



Second GMS Economic Corridors Forum (ECF-2)

17 September 2009
Phnom Penh, Cambodia

Summary of Proceedings

I. Introduction

The Second GMS Economic Corridors Forum (ECF-2) was held on 17 September 2009 in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. It was chaired by H.E. Mr. Cham Prasidh, Senior Minister, Ministry of Commerce and GMS Minister of Cambodia, and co-chaired by Mr. C. Lawrence Greenwood, Jr., Vice President, Asian Development Bank (ADB). The meeting was attended by Ministers of Cambodia, the People's Republic of China (PRC), Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand, and Viet Nam, governors and local executives of provinces of the GMS countries, representatives of the private sector including the GMS Business Forum, ADB resource persons, and representatives of development partner organizations (see **ANNEX 1** for the list of participants). ECF-2 has the theme "*GMS Economic Corridors: Pathways to an Integrated, Harmonious and Prosperous Subregion*". Its objectives are to: (i) strengthen the platform for coordination and networking among sectors and groups involved in GMS economic corridor development; (ii) draw attention to issues and concerns affecting economic corridor development, and to discuss strategies and measures to accelerate such development; (iii) expand the support of provincial and local authorities to GMS economic corridor development and promote cooperation in addressing cross-border issues; and (iv) increase the participation of the private sector and promote public-private partnership in GMS economic corridor development. (A copy of the Forum Agenda is in **ANNEX 2**.)

II. Opening Ceremony

1. H.E. Cham Prasidh, Meeting Chair, welcomed the participants and recalled the substantial achievements of the GMS Economic Cooperation. He, however, also emphasized that there are serious challenges that the region now faces, such as the global financial crisis, rising oil and food prices, global warming, and new pandemics. Given this backdrop, the development of the GMS economic corridors will serve as the main platform for driving the region's development. He noted that the Forum is successfully achieving its mandated role of being the main promoter of economic corridor development in the GMS as well as the principal venue for discussing and addressing issues in this important area. He also recalled the results and directives of the recently concluded 15th GMS Ministerial Conference (June 2009, Cha-Am, Thailand) that pertain to the work of the ECF, particularly the Ministers' directive to accelerate work on the effective implementation of measures to facilitate trade, transport, tourism and other economic flows along the GMS corridors; and the need to ensure that the potential negative social and environmental effects of corridor development are mitigated and that its benefits are inclusive and widely distributed.

2. Mr. C. Lawrence Greenwood, Jr., Co-Chair, in his opening statement remarked that although the economic corridors concept is not a new one, what makes the GMS agenda in this field is the zeal with which the member countries have embraced it and their full realization that this must involve well-coordinated multi-sector, multi-level, and multi-stakeholder efforts. He also noted that as the GMS

Program matures, increasing attention will have to be given to the softer aspects of economic corridor development, particularly the streamlining and reduction of cross-border transaction and transport costs, and addressing the social and other risks of corridor development. It is essential that the economic corridors ultimately improve the living standards of families living along them, and that this is achieved without undue environmental costs.

3. The Ministers and heads of delegation of the other GMS countries gave their brief statements as summarized below:

- (i) H.E. Yi Xiaozhun, Vice Minister, Ministry of Commerce, People's Republic of China, recalled that the ECF was launched in Kunming last year as the platform for enhanced cooperation among central and local governments and the private sector. The prevailing global economic crisis has highlighted the importance for enhancing our cooperation and he proposed the ECF to focus on certain key areas, as follows: (i) focus resources on prime areas and take a pragmatic approach to action plans designed to address issues and constraints in corridor development; (ii) promote public-private partnership, using the ECF as a platform for private sector engagement in corridor cooperation; (iii) develop a mechanism for improved coordination among the three corridors in order to deepen regional integration; and (iv) enhance consistency with the efforts of other cooperation mechanisms, such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), particularly with respect to agreements on customs procedures and trade logistics, which could speed up the GMS work program while accelerating the ASEAN's integration process. He expressed PRC's commitment to work closely with the GMS countries.
- (ii) H.E. Mme. Khempheng Pholsena, Minister to the Prime Minister's Office and GMS Minister for Lao People's Democratic Republic, noted that after last year's successful launch of the Economic Corridor Forum (ECF) Initiative in Kunming, ECF-2 will provide the means for stepping up efforts in economic corridor development. She also cited the Governors Forum yesterday as a timely institutional mechanism for enhancing support of provincial officials to promote growth of the corridor areas. She recalled that the 15th GMS Ministers Meeting in Thailand last June 2009, called for intensified efforts to address the constraints to effective implementation of the Cross-Border Transport Agreement (CBTA) and other transport and trade facilitation (TTF) initiatives. She emphasized the importance of adopting a strategic and integrated approach to TTF, which requires strengthening of existing institutional arrangements, and noted Lao PDR's concrete efforts in this area, by adopting inclusive and high-level representation in its National Transport Facilitation Committees (NTFCs) to be coordinated by the GMS Minister. She also informed of Lao PDR's progress in the initial implementation of the CBTA at the pilot border crossing sites with its neighbors along the EWEC. She also announced that Lao PDR will prioritize single-window inspection (SWI) toward eventual implementation of single-stop inspection as part of the focused work program of the restructured NTFC.
- (iii) H. E. Colonel Thuyain Zaw, Minister, Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development, Union of Myanmar, noted while there are unprecedented opportunities from the development of the economic corridors, there are also constraints, threats and challenges including mobilization of financial resources, streamlining of cross-border arrangements, illegal crossings and human trafficking, labor migration, spread of communicable diseases, and environmental degradation. Hand in hand with the development of economic corridors, efforts in all sectors of cooperation need to be accelerated in order that the goal of a harmonious and prosperous subregion could be achieved. Further, the participation of the private sector plays a vital role in the development of the GMS Program. He also informed that most of the investments for physical infrastructure in Myanmar along the economic corridors are being undertaken with national resources and with some bilateral assistance.

- (iv) H.E. Virachai Virameteekul, Minister, Prime Minister's Office, Kingdom of Thailand noted that despite the current global economic crisis, there is still strong potential for the GMS region to grow. He emphasized that implementation of the cross-border transport agreement (CBTA) will provide the momentum for further GMS work as discussed at the 15th GMS Ministerial Meeting. He commended the completion of the strategies and action plans (SAPs) for the East-West Economic Corridor (EWEC) and North-South Economic Corridor (NSEC) and the progress in the SAP for the Southern Economic Corridor (SEC), and proposed that each GMS country formulate SAP implementation at the national level and select high-priority projects for the first three years. He elaborated on Thailand's views on how to transform transport into economic corridors, which consist of the following elements: streamlining rules, laws and regulations on cross-border economic activities; creating investment opportunities along the corridors; integrating key enabling factors such as infrastructure, logistics, financial regulations and labor management; and human resource development. He illustrated Thailand's support for corridor development through the following actions: agreement to pilot exchange of traffic rights between Thailand and Cambodia; approval of 872 million baht Economic Stimulus Package to eliminate the bottleneck in the western portion of the EWEC; request to ADB for a feasibility study on the SMEs Development Fund; and organization of a GMS corridors development conference in Thailand in August 2009.
- (v) H. E. Truong Van Doan, Vice Minister, Ministry of Planning and Investment, Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, stated that with its geographical position, Viet Nam gives its strong support to the development of all the three economic corridors as well as the implementation of the CBTA and the TTF initiatives. For the NSEC, the Hanoi-Lao Cai highway connecting Kunming, PRC with Hanoi and Hai Phong seaport has been initiated. The railway linking these two big cities is also being upgraded with ADB assistance. Viet Nam has also signed with ADB an agreement on a feasibility study for two highway routes, i.e., Hanoi-Lang Son linking to Ping Xeng, PRC, and Hanoi-Mong Cai linking to Dong Huay, PRC. For the EWEC, the transport infrastructure on Vietnamese territory has almost been completed. In June 2009, Lao PDR, Thailand, Cambodia and Viet Nam forged an agreement on cross-border traffic flow along the EWEC in accordance with the CBTA, an important step forward in the development of the economic corridor. For the SEC, Viet Nam and Cambodia have agreed on the connection points of the Poipet-Loc Ninh railway route for immediate construction. Viet Nam is also constructing and upgrading the coastal national motorway from Ca Mau to Kien Giang with a total amount of \$328 million. Viet Nam believes that the successful construction of subregional transport route on Vietnamese territory and in other GMS countries, together with the implementation of software such as the CBTA and TTF, will help realize the goal of transforming transport corridors into economic corridors. With the involvement of governors, the business community, and central level staff in a multi-dimensional approach, the strategies and action plans for the economic corridors could be smoothly implemented. Viet Nam as an active member and with a high sense of responsibility will do its best to contribute to the development of the GMS economic corridors for the common goal of a comprehensive and sustainable development of the GMS.

III. Session 1: Setting the Stage

Report on the Kunming GMS Economic Corridors Logistics Fair

4. Mr. Zhang Kening, Commercial Counsellor, International Trade and Economic Affairs Department, Ministry of Commerce, People's Republic of China gave a report on the GMS Economic Corridors Logistics Fair held in Kunming, China on 6-7 June 2009, including the High Level Symposium on Logistics Cooperation, which was attended by national, regional and multinational logistics services providers, transport and freight forwarder firms, import-export companies, senior government officials from transport, customs and commerce ministries, media and academia in the

region. Among the important topics that the Symposium tackled were: the institutional framework for national logistics strategies and policy formulation and implementation, including areas for cooperation between public and private sector; the findings of the logistics benchmark studies conducted on the East-West Economic Corridor (EWEC) and North-South Economic Corridor (NSEC); the various problems and constraints relating to logistics development; and lessons learned from the experience of actual logistics service providers and operators along the corridors. Among the key suggestions and recommendations made by participants were: (i) accelerate the implementation of the Cross Border Transport Agreement (CBTA), particularly the single window inspection and single stop inspection and harmonization and standardization of procedures and formalities, and closely involving the private sector in the process; (ii) enhanced logistics cooperation to create “win-win” solutions; (iii) increased public-private sector consultations in order to provide a pro-logistics business environment; (iv) to consider the possibility of establishing a GMS logistics association by the private sector; (v) harmonisation of standards to ensure the compatibility of logistics systems in the GMS; and (vi) increased logistics human resource capacity development activities.

Report on the Proceedings of Governors' Forum

5. His Excellency Sok Chenda of Cambodia, Chair of the Governors' Forum, gave a report on the proceedings of the first meeting of the Forum, which was held the previous day. The meeting was highly successful and had very encouraging results with the governors and other provincial authorities expressing strong interest in and commitment to GMS economic corridor development. This is also reflected by the attendance of about 250 participants in the meeting, consisting of GMS senior officials from central government agencies, local executives from the provinces along the GMS economic corridors, representatives of the private sector and from development partner organizations. Some of the key points that emerged from the meeting were:

- The need to fully understand issues and challenges that are specific to a locality or corridor and to come up with approaches that are appropriate in addressing them;
- The need of local authorities to have access to resources and assistance from central governments and development partners, particularly in improving their operational mechanisms and capacities to perform their roles in accelerating economic corridor development;
- The importance of local authorities' promotion of an enabling environment for business and reducing the costs of cross border transactions and of moving goods and people across borders was emphasized; it was recognized that this could help attract needed private investment into the economic corridors and help ensure that the transport corridors did not become mere transit routes which failed to spread economic benefits in surrounding areas;
- There is broad scope for addressing cross-border transport and trade facilitation using a strategic and integrated approach;
- The importance of addressing social and environmental risks at the local level; and
- The suggested setting up of smaller groups of provincial authorities within countries in order to determine their specific requirements, specific sectors and opportunities for cooperation, and approaches on how to get economic activities going at the local level.

Economic Corridor Development: Experience in Other Parts of the World

6. Mr. Toh Mun Heng, Associate Professor, Department of Business Policy, National University of Singapore gave a presentation on the experience of the **Singapore-Johor Riau (Sijori) Growth Triangle (later renamed the Indonesia-Malaysia-Singapore Growth Triangle)**. His presentation highlighted the importance of tapping complementarities among member countries (e.g., in specific locational factors, resources, technological endowments, policies) as well as achieving coherence in the policy mindset of member countries' authorities (e.g., in the importance given to good governance).

It also pointed to the potential multiplier impact and other benefits of developing special economic zones (SEZs), particularly in border or corridor towns.

7. Mr. Michael Reeves, President, **Ports-to-Plain Trade Corridor** Coalition shared with the meeting the experience of this trade corridor spanning Canada, the U.S., and Mexico. The experience of this trade corridor validated the importance of good transport connectivity as the basis for enhanced competitