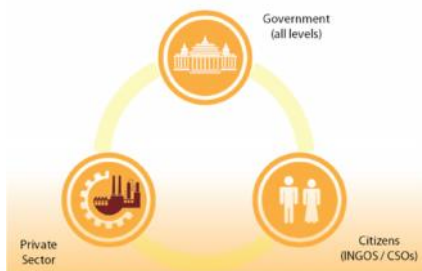
The Action Areas for Financing Development, UNCDF

From the UNCDF's perspective, blended finance is used as an instrument to look for funds from domestic public financing resources, private investment, effective ODA as well as regional financing resources.



Blended Finance

Besides, the tripartite partnership with all levels of government agencies, private sector, and citizens, NGOs, and/or community social organizations (CSOs) has been developed to implement UNCDF's initiative programs.



Tripartite Partnerships

Furthermore, Mr. Martin mentioned the issues of SMEs and financing model development and role of UNCDF. The picture as below illustrated the bottleneck between supply

side and demand side for finance. The bottleneck is just where UNCDF is working on so as to make finance flowing.



Issues of Financing

In the last part of the presentation, Mr. Martin introduced two typical solutions which UNCDF has been applying in its programs to implement the agenda for financing and SMEs development in LDCs. One solution was designed for modeling startups, while another for SME upgrades. Both solutions follow the step-by-step strategy to de-risk obstacles faced by SMEs along the entire process.



Solutions one - Modeling Start Ups



Solutions two - Modeling Upgrade

To further demonstrate how the solutions work in reality, Mr. Martin shared some good models under Clean Start financing program implemented by UNCDF in Cambodia.



First case introduced a Singaporean registered energy start-up -Sun-eee Pte Ltd. - installing Electrical Supply Systems in rural Cambodia. It seeks to bring greater energy access to the rural poor while tackling the environmental problem for relying on cheap diesel fuel. Applying to solution one with six steps, on one hand, UNCDF is trying to link financial institutions, including micro-financing institutions or formal finance service providers, to consumer via SMEs so as to support SMEs to create market-needed products. As a result, domestic finance and formal domestic savings has been unlocked and joined with UNCDF to form challenge fund up to USD one million to invest in Cambodia's energy sector while bringing benefits to the poor. On the other hand, in the whole process, UNCDF also assisted SMEs to make identifiable, affordable, and serviceable products to meet the market needs and requirements.

Second and third cases apply solution two to scale up SMEs and diversify businesses with innovated products, e.g. the solar power solution is being introduced to rural areas and traditional cooking stoves are being replaced by Hydrologic's High Efficiency Stove. Once complete the five steps process, scaled-up SMEs will be more likely to integrate into regional production networks.

At the end, Mr. Martin emphasized the regional SMEs incubation opportunities. He shared the Myanmar – Myawaddy Industrial Zone project, where UNCDF works with government and private sector to blend the finance into a so-called invest company or regional development company to provide incubators for startups financial services or capital.

#### Topic IV: Supply Chain Finance Mechanism for SMEs Integration into Global Value Chain



##### **Mr. Govindasamy Sampath Kumar**

General Manager and Regional Head  
Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI), India

Following Mr. Martin's presentation, Mr. Kumar presented the focus on SMEs and financial services development. He took the perspective of supply chain to introduce the finance mechanism for SME integrate into global value chain.

Prior going to the concept of Supply Chain Finance, he firstly led participants to have clearer understanding on the definition of supply chain, value chain, and global value chain, as well as the importance of GVC and the needs for SMEs to integrate into GVC.

##### **Supply Chain Finance**

As the importance of SMEs to GVC has been well understood, however, most of SMEs face great challenges in many aspects, of which access to finance is one of the biggest. The first step to conquer the challenge is to understand the supply chain for finance and its key players.

Supply chain finance is a new financing mode tailored specially for SMEs by financial institutions. The financial institutions develop synthesis credit for SMEs from the supply chain angle and transforms risk

management aimed at single enterprise to risk management of the whole supply chain.

Supply chain finance breaks the bank's traditional operational model of inspecting a particular enterprise's static state credit, and considers the upstream to downstream enterprises as a whole to design effective financing plan according to the chain relationship formed in the transaction and industrial characters. The supply chain finance can not only solve SME's capital problem, but also promote the competitive power of the entire supply chain.



Supply Chain Finance Mechanism

Various supply chain financing solutions have been designed to support SMEs. Benefits of Supply Chain Finance (SCF) include:

- Short-term credit facility that optimizes working capital for both the buyers and the sellers;
- Connection of the different links in the chain of a transaction, such as the financial institution, the seller, the buyer, which brings them together and helps in lowering financing costs and thus enhancing the business efficiency;
- Ensures business continuity seamlessly by avoiding bottlenecks in working capital needs at both ends;
- Mitigates risk for all players that are part of the supply chain;
- Optimize the cash flow by letting businesses to stretch the payment owed to their suppliers, while ensuring that suppliers get paid early;
- Purchaser's working capital is made better use off and the extra cash the supplier generates, can be used for further investment;

- Uses a technology platform that automates transactions and tracks the entire process, right from invoice approval to the settlement process.

In order to be benefitted from the above, policy changes should be made to speed up and regulate international financial transaction procedure, improve information access, allocate resources from public and private sources, develop complimentary sources of debt financing such as private equity, venture capital, risk capital etc., create incentives for institutional investors, and promote cross-border venture capital investments.

For SMEs, they need to understand the finance options by attending capacity building programs provided by banks, government and financial service providers. To be more specific, SMEs could access finance through various ways, including banks; risk capital and venture capital / private equity; SME exchange, export Lines of credit, hedging Instruments; credit guarantee schemes; cluster financing; micro finance and securitization.

## ❖ Questions and Answers

**Q:** What are the opportunities and challenges for SMEs and SME clusters when developing a SEZ?

**A:** The purpose of SEZ is to attract FDI with lower taxation for the participated business so as to increase trade, investment and employment. Domestic SMEs should see the SEZ as the bridge to sub-contract with the industry of SEZ, and then integrate into the regional production networks and value chains.

**Q:** Is there any feasibility study to look into how each province will benefit from the SEC development?

**A:** As part of the SEC project, MI has conducted one study on market and value chain mapping to identify the bottlenecks and advantages of each province. Certain SME clusters have also been identified in each province. MI is also now preparing a baseline study to set up the performance indicators of SMEs and BDS. The study results will be shared by the end of the year.

**Q:** In UNCDF presentation, we came to know about blended finance and tri-partite partnership between government, private sector (usually large organization who is able to invest) and development partners/ NGOs/ CBOs joining hands in investment. In these models, how to guarantee the development inclusivity with private sector, especially in SMEs' participation?

**A:** In terms of inclusivity, in the case of Africa and Myanmar, the UNCDF cooperates with government, project developer (usually private sector) and citizen's council to establish an investment company, which is capitalized by UNCDF and go to the market for loan. UNCDF could work directly with private sector to guarantee SMEs to access commercial loans. Besides, UNCDF also guide SMEs to identify the interests of ODA so as to access the source of finance.

## 5. SESSION III: REALIZING IMPORTANCE OF SEC IN THE CONTEXT OF REGIONAL AND GLOBAL PRODUCTION NETWORKS



**Mr. Daisuke Matsushima**  
Professor  
Nagasaki University  
Japan

### Dawei project and Southern Economic Corridor (SEC) Development

In his well-thought out and interestingly delivered presentation, Mr. Daisuke Matsushima illustrated the emerging production network comprising Japan, Korea, China, India, ASEAN and Mekong countries. He believed that as ASEAN and GMS becoming the center of the regional production network building, clusters linkages is getting more and more important for regional economic cooperation and integration, since clusters linkage would encourage the complementary relations rather than competitive relations between industries crossing borders in this region.

As the important nod to the SEC, the development of Dawei deep-sea port and special economic zone (SEZ) project will significantly facilitate the linkage of the Mekong region with its eastern market (Japan, Korean and China region) and western market (India and Middle East region). Through the Dawei project, more job opportunities will be created to attract the returning of Myanmar labors, as well as freer flow of skilled labors, to develop local

businesses and stimulate the construction of infrastructure. Dawei project is expected to not only bring the robust growth to Myanmar's economy with up to 11% of GDP contribution, but also an inclusive and sustainable development model.

By foreseeing the vital potentials of Dawei project, Japan joined Thailand and Myanmar in February 2015 to co-develop the Dawei SEZ by providing technical and financial support. The decision of participation was also made according to the emerging challenges and needs of Japan economy.

### **Transnational Innovation Platform – Otagai Forum**

Japan is facing serious challenges of aging society, frequent disasters, and lacking innovation. This results a vast needs for younger labors, stable supply chains and manufacture base and innovation opportunities to recover Japan economy. With this background, when both of domestic and oversea Japanese enterprises suffered a great loss from tsunami and mega flood happened in Japan and Thailand respectively in March and November of 2011, Japan raised a new concept –Otagai, a transnational innovation platform to build cluster-to-cluster business alliances crossing whole region to prevent supply chain disruption caused by any unexpected disasters.

14 Otagai forums have been organized in Japan to build linkages between Japanese enterprises with its counterparts in ASEAN countries in the area of technology, tourism, trade and finance. Through the Otagai forum, Japan highlighted its core competencies on timely Japanese logistics system, high technology for environment and energy conservation and Japanese style of project management for safety and reliability. As the results, within two years, 51 projects have been set up between Japan and ASEAN countries. The following potential

business sectors have also been identified in the Otagai forum:

- Upgrading food processing industries of agro-based countries by applying Japanese high technology;
- Upgrading the supporting industries of ASEAN production bases by linking machinery clusters between upstream and downstream;
- Combining special metal fabrication (core technology) with ASEAN local wisdom;
- Linking sustainable tourism clusters to enhance regional tourism value chain;
- Setting up traditional medicine business alliances to develop new health care market for the inclusive growth.

In order to facilitate building clusters business alliance in this region, the forum has also addressed several policy recommendations for both of ASEAN countries and Japan as blow:

- In collaboration with Japanese local governments, organizing networking conference and workshop both in Japan and ASEAN, e.g. Otagai Forum, to catalyze new industries;
- Conducting a joint study to identify the missing links between ASEAN and Japan, to disseminate Otagai project methods and mechanism to overcome the missing links, to initiate Otagai pilot projects, e.g. development of Asian entrepreneurs, sustainable tourism Cluster linkage and cultivation of consumer market;
- Jointly endorse the policy environment for implementing the Otagai project with incentive mechanism and standardization for new combination toward innovation hub in ASEAN.

### **Proposal for Future SEC Development**

At the end, Mr. Matsushima proposed following strategies to realize aforementioned potentials of SEC.



- **Sustainable Energy Development (SED)**  
Implement demonstrate projects at Dawei to promote sustainable and renewable energy, such as tidal current power generation system, biomass power generation system and energy conservation system.
- **New Industry Development (NID)**  
Develop new fisheries, rubber and agro-based industries, taking good use of local materials with new technology.
- **Human Resource Development (HRD)**  
Enhancing HRD by conducting joint courses between Dawei University and Japanese universities; donating desktop computers for IT education.

## ❖ Questions and Answers

**Q:** Although Japan, Myanmar and Thailand governments have agreed to co-develop Dawei, in the past two years, the development progress was very slow. Who will invest Dawei project at this moment?

**A:** Giant private companies from Japan have showed great interests to invest in Dawei, but political stability is the main concern of Japanese investors. The solution could initiate the small business matching and investment at grass-root level through Otagai forum and invest step by step.

**Q:** What environmental and social impacts will be caused by the SEC development? How do you think of the economic development and environment conservation?

**A:** Economic Corridor approach is applied into the SEC development. Through the model of Otagai, Japan could share its advanced environment-friendly technology and project management to contribute to the sustainable development at Dawei and SEC in a long term.

**Q:** In Dawei project, how Japanese government will assist the cross border infrastructure and regional industry growth? As you mentioned the tsunami and flood in 2011, is there any risk mitigation tools have been put in place for financial sector?

**A:** During the mega flood in Thailand in 2011, Japanese government set up the back-up system to call for support from banks, and supply assistant from competitors of the affected companies. However, due to competition, it won't really as effective as the Otagai, the business continuity mechanism, which provides mutual and timely supply chain assistant from sister clusters crossing the region.

As for the financial sector, insurance company and banks has been introduced in the cycle of business risk management and Otagai mechanism. Besides, the 10th Otagai forum has also introduced transnational supply chain financing between big enterprise and its contracted suppliers in the region to secure the stable supply chain assistant in any circumstance.

## 6. CONCLUDING SESSION

Dr. Watcharas Leelawath, Executive Director of Mekong Institute, concluded the seminar with the brief summary of the outputs. He congratulated ASEAN, especially the CMTV countries for its achievements to realize the goal of AEC for 2015, and also complimented the contribution of GMS for enhancing the regional physical and non-physical connectivity through economic corridors initiatives.

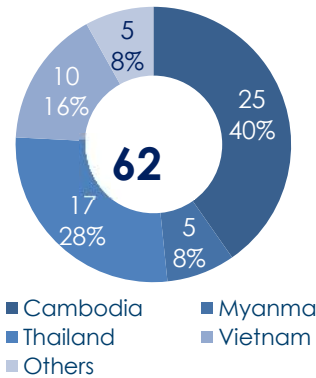
Nevertheless, as the regional integration process is still going on, he called for deeper cooperation and commitments from AMS and GMS countries to implement the strategic measures under AEC Blueprint 2025 and GMS strategic frameworks 2011-2022. He encouraged development partners of ASEAN and GMS to share good practices, updated technologies through investment to enhance the regional economic development in a sustainable way so as to benefit from a win-win model. He has also promised that MI will continually act the intermediary role to create linkages between international, regional, national and local levels of stakeholders including governments, public and private sectors, and development partners, gathering all the resources to facilitate cross border trade and investment and development of SMEs via policy dialogue, capacity building trainings, researches and trade promotion networking.

At last, he expressed sincere appreciation to the speakers and participants for sharing their valuable thoughts and experience on AEC and GMS regional economic cooperation, development and integration.

## APPENDICES

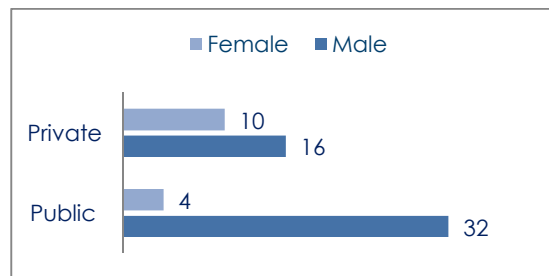
### APPENDIX 1: SEMINAR EVALUATION

#### Composition of Participants



Participant's composition (by Country)

A total of 62 participants including regional speakers, delegates of CMVT countries and participants from 19 provinces of SEC attended the regional seminar, of which 25 (40%) from the Cambodia, 5 (8%) from Myanmar, 17 (28%) from Thailand, 10 (16%) from Vietnam and 5 (8%) from other countries.



Participant's composition (by sector and gender)

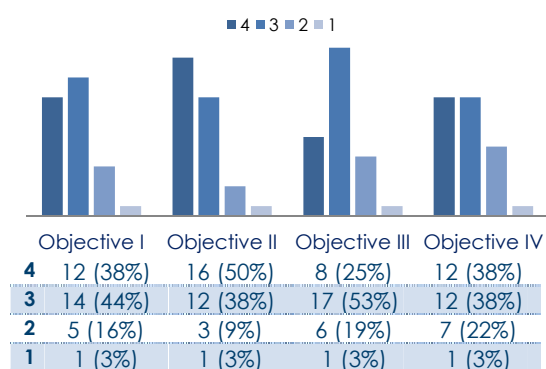
26 participants (42% of total 62) are from private sectors representing members or representatives of Chamber of Commerce and business associations from four countries along SEC. 36 (58%) participants are representing public sectors including trade related governmental agencies, research institutions and international and regional organizations. 14 participants are female which accounted for 23% of total 62 participants. Female participation rate is

much higher in private sector standing at 70% in comparison with public sector.

### Results of Evaluation Questionnaire

In order to reflect the effectiveness of the seminar, an evaluation questionnaire was prepared and circulated among the participants. Out of total of 62 participants, 32 filled out the evaluation questionnaires. The evaluation results, comments and suggestions are listed as below:

#### 1) How well did the Seminar meet its objectives?



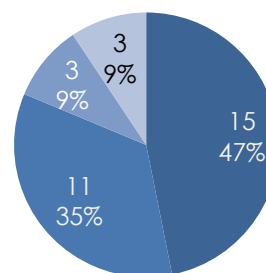
**Note:** A scale from 1 to 4 was given to measure how the seminar met the four objectives: Fully Met (4), Partially Met (3), Met (2) and Not Met (1).

97% of participants believed that the seminar has met the four objectives as below:

- **Objective I:** to discuss the significance and impact of AEC and implementation progress as envisaged in the AEC Blueprint 2025;
- **Objective II:** to update and share information on regional trade, cross-border trade, trade facilitation, small and medium-sized enterprises (SME) development and financing, and others relevant issues in the integration process;
- **Objective III:** to increase comprehensive awareness of AEC for the government officials and related stakeholders from private sectors of CMTV, development practitioners, and concerned stakeholders;

- **Objective IV:** to serve as an interactive platform for the project stakeholders to exchange innovative ideas and information that facilitates the development of SEC through enhancing competitiveness of SMEs;

#### 2) How the knowledge gained from the event is relevant to work?



- Most relevant (4)
- Moderately relevant (3)
- Slightly relevant (2)
- Not relevant (1)

97% of participants believed that the knowledge gained from the event is relevant to their work. In particular, 47% of participants considered most relevant.

#### 3) What did you like about the seminar?

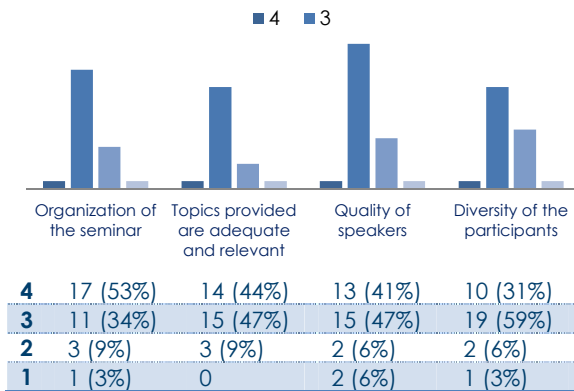
1	Seminar Topics and Discussion Sessions	30 (94%)
2	Staff from Mekong Institute	22 (69%)
3	Venue of the Seminar & Atmosphere	16 (50%)
4	Time Management	15 (47%)
5	Accommodations	15 (47%)
6	Food & Beverages	14 (44%)
7	Dinner Reception	8 (25%)
8	Others, Please Explain Below:	1 (3%)

Above multi indicators were given to participants to measure the level of satisfaction. The top satisfaction refers to the seminar topics and discussion sessions followed with the support from MI staff.

#### 4) Effectiveness of the Seminar

The indicators were given to measure the effectiveness of seminar, such as level of organization, adequacy and relevance of

topics provided, quality of speakers and diversity of the participants.



**Note:** Fully Effective (4); Partially Effective (3); Effective(2); Not Effective (1)

### 5) Suggested topics/ activities for future events.

#### Suggested Topics:

- SME development stakeholders mapping and their actual needs;
- Market development approach for sustainable development of SMEs along the SEC;
- Cluster linkages and clusters related development for MSMEs;
- More detail on SME competitiveness;
- Economic crisis and growth in ASEAN;
- Value/ supply chain in the region;
- Logistics development;
- More specific financing sources and models for SME

#### Suggested activities:

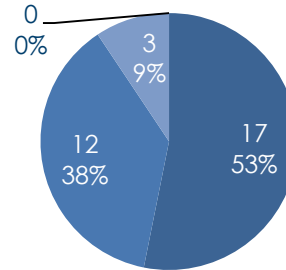
- SME linkage initiative
- Training, survey and seminar
- Field study

#### Comments:

- The presentations were too long and they tried to cover too many contents which leave very little opportunities to discuss and exchange innovative ideas;
- The seminar has raised basic issues for developing AEC in general, however, the next time should focus on specific issues from realistic cooperation between local project;

- Very useful update on current and planned activities in GMS;
- Invite more speakers in the future who are professionals, specialist from consultation organizations, universities, research centers and others.

### 6) Overall assessment for this regional seminar program



■ Very satisfied (4)      ■ Neutrally satisfied (3)  
 ■ Satisfied (2)            ■ Not Satisfied (1)

At last, the participants highly complimented the regional seminar with 100% of satisfaction.



## APPENDIX 2: PROGRAM SCHEDULE AND AGENDA

# DAY ONE

September 19, 2016

REGIONAL SEMINAR ON

### ASEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY (AEC) SHARING PERSPECTIVE, KNOWLEDGE and EXPERIENCE

KhonKaen, Thailand

08:30 - 09:00	Registration
09:00 - 09:15	<b>Welcome Remarks</b> Dr. Watcharas Leelawath, Executive Director, MI
09:15 - 09:30	<b>Opening Remarks</b> Mr. Daisuke Hiratsuka, President, Bangkok Research Center (BRC), IDE - JETRO
09:30 - 09:45	<b>Keynote Speech</b> H.E. Sok Siphana, Advisor to the Royal Government of Cambodia
09:45 - 10:00	Group Photo, Coffee Break, and Networking
10:00 - 10:30	<b>Session I: ASEAN Economic Community Blueprint 2025</b> Keynote presentation: Dr. Watcharas Leelawath, Executive Director, MI
	<b>Panel Discussion I: AEC Blueprint 2025 – Reflections from Cambodia, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam (CMTV)</b>
	Moderator: Dr. Watcharas Leelawath, Executive Director, MI
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cambodia: Mr. Suon Vichea, Director, Trade Training and Research Institute, Ministry of Commerce</li> </ul>
10:30 - 12:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vietnam: Ms. Nguyen Thi Phuong NGA, Ministry of Industry and Trade</li> <li>• Thailand: Mr. Vitat Vajropala, Director, Bureau of Trade Capacity Enhancement, Department of Trade Negotiations, Ministry of Commerce</li> <li>• Myanmar: Mr. Aung Kyi Soe, Joint Secretary General, Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI)</li> </ul>
12:00 - 13:30	Lunch
	<b>Session II: Cross-Border Trade and Trade Facilitation in SEC</b>
13:30 - 14:00	Keynote Presentation: Ms. Kanya S. Sasradipoera, Senior Trade Specialist, Southeast Asia Department, Asian Development Bank (ADB) Thailand Resident Mission
14:00 - 14:15	Discussion

**Panel Discussion II: SME Development and Financing: Sharing experiences**

Moderator: Mr. Madhurjya Kumar Dutta, Director, TIF

- 14:15 - 15:45

  - **Opportunities and Challenges for SMEs in the context of ASEAN economic integration**  
 By Dr. Jean Pierre A. Verbiest, Policy Advisor, Mekong Institute
  - **Dynamics of ASEAN-India Relations with Special Reference to India's North East**  
 By Mr. Bhaskar Jyoti Mahanta, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Heavy Industry and Public Enterprises, Government of India
  - **New Approaches to SME and Entrepreneurship Financing in ASEAN**  
 By Mr. Paul Martin, Regional Technical Advisor – Asia / Pacific, United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF)
  - **Supply Chain Finance Mechanism for SMEs Integration into Global Value Chain**  
 By Mr. Govinda samy Sampath Kumar, General Manager and Regional Head, Small Industries Development Bank of India(SIDBI), India

15:45 – 16:00	Discussion
16:00 - 16:15	Coffee Break and Networking
16:15 - 16:45	<p><b>Session III: Realizing importance of SEC in the context of regional and global production networks</b>                      Mr. Daisuke Matsushima, Professor, Nagasaki University, Japan</p>
16:45 – 17:00	Discussion and Closing Remarks
17:00 – 17:30	Seminar Evaluation

## APPENDIX 3: SPEAKERS AND MODERATORS PROFILES

### Mr. Daisuke Hiratsuka

President

Bangkok Research Center (BRC),

Bangkok Institute of Developing Economies - Japan External Trade Organization (IDE-JETRO), Thailand



Mr. Daisuke Hiratsuka has served as President of Bangkok Research Center (BRC), IDE- JETRO since December 2015.

Mr. Daisuke Hiratsuka was the Executive Vice President of JETRO, in charge of relation with the Southeast Asia and the Oceania regions, as well as in charge of the Institute of Developing Economies (IDE) - JETRO during the period 2012 – 2015.

Mr. Daisuke Hiratsuka joined to IDE starting academic career there in 1979. He also worked as the Visiting Professor, Faculty of Law, Politics, and Economics, Chiba University during 2001-2003, and Visiting Professor, Graduate School of International Relation, Ritsumeikan University during 2006-2009.

Mr. Daisuke Hiratsuka is the author of the three books: (i) East Asia's De Facto Economic Integration (Palgrave Macmillan, 2006); (ii) East Asia's Economic Integration: Progress and Benefit (Palgrave Macmillan, 2008); and (iii) Input Trade and Production Networks in East Asia (Edward Elgar, 2010).

Mr. Daisuke Hiratsuka has also been invited to many high level international conferences: the 2012 UNIDO Round Table, "Asia 2050, the Sustainable Route to Prosperity", in Vienna, Austria; the ESCAP High-level Policy Dialogue and Eleventh Bank of Indonesia Annual International Seminar, on "Macroeconomic Policies for Sustainable Growth with Equity in East Asia ", in Yogyakarta, Indonesia in May 2013; and OECD Forum, "Trade in Value Added: The World Factory," in Paris France, in June 2013.

## H.E. SokSiphana, J.D., Ph.D.

Advisor to the Royal Government of Cambodia

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Dr. SokSiphana has served as a practicing attorney and the Managing Partner at SokSiphana & associates, a law and consulting firm specialized in international trade, corporate and banking law in Phnom Penh since 2009. Deeply passionate for the development of his country, he has dedicated a large amount of time to serve as the Chairman of the Board of Cambodia Development Resource Institute (CDRI), Cambodia's oldest and prominent independent research institute since 2011. He was appointed by Prime Minister Samdech Decho Hun Sen to hold the current position as Advisor of the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC), as Advisor to the Supreme National Economic Council (SNEC), and as Advisor to the Council for Development of Cambodia (CDC) with rank of Minister in August 2009 and November 2011 respectively.

Since Cambodia's ASEAN Chairmanship in 2012 Dr. Sok was attached to H.E. Hor Namhong, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs where he served, among other advisory functions: as Member of the ASEAN Task Force on Substantive Issues; ASEAN India Eminent Person Group Co-Chair; Eminent Person for the Lower Mekong Initiative; ASEAN Cambodian Sherpa to G20 and High Level Cambodian Representative to G20 Development Working Group; Cambodia Representative to the High Level Task Force to Strengthen the ASEAN Secretariat and Related Organs. SOM for the Mekong Japan; Mekong ROK; Mekong Lancang; Mekong Ganga Cooperation. Aside from ASEAN matters in general, he advises the Royal Government and assist in the preparation of the following Foreign Ministers Meeting and Summit portfolios: Asia Europe (ASEM); Francophonie; and Mekong cooperation with Japan, ROK, China, India (Mekong Ganga), US (LMI and FLM).

Previously, from 1999 to 2005, Dr. Sok served as Secretary of State (Vice Minister) at the Ministry of Commerce, where he worked extensively on issues related to trade policies and development, commercial legal framework and economic integration. During his service at the Ministry, he was also a negotiator in Cambodia's accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO). From October 2005 to July 2009 he served as Director at the International Trade Center (ITC) a joint technical agency of the UNCTAD and the WTO in Geneva, Switzerland.



## Dr. WatcharasLeelawath

Executive Director  
Mekong Institute (MI)

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Dr. Watcharas Leelawath is the Executive Director of Mekong Institute (MI). Prior to joining MI, he was the Deputy Executive Director of the International Institute for Trade and Development (ITD) in-charge of planning, supervising and conducting research projects, training programs and various capacity building activities.

Dr. Leelawath earned his undergraduate degree from Chulalongkorn University and his MA and Ph.D. in Economics from the University of Kansas, USA. Right after obtaining his Ph.D., he worked as Assistant Professor of Economics at the University of Minnesota, Morris, USA where he taught International Economics and Mathematics for Economists.

Dr. Leelawath is a trade economist with a strong interest in trade and development cooperation issues under GMS and ASEAN frameworks. He has extensive research experience in the fields of International Labor Migration, Regional Economic Integration. He has written several papers for presentation in local and international conferences, has published several articles on trade related topics and has co-authored a book entitled "Economics and Trade in Goods: An Introduction." He provided his expertise in a number of capacity building activities organized by ITD, ADB, UNESCAP, WTO and Thailand International Cooperation Agency (TICA).

## Mr. SuonVichea

Director  
Trade Training and Research Institute  
Ministry of Commerce  
Cambodia



Mr. Suon Vichea is now the Director of Trade Training and Research Institute (TTRI), Ministry of Commerce, Cambodia.

Mr. Suon Vichea has 11-year experience in teaching at different universities in Cambodia in subject of Intellectual Property Law; Economics, Macroeconomics; Microeconomics, International Economics, International Business, Management, Marketing, Organization Behavior, Business Finance, Financial Management and Financial Institution.

Mr. Suon Vichea with progressive working experience of "15 years" at Intellectual Property Department, directly engaged in International Cooperation and Legal Affairs for two years with responsibility for cooperation inside and outside country with concerned institution, international organizations and other countries on Intellectual Property Affairs and coordination to promote and monitor the implementation of all Intellectual obligations committed by Cambodia during the accession to the WTO. Examine the Cambodian obligation on Intellectual Property through promotion of drafting laws related to the implementation of the agreements in which Cambodia is a contracting party, and coordinates to conduct study research on treaties, conventions, and any agreements administered by WIPO and WTO in order to determine its effects and benefit prior to the accession of Cambodia as a member, and cooperate with concerned institution to receive Technical Assistance of International Communities and International Organization.

He earned LLM (Master) in Intellectual Property from WIPO-ITC-Turin University in Italy; Postgraduate Diploma in Economic Development from IDE-JETRO in Japan; MBA in International Business from UTCC in Thailand; MBA from Norton University incorporation with Ateneo de Manila University; Bachelor of Business Administration from Royal University in Cambodia; and Associate Degree on Business from National Institute of Business. Also, he obtained many certificates from various countries.

## Mr. AungKyisoë

Joint Secretary General

Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI), Myanmar

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Mr. AungKyisoë is the Joint Secretary General of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI), Myanmar, meanwhile he is also the Managing Director of Eastern Wealth Trading Co.,Ltd., Aung Shwe Thee Company and Myanmar Liquefied Petroleum Gas Group.

The UMFCCI stands as a non-government Apex Organization (NGO) representing and safeguarding the interests of the private business sector. UMFCCI is also acting as a bridge between the state and the private sector. Under the umbrella of UMFCCI, there are eight State Chambers, eight Regional Chambers, nine Border trade Associations and 47 trade associations.

Eastern Wealth Trading Co., Ltd was established in 1997 in Myanmar. The main business of the company is production of Oxygen and Nitrogen gas. The company owned three factories, two of which located in Yangon and one in Mandalay. Aung Shwe Thee Company was established in 2009 and deal with construction and development of condominiums, industrial park and other construction works. Myanmar Liquefied Petroleum Gas Group mainly focuses on importing petroleum and distributing locally since 2012.

## Ms. Nguyen Thi Phuong Nga

Ministry of Industry and Trade  
Vietnam



Ms. Nguyen Thi Phuong Nga is currently the Deputy Director of ASEAN Division, Asia – Pacific Market Department, Ministry of Industry and Trade of Viet Nam. Before taking the current management role, Ms. Nga served as an official at Asia – Pacific Market Department, MOIT for the period 2011 – 2014. Before joining MOIT, Ms. Nga worked in the private sector.

Ms. Nguyen Thi Phuong Nga earned Master of Business and Administration (MBA), Solvay Business School, the Université libre de Bruxelles, Belgium (2013), and Master of Art, Sunderland University, United Kingdom (2009).

## Mr. VitatVajropala

Director

Bureau of Trade Capacity Enhancement, Department of Trade  
Negotiations

Ministry of Commerce

Thailand

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Mr. Vitat Vajropala is currently the Executive Director of Bureau of Trade Capacity Enhancement Department of Trade Negotiations Ministry of Commerce, Thailand (2015 – present).

Before taking the role of an Executive Director at the Bureau of Trade Capacity Enhancement Department, Mr. Vitat Vajropala handled various important tasks as Chief of AEC Information Center Section (2013 – 2015); Director ASEAN Bilateral Cooperation Division (2010 – 2013); Division Director of CIS and Balkan States Cooperation Division (2007 – 2010), Senior Trade Analyst of the Bureau of East Asia Department of Trade Negotiations (2005 – 2007); and Economist of the Bureau of Trade Policy, Department of Business Economics (1998 -2005).

Mr. Vitat Vajropala has sound experience in (i) Market Access Group, APEC; (ii) FTA Thailand – Australia, Joint Feasibility Study; (iii) FTA ASEAN-CHINA; (iv) Thailand – Russia Bilateral Negotiations under the process of Russian Accession to WTO; and ASEAN Harmonized Tariff Nomenclature Task Force

Mr. Vitat Vajropala earned Master of Applied Finance, The University of Melbourne (1997), Master of Science in Business Economics at the National Institute of Development Administration (1993); and Bachelor of Economics at Thammasat University (1989)



## Ms. Kanya S. Sasradipoera

Senior Trade Specialist  
Southeast Asia Department  
Asian Development Bank (ADB) – Thailand Resident Mission



Ms. Kanya Satyati is the Senior Trade Specialist for the Southeast Asia Department of the Asian Development Bank (ADB). She joined the ADB in 2009 as Regional Cooperation Specialist for the Central Asia Regional Cooperation (CAREC), and subsequently transferred to Southeast Asia Department of ADB in 2011 as the focal point of the ADB's cooperation with ASEAN, Brunei Indonesia Malaysia Philippines – East Asian Growth Area (BIMP-EAGA), and Indonesia-Malaysia-Thailand Growth Triangle (IMT-GT). In 2013, she was assigned to be the focal person for ADB's support in Trade and Transport Facilitation programs in Southeast Asia Region.

Prior to joining ADB, Ms. Kanya served at the ASEAN Secretariat in 1996 as the Assistant Programme Officer for Industrial Cooperation for Economic Cooperation Bureau, then moved to management team of the ASEAN-UNDP subregional program on trade and investment in 1999 until 2002. She rejoined the ASEAN Secretariat in 2004 as the Senior Officer for Trade in Goods unit of the Trade and Trade Facilitation Division of the Bureau for Economic Integration, until left to ADB in 2009.

Ms. Kanya earned Bachelor degree in Metallurgical engineering from the University of Indonesia and Master in Public Policy from the National University of Singapore.

## Dr. Jean Pierre A. Verbiest

Honorable Advisor to Mekong Institute Council

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Jean-Pierre A. Verbiest is a senior economist based in Southeast Asia since over 35 years. He holds a MSC in Econometrics from the UniversiteLibre de Bruxelles (ULB, Belgium) and a doctorate in economics from Oxford University (UK). After a short academic career at the Mons campus of the Catholic University of Louvain, he joined the Development Planning Division of the United Nations Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) in Bangkok, Thailand in 1981 as a research economist, moving to the Economic Research Department of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) in Manila, the Philippines, in 1989. He held several senior positions in the ADB including senior programs officer for Pakistan and Afghanistan, Manager, Strategy and Policy Department, Assistant Chief Economist (Macro-economics and Finance) and Country Director in Viet Nam (1996-2000) and in Thailand (2005-2010).

He was a principal consultant (ASEAN 2030 study) for the Asian Development Bank Institute (ADBI, Tokyo) based in Bangkok (2011-2012). In 2013-2014, he was the Lead Economist (consultant) for an ADB Myanmar comprehensive diagnostic study. In 2015-2016, he authored a regional cooperation and integration strategy for ADB in Myanmar. He is Policy Advisor to the Mekong Institute, and a partner in West Indochina Ltd (Myanmar). He teaches international finance in the Vietnam Master Program in Management of Banking and Finance of the Solvay-Brussels School of Economics and Management (together with the National Economics University in Hanoi). Since 2014, he is also a Beachheads Advisor to New Zealand Trade and Enterprise (NZTE). His principal research interests are macroeconomic policies in East and Southeast Asian countries, economic reforms in Myanmar and regional economic and financial cooperation and integration in Asia.

## Mr. Bhaskar Jyoti Mahanta

Joint Secretary  
Ministry of Heavy Industry and Public Enterprises  
Government of India



Mr. Bhaskar Jyoti Mahanta, Joint Secretary to the Ministry of Heavy Industry & Public Enterprises, Government of India is a Member of Indian Federal Police Force. Mr. Mahanta, has held some of the important positions and contributed successfully in experimenting the State response to conflict by introducing measures of rehabilitation of victims of violence which has been recognized widely.

After having joined the Department of Heavy Industry, Mr. Mahanta has been instrumental in pursuing the Government policy in respect of providing necessary fillip to the strategic sectors of the Government controlled Public Sector Enterprises and facilitating Joint ventures and FDI thereof. Several companies under his command are also exploring economic interfacing in Europe as well as South-East Asia. Mr. Mahanta is also a writer and takes keen interest in diverse fields like culture and sports.

Mr. Mahanta is also the Managing Trustee of the non-Governmental Organisation called Srimanta Foundation through which he has been trying to garner popular and State support for renewing ties of India's North-East with South-East Asia. His Organisation is presenting making plans for inter-faith dialogue of the Indigenous communities of India's North-East with Myanmar and beyond.

## Mr. Paul Martin

Regional Technical Advisor – Asia / Pacific  
United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF)

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Mr. Paul Martin joined the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) after working as an international consultant in the fields of governance and local development since 1994. He has throughout international career with a limited number of recognized international agencies and European consultancy companies that include; (1) UNCDF, (2) OSCE, (3) GOPA, (4) IMC, and (5) COWI.

Mr. Paul Martin also has enriched experience in working with national government at senior levels in transition economies (Russia, China) and in the developing economies of the Middle East, Eastern Europe, and Africa. I have also worked in post conflict environments and with LDCs in these areas.

Within the Asia region Mr. Paul Martin has recently spent a considerable amount of time in Cambodia and Myanmar respectively. In the case of the former he was engaged by UNDP and GIZ focusing upon the de-concentration and de-centralization process. In Myanmar, he worked within government institutions (Ministry of Economic Development and National Planning) being engaged by UNDP and the E. In this role he facilitated in partnership with ABD the long term national plan and contributive regional development plan inclusive of growth projections, investment requirements, and strategic policy. Both plans are developed as pro-growth strategies that articulate structural transformation.

## Mr. Govindasamy Sampath Kumar

General Manager and Regional Head  
Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI), India



Mr. Sampath Kumar has over 24 years of extensive experience in Development Banking encompassing refinance, project appraisal, venture capital, Infrastructure finance, forex, business development, NPA management, promotional and developmental activities, micro finance, resources management and asset reconstruction areas. Currently, he is associated with Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI), Hyderabad, India, a premier All India Financial Institution for Small and Medium Enterprises, as General Manager. He completed the deputation to India SME Asset Reconstruction Limited as Chief Financial Officer.

Mr. Sampath Kumar also takes the role of a lecturer on SIDBI in promotion of MSMEs in various Banker Zonal Training Centres, different meetings organised by MSME, Govt of India, different state level meetings, seminars, workshops etc. Besides, delivered lectures and made presentations on the role of SIDBI in Microcredit and disseminating the importance of role played by Micro enterprises in the economy in various fora such as workshops organised by Micro Finance Institutions, MFI seminars, etc.

Mr. Sampath Kumar is the Director on the Boards of (i) Andhra Pradesh State Financial Corporation (APSFC); (ii) Telangana State Financial Corporation (TSFC); (iii) Andhra Pradesh Industrial Technical Consultancy Organisation (APITCO), (iv) Future Financial Services Pvt. Ltd (FFSL), (v) HITVEL Fund and Cyberabad Fund (Chairman of both the Funds); (vi) Member of Subcommittee formed for MSMEs by Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh; (vii) Member of SLIC for MSMEs, RBI Empowered Committee on MSMEs, Committee on PMEGP of Telangana State; and (viii) nominee director in MPFC (MP State Finance Corporation) and MPCON (Madhya Pradesh Consultancy Organisation) while posted at Bhopal.

Mr. Sampath Kumar studied MBA program in Finance at Punjab Technical, India, and attended other training courses on (i) Teaching Assistantship in St. John's University, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, Utopia Parkways, Jamaica, New York, USA; (ii) PGDFM (Post Graduate Diploma in Financial Management) from Annamalai University, India; (iii) PGDBA (Post Graduate Diploma in Business Administration) from Annamalai University, India; (iv) PGDCA (Post Graduate Diploma in Computer Applications) from Bharathiar University, India



## Mr. Daisuke Matsushima

Professor  
Nagasaki University  
Japan

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Professor Daisuke Matsushima is now the Policy Advisor to Mekong Institute. Besides, he served as a professor at Nagasaki University (2015 – Present); Vice President of Otagai Forum Association (2014 – Present); Advisor for Ministry of Industry of Thailand (2015 – Present). He used to work as the Policy Advisor to the Government of the Kingdom of Thailand at the National Economic and Social Development Board during the period 2011–2015. Earlier, Professor Daisuke Matsushima worked for Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI), Japanese Government (Previously the Ministry of International Trade and Industry, MITI), 1998 – 2015.

Professor Daisuke Matsushima earned Master degree at Harvard University, USA (with Scholarship for Officials provided by the Personnel Office of the Government of Japan); was awarded "Special Thesis Award" from University of Tokyo September 2003 – June 2005; and obtained BBA degree at University of Tokyo Tokyo, Japan.

In addition, Professor Daisuke Matsushima was the First Truck Candidate for Senior Officer in the Central Government of Japan, 1997

## Mr. Madhurjya Kumar Dutta

Director  
Trade and Investment Facilitation  
Mekong Institute  
Thailand

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Mr. Madhurjya Kumar Dutta is currently the Director of Trade & Investment Facilitation at Mekong Institute (MI). Prior to joining MI, he served as Research Director of Economic Institute of Cambodia (EIC) and Adviser of Cambodia India Entrepreneurship Development Institute (a bilateral project of Governments of India and Cambodia). Mr. Dutta has also been recently conferred as the Honorary Advisor to the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training, Cambodia through a royal degree by the Prime Minister and the King of the Kingdom of Cambodia.

Mr. Dutta has over 20 years of experience in private sector development in South Asian and South East Asian countries. His key areas of interest are entrepreneurship, SME development and trade facilitation. He has designed and implemented several multilateral capacity development projects on SME and Trade Facilitation in the GMS including the 'Private Sector Development in the East West Economic Corridor (EWEC)' and 'SME Competitiveness in Southern Economic Corridor' (SEC) funded by Japan; Trade Facilitation Project in the North South Economic Corridor (NSEC)' funded by China; 'Integration of CLMV Economies into AEC' funded by New Zealand, Certified Logistic Master Program funded by Republic of Korea among others.

He has also provided consultancy to various agencies - UNESCAP, ADB, World Bank, GIZ, UNDP, IFC, ILO, USAID, IFAD, OXFAM, World Vision, Chemonics International etc. on SME policy development, value chain, tourism, investment feasibility, green business, private sector innovations etc.

Mr. Dutta earned his Master Degree from Delhi School of Economics, University of Delhi and an additional Master of Science in Regional Development Planning and Management from Technical University of Dortmund, Germany. He also holds an advanced diploma in regional development planning.

## APPENDIX 4: DIRECTORY OF PARTICIPANTS

## Speakers and Moderators (14)

NAME	ORGANIZATION & ADDRESS	CONTACTS
<b>Mr. Daisuke Hiratsuka</b> President	Bangkok Research Center (BRC) JETRO – IDE  16th Fl., Nantawan Building, 161 Rajdamri Road, Patumwan, Bangkok, 10330, Thailand	Tel: +66 2 253 6441 (ext. 142) E-mail: <a href="mailto:daisuke_hiratsuka@jetro.go.jp">daisuke_hiratsuka@jetro.go.jp</a>
<b>H.E. Dr. Sok Siphana</b> Advisor	Advisor to the Royal Government of Cambodia  C/O 9 – 13, St.7, Sangkat Chaktomuk Khan Doun Penh, Phnom Penh, Cambodia	E-mail: <a href="mailto:soksiphana@yahoo.com">soksiphana@yahoo.com</a>
<b>Dr. Watcharas Leelawath</b> Executive Director	Mekong Institute  123 Mittraphap Rd., Muang District, Khon Kaen 40002, Thailand	Tel: + 66 (0) 43-202-411-2 (ext. 4151) E-mail: <a href="mailto:watcharas@mekonginstitute.org">watcharas@mekonginstitute.org</a>
<b>Mr. Vichea Suon</b> Director	Trade Training and Research Institute (TTRI), Ministry of Commerce of Cambodia  No.65, 67, 69, Street 136 Sangkat Phsar Kandal, Khan Daun Penh, Phnom Penh, Cambodia	Tel: +855 12 880 384 +855 15 804 111 E-mail: <a href="mailto:vicheasuon@yahoo.com">vicheasuon@yahoo.com</a> <a href="mailto:vicheasuon@gmail.com">vicheasuon@gmail.com</a>
<b>Ms. Nguyen Thi Phuong NGA</b> Deputy Director	ASEAN Division Asia - Pacific Market Department Ministry of Industry and Trade  54 Hai Ba Trung Street, Hoan Kiem District, Ha Noi, Vietnam	Tel: +84 4 2220 5430 E-mail: <a href="mailto:ngangtp@moit.gov.vn">ngangtp@moit.gov.vn</a>
<b>Mr. Vitat Vajropala</b> Director	Bureau of Trade Capacity Enhancement, Department of Trade Negotiations, Ministry of Commerce  44 / 100, Nonthaburi 1, Amphoe Muang, Nonthaburi, 11000, Thailand	Tel: +66 2 507 7617 +66 92 435 9090 E-mail: <a href="mailto:vitat_v@hotmail.com">vitat_v@hotmail.com</a>
<b>Mr. Aung Kyi Soe</b> Joint Secretary General	Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI)  29, Min Ye Kyaw Swar Street, Lanmadaw Township, Yangon, Myanmar	Tel: +95 9 200 3572 E-mail: <a href="mailto:agkyiisoe@gmail.com">agkyiisoe@gmail.com</a>

<b>Ms. Kanya S. Sasradipoera</b>	Asian Development Bank (ADB) Thailand Resident Mission	Tel: +66 2 263 5300 Fax: +66 2 2635301 to 2 E-mail: <a href="mailto:kanyass@adb.org">kanyass@adb.org</a>
Senior Trade Specialist Southeast Asia Department	23rd Floor, Central World, 999 / 9 Rama 1 Road, Wangmai, Phatumwan, Bangkok, 10330, Thailand	
<b>Mr. Madhuriya Kumar Dutta</b>	Trade & Investment Facilitation (TIF) Department, Mekong Institute	Tel: +66 (0) 43 202 411-2 (Ext. 4061) Fax: +66 (0) 43 343 131 Email: <a href="mailto:dutta@mekonginstitute.org">dutta@mekonginstitute.org</a>
Director	123, Muang District, Khon Kaen Province, 40002, Thailand	
<b>Dr. Jean Pierre A. Verbiest</b>	Ruam Rudee Penthouse, 30/7 Soi Ruam Rudee, Lumpini, Pathumwan, Bangkok 10330, Thailand	Tel: +66 81 7542 399 Email: <a href="mailto:jpverbiest@gmail.com">jpverbiest@gmail.com</a>
Honorary Advisor to MI Council		
<b>Mr. Bhaskar J. Mahanta</b>	Ministry of Heavy Industries & Public Enterprises, Government of India	Tel: +91 2306 3733 E-mail: <a href="mailto:bhaskar.jmahanta@gov.in">bhaskar.jmahanta@gov.in</a>
Joint Secretary	183, Udyog Bhawan, New Delhi, India	
<b>Mr. Paul Martin</b>	United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF)	Tel: +66 2 288 18 29 E-mail: <a href="mailto:paul.martin@uncdf.org">paul.martin@uncdf.org</a>
Regional Technical Advisor	3rd Floor, Service Building, Rajdamnern Nok Avenue, Pra Nakorn, 10200, Thailand	
<b>Mr. Shri G. Sampath Kumar</b>	Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) Hyderabad Regional Office	Tel: +91 40 2323 0903 E-mail: <a href="mailto:gsam@sidbi.in">gsam@sidbi.in</a>
General Manager	101, Hermitage Office Complex, 1st Floor, Saifabad, Hyderabad – 500004, India	
<b>Mr. Daisuke Matsushima</b>	Nagasaki University	Tel: +81 90 7224 0414 E-mail: <a href="mailto:matsushima@otagai.asia">matsushima@otagai.asia</a>
Professor	1-14 Bunkyo-Machi, Nagasaki City, Nagasaki Prefecture, 852-8521, Japan	

## Delegates from CMTV countries (10)

NAME	ORGANIZATION & ADDRESS	CONTACTS
<b>CAMBODIA (3)</b>		
Mr. Bunna Yea Deputy Director General	General Department of SMEs and Handicraft, Ministry of Industry and Handicraft  45 PreahNorodom, Boulevard, SangkatPhsarThmey III, Khan Daun Penh, Phnom Penh, Cambodia.	Tel: +855 12 814 150 E-mail: <a href="mailto:bunnayea@gmail.com">bunnayea@gmail.com</a>
Mr. Chantha Kin Advisor	Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training  #3 Russian Confederation Blvd., Sangkat ToekLaak 1, Khan ToulKok, Phnom Penh, Cambodia.	Tel: +855 12 866 080 E-mail: <a href="mailto:chantha_khin65@yahoo.com">chantha_khin65@yahoo.com</a>
<b>MYANMAR (2)</b>		
Mr. Nay San Deputy Director	Research Development & Technology Extension Department, Department of Trade Promotion, Ministry of Commerce  No (54) building, Room No (24), Khayae Housing, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.	Tel: +95 67 430 139 E-mail: <a href="mailto:naysanpaya@gmail.com">naysanpaya@gmail.com</a>
Mr. Soe Moe Kyaw Deputy Director General	Directorate of Industrial Supervision and Inspection, Ministry of Industry  Office No (30), Zeya Htani Road, Nay Pyi Taw, Union of Myanmar.	Tel: +95 67 408 367 E-mail: <a href="mailto:disiddg@gmail.com">disiddg@gmail.com</a>
<b>THAILAND (3)</b>		
Mr. Apisit Cholsakorn Director	Board of Trade Thailand  150, Rajbopit Road, Pranakhon District, Bangkok 10200, Thailand	Tel: +66 2 018 6888 E-mail: <a href="mailto:cholsakorn.a@hotmail.com">cholsakorn.a@hotmail.com</a>
Mr. Athiwat Pattanachaiyupvanon Member	Border Trade Committee, the Federation of Thai Industries (FTI)  Queen Sirikit National Convention Center, Zone C 4 <sup>th</sup> Floor, 60 New Rachadapisek Rd., Klongtoey, Bangkok, 10110, Thailand.	Tel: +66 2 345 1000 E-mail: <a href="mailto:athiwat888@hotmail.com">athiwat888@hotmail.com</a>
Mr. Chotiwutti Innadda Division Director	Service Standards and Networks Division, Bureau of Industrial Management Development, Department of Industrial Promotion, Ministry of Industry of Thailand.  Rama VI Road, Rachathevi, Bangkok, Thailand.	Tel: +66 2 202 4493 E-mail: <a href="mailto:chotiwutti@innadda.com">chotiwutti@innadda.com</a>
<b>VIETNAM (2)</b>		
Mr. Ta Duc Minh Director	Sub-region Cooperation Division, Asia- Pacific Market Department, Ministry of Industry and Trade  54 Hai Ba Trung Street, HoanKiem District, Ha Noi, Vietnam	E-mail: <a href="mailto:MinhTD@moit.gov.vn">MinhTD@moit.gov.vn</a>



Mr. Nguyen Duong Kien	Southeast Asia Division, Asia-Pacific Market Department, Ministry of Industry and Trade	E-mail: <a href="mailto:KienNGD@moit.gov.vn">KienNGD@moit.gov.vn</a>
Officer	54 Hai Ba Trung Street, HoanKiem District, Ha Noi, Vietnam	

### Participants from 19 Provinces along SEC (53)

NAME	ORGANIZATION & ADDRESS	CONTACTS
<b>CAMBODIA</b>		
<b>Banteay Meanchey (2)</b>		
Ms. Morn Saroeuth General Manager	Khmer Golden Silk Siem Reap, Cambodia	Mobile: +855 17 44 0925 Email: khmergoldensilk@gmail.com
Mr. Seng Sereivath Deputy Officer	Trade Development Provincial Department of Commerce, Banteay Meanchey, Cambodia	Mobile: +855 017 61 5100 Email: sereivathseng@yahoo.com
<b>Battambang (3)</b>		
Mr. Suon Sunlee Own department of Fish Sauce	Ponle Preah Artit Fish Sauce Production Ronelek A.V. Ralanack City, Battambang Province, Cambodia	Mobile: +855 021 363 185
Mr. Tim Bomrong Deputy Chief of Industry Office	Battambang Department of Industry and Handicraft Ministry of Industry and Handicraft Road No.1 Svaypor Commune, Battambang District, Battambang Province, Cambodia	Mobile: +855 092 325773
Ms. Ho Dany Vice President	Battambang Department of Industry and Handicraft Road No.1 Svaypor Commune, Battambang District, Battambang Province, Cambodia	Tel: +855 125 895 45 E-mail: ho.dany18@gmail.com
<b>Pursat (3)</b>		
Mr. Bun Saoratt Chief Officer	Trade Management Office, Pursat Department of Commerce Peal Nhekl Village SangakPhteah Prey, Pursat city, Prusat Province, Cambodia	Mobile: +855 011 698 666 Tel: +855 016 41 0055 Email: bun.saoratt@gmail.com
Mr. KhunSopheap Secretary	Pursat Orange Association Angkrong Village, Samrong Coon, PhnamKraVan District, Pursat Province, Cambodia	Mobile: +855 071 945 5557 Tel: +855 092 558 384 Email: khunsopheapps@gmail.com

Mr. ChheVansoda Director	Pursat Department of Industry and Handicraft  Pursat, Cambodia	E-mail: chhevansoda@gmail.com
<b>Kampong Chhnang (3)</b>		
Mr. Sar Piseth Chief Office	Kampong Chhnang Department of Industry and Handicraft  Kampong Chhnang Province, Cambodia	Mobile: +855 092 192 692 Email: sarpiseth25@yahoo.com
Ms. Yong Sokha President Center	Center of Development Ceramic  Kampong Chhnang Province, Cambodia	Mobile: +855 077 486 108
Mr. Tith Nan Director	Kampong Chhnang Department of Industry and Handicraft  Lor Toektrey Village, Sangkat, Kampong Chhnang, Kampong Chhnang City, Kampong Chhnang Province, Cambodia	Tel: +855 1 688 0607 E-mail: tith.nann@gmail.com
<b>Svay Rieng (3)</b>		
Mr. Samrit Chheung President	Smach Paddy Association  Kampong Ro District, Svay Rieng Province, Cambodia	Mobile: +855 097 903 1301
Mr. Chea Sopheara Finance and Adm Official	Svay Rieng Department of Commerce  Rong Ban Le Village, SvayRiengTowm, Cambodia	Mobile: +855 096 730 3063 Email: sophearasso@gmail.com
Mr. Long Sokhom Director	Svay Rieng Department of Industry and Handicraft  Street 1, Phum Mephleung, Sangkat, Svay Rieng, Svay Rieng City, Svay Rieng Province, Cambodia	Tel: +855 12786009 E-mail: long81kh@gmail.com
<b>Koh Kong (3)</b>		
Mr. Hor Sinourn Staff	Koh Kong Department of Industry and Handicraft  Koh Kong Province, Cambodia	Mobile: +855 081 888 034 Email: sinourn_hor@yahoo.com
Mr. Cheu Li Heang	Cheu Li Heang Import and Export Company	Mobile: +855 088 455 0775 Email: boy.a83@yahoo.com
Mr. Khloem Koky Director	Koh Kong Department of Industry and Handicraft  Koh Kong Province, Cambodia	Tel: +855 1234 1199 E-mail: kokykhlem2013@gmail.com
<b>Preah Sihanouk (3)</b>		
Mr. Chin Samnan President	Dried Shrimp Processing Association  Sihanouk Ville, Cambodia	Mobile: +855 012 866 376/ 097 99 888 10 Email: chinsamnang888@gmail.com

Mr. Phron Rattanak Chief Officer	Preah Sihanouk Department of Industry and Handicraft  Village 1, Songkat 1, Preahsihanouk City, Cambodia	Tel: +855 093/017 288 555 Email: rattanakdolvt@gmail.com
Mr. Vann Sok Heng President	Federation of Associations for Small and Medium Enterprises of Cambodia (Sihanoukville Branch)  Sangkat 2, Sihanoukville, Cambodia	Tel: +855 11340076 E-mail: vann_sokheng@yahoo.com
<b>Kampot (3)</b>		
Mr. Bun Chandara Assistant Manager	Office of Salt Producer Company, Sail Producer Community of Kampot & KEP  One Usakphea Kampong Kamdal, Kampong Bay, Kampot, Cambodia	Tel: +855 017 874 941 Email: bun.chandara@hotmail.com
Mr. Koeng Sonthean Head Officer Office Ambel	Kampot Department of Industry and Handicraft  Khanng Cherng Village, Sangkat Aunding Khmer, Kampot City, Kampot Province, Cambodia	Tel: +855 12 93 8351
Mr. Chhon Chhang Vice President	Chamber of Commerce Kampot  Takeo and Kep, Kep Village, Kep Commune, Kep City, Kep Province, Cambodia	Tel: +855 7195 599 66 E-mail: chhang_chhon@yahoo.com
<b>MYANMAR</b>		
<b>Tanintaryi Region / Dawei (3)</b>		
Mr. Zaw Myo Aung Deputy Director	Department of SMEs Development Tanintharyi Region, Directorate of Industrial Supervision and Inspection (DISI), Ministry of Industry Myanmar  WaiKyun Nyaungyan Block, Eithinar Yone Road, Dawei, Tanintharyi, Myanmar	Tel: +95 59 21146 Mob: +95 9 533 0257 E-mail: zmateza24@gmail.com
Mr. Zaw Thura Executive Member	Tanintharyi / Dawei District Fishery Federation  No(486) Seikkanthar Road, Talinehtain Quarter, Dawei, Tanintaryi, Myanmar	Mobile: +95 9254 700 635 Email: ztr.droorg@gmail.com
Mr. Bo BoAung Member	Dawei Small Scale Fishery Federation  Tanintharyi, Myanmar	Mobile: +95 9420 0200 18 E-mail: kobodawei.dyf@gmail.com
<b>THAILAND</b>		
<b>Ratchaburi (2)</b>		
Ms. Wantamat Tantrarak	Organic Fruit Product Ratchaburi Thailand	Mobile: +66 83 – 160 4265 Email:

Gardener	11 Moo 10, Bangpae, Ratchaburi 70160	ratchaburi.orgnics@gmail.com Website: www.fruitratchaburi.com
Ms. Janejira thammaraksakul	Group of Export Organic Fruit Product	Mobile: 080-055 3368 ratchaburi.orgnics@gmail.com Website: www.fruitratchaburi.com
Document Control (DC)	11 Moo 10, Bangpae, Ratchaburi 70160	
<b>Prachinburi (2)</b>		
Dr. Somporn Viriyanupappong	Office of Commercial Affairs Prachinburi	Tel: +66 37 45 4062 Mob: +66 81 7831 300 E-mail: s-viriya@hotmail.com
Director	Road Suwinthawong, District Mai Khet, AmphoeMueang, Prachinburi, 25230, Thailand.	
Mr. Sivapoch Kuvichitsuwan	Nakham Organic Rice Community Enerprise	Mobile: 098-494 0498, 081-861 3245 Tel: 037 283 856 Fax: 037 283 856
Owner	71/1 Moo 3, Nakham Kabinburi, Prachinburi, Thailand 25110	Email: nakham.organicrice@gmail.com
<b>Sa – Kaeo (3)</b>		
Ms. Aoytip Jumjod	Aromatic Herb Cooperative Sakaeo	Tel: +66 82 211 2399 Email: aortip_1991@hotmail.com
	543, Suwannasorn Rd., Baan Nong Nok Kao, Tha Ka-sem Sub-District, Muang District, Sa-Kaeo Province	
Ms. Preeda Padungcharoen	6/12 Thesabaan 14, Sakeao Sub-District, Muang District, Sa-Kaeo	Tel: +66 61 423 6694 Email: preeda19622@gmail.com
Teacher		
Ms. Saaritha Nonpayom	Sa-Kaeo Provincial Industry Office	Tel: +66 3742 5053 +66 3742 5056 E-mail: nsaritha@yahoo.com
<b>Chanthaburi (4)</b>		
Mr. Surasak Janchum	Chanthaburi Provincial Industry Office	Tel: +66 81 948 1925 E-mail: surasak5363@hotmail.com
Head, Division of Policy and Planning	200 Tha Luang Rd., Wat Mai Sub-district, Muang, Chantaburi 22000, Thailand	
Mrs. Sasithorn Vises	Chanthaburi Provincial Cooperative Office	Tel: +66 3 931 3517 Email: sasithorn@cpd.go.th
Mr. Suparb Kerdboon	Chanthaburi Provincial Cooperative Office	Tel: 086-300 1525 Email: Suparb.kb2512@gmail.com
Cooperative Technical Officer, Services Technical Specialist		
Mrs. Phitchaya Ponmak	Makam Agricultural cooperative 229/2 Village No. 1, Makam Sub-District, Makam District, Chanthaburi 22150	Tel: +66 39 389 095 Fax: +66 39 389 363 Email: wipa22@yahoo.com
Manager		
<b>Trat (3)</b>		
Mr. Amornrit Phulsawat	Trat Chamber of Commerce	Tel: +66 3 952 0430 +66 3952 1275
Secretary	Community hall of Trat (Upstairs)	E-mail: trattechamber@gmail.com

	besides The city Hall, Radniyom Road, Muang, Trat, 23000, Thailand.	
Mr. Nijitawat Pakdeepasit	Trat Office of Commercial Affairs Ministry of Commerce	Mobile: +66 86-3311869 Tel: +66 39-511283 Fax: +66 39-520023 Email: popnijitawat@gmail.com
Government Officer	322/1 Moo. 8, Mueng District, Trat Province, Thailand	
Ms. Phlapplung	Trat Tourism Council of Thailand	Mobile: +66 81-7772124 Email: phlung@outlook.com
Manager	29 kohchang Sub-district, Kohchang District, Trat Province 23170	
<b>Others (5)</b>		
Mr. Kevin Billing		E-mail: kevin.billing@gmail.com
International Development Specialist		
Ms. Kulisa Sayavee	United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) Regional Office for Asia	E-mail: kulisa.shayavee@uncdf.org
Associate Program Management and Operations Officer for Local Development Finance Practice Asia	3rd Floor, Service Building RajdamnernNok Avenue, PraNakorn, 10200, Thailand.	
Mr. Noritada Morita	Asian Institute of Technology	Mobile: +66 80 068 0010 Email: nmoritabkk@gmail.com Website: <a href="http://www.ait.com">http://www.ait.com</a>
Member of the Board of Trustees	Km 42 Paholyothin Highway KlongLuang, Pathumthani, 12120, Thailand.	
Ms. Saruntorn Kaewveangchai	Thai Public Broadcasting Service (Thai PBS)	Mobile: +66 84 655 9841 Tel: +66 2 790 2592
News Anchor/ Reporter	145 ViphavadiRangsit Rd., TalatBangkhen, Laksi, Bangkok 10210 Thailand.	E-mail: saruntorn.k.09@gmail.com
Mr. Surachet Tipmalee	Thai Public Broadcasting Service (Thai PBS)	
Cameraman	145 ViphavadiRangsit Rd., TalatBangkhen, Laksi, Bangkok 10210 Thailand.	
<b>VIETNAM</b>		
<b>TayNinh (1)</b>		
Mr. Le khanh Trinh	Tayninh Trade Promotion Center	Tel: +84 91388 4035 Tel: +84 08466 381 3794 E-mail: kxanhtrinh25@gmail.com
Chief Trade Promotion	304 Cach Mang Thang Tam Street, Ward 2, Tayninh City, Tayninh Province, Vietnam	
<b>KienGiang (2)</b>		
Mr. Ngo Quang Binh	Fx-Import Managing Division, Kien Giang Department of Industry and Trade	Tel: +84 913 969 556 Email: ngoquangbinh68@gmail.com
Head	840 Nguyen Tring Truc Street, Rach Gia City, Kien Giang Province, Vietnam	
Mr. Tran ThanhKiet	Trade Promotion and SME Sup. Division	Mobile: +84 919 312 927 Email:
Head	KienGiang Trade-Inv-Tourism Pro Cen.222-224 Tran Phu Street,	tranthanhkietkinhle@gmail.com





RachGia City, KienGiang Province, Vietnam		
<b>Ca Mau (3)</b>		
Mr. Nguyen Viet Trung Head	Trade Management Division, Ca Mau Department of Industry and Trade  290, Tran Hung Dao Street, Ca Mau City, Ca Mau Province, Vietnam	Tel: +84 918 070 448 +84 780 3832 211 Fax: +84 780 3830 211 Email: nguyenviettrungha@yahoo.com.vn
Mr. Nguyen Le Thai Secretary General	Ca Mau Business Association  99 Phar Ngoe Hien Street, Ward 5, Ca Mau City, Vietnam	Email: nguyenlethai@gmail.com
Nguyen Van Do Director	Ca Mau Department of Industry and Trade  290 Tran Hung Dao Street, Ca Mau City, Ca Mau Province, Vietnam	E-mail: quanlythuongmaicm@gmail.com
<b>Can Tho (2)</b>		
Ms. Vo Thi Kim Cuong Manager Legal	VCCI Can Tho 12 Hoa Binh Street, Can Tho City, Vietnam	Tel: +84 07103 824 918 +84 0909 351 055 Fax: +84 07103 819 345 Email: kimcuongvcci@gmail.com
Mr. Vo Hung Dung Director	Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI) – Can Tho Branch  No.12, Hoa Binh Avenue, Can- Tho City, Vietnam	E-mail: vpvccicantho@vccimekong.com.vn

## Organizing team (7)

### Trade and Investment Facilitation Department, Mekong Institute

PHOTO	NAME	CONTACT
	Mr. Madhurjya Kumar Dutta  Director Trade & Investment Facilitation (TIF)	Tel: +66 (0) 43 202 411-2 Ext. 4061 Fax: +66 (0) 43 343 131 Mobile: +66 (0) 8 74927118 Email: dutta@mekonginstitute.org
	Mr. QuanAnh Nguyen  Program Specialist TIF	Tel: +66 (0) 43 202 411-2 Ext. 4071 Fax: +66 (0) 43 343 131 Mobile: +66 (0) 8 7582628 Email: quan@mekonginstitute.org
	Mr. Sa-nga Sattanun  Program Manager TIF	Tel: +66 (0) 43 202 411-2 Ext. 4081 Fax: +66 (0) 43 343 131 Mobile: +66 (0) 0 87858 2628 Email: sa-nga@mekonginstitute.org

	<p>Mr. Toru Hisada Senior Project Coordinator TIF</p>	<p>Tel: +66 043 202 411-2 ext. 4097 Fax: +66 043 343 131 Mob: +66 89 011 8672 Email: toru@mekonginstitute.org</p>
	<p>Mr. Sopheak Seang Project Coordinator TIF</p>	<p>Tel: +66 (0) 4320 2411-2 ext.4093 Fax: +66 (0) 43 343 131 Mobile: +66 (0) 82 053 5534 Email: sopheak@mekonginstitute.org</p>
	<p>Ms. Wen Hao Program Coordinator TIF</p>	<p>Tel: +66 (0) 4320 2411-2 ext.4092 Fax: +66 (0) 43 343 131 Mobile: +66 (0) 874232983 Email: <a href="mailto:haowen@mekonginstitute.org">haowen@mekonginstitute.org</a></p>
	<p>Ms. Sasiporn Phuphaploy Program Assistant, TIF</p>	<p>Tel: +66 (0) 4320 2411-2 Ext. 4095 Fax: +66 (0) 43 343 131 Mobile: +66 (0) 88 3044427 Email: sasiporn@mekonginstitute.org</p>



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## **Mekong Institute (MI)**

Mittraphap Road, Muang District, Khon Kaen,  
40002, Thailand

Tel: + 66 43 202 411- 2, +66 43 203 656 -7

Fax: +66 43 343 131

Website: [www.mekonginstitute.org](http://www.mekonginstitute.org)

Email: [information@mekonginstitute.org](mailto:information@mekonginstitute.org)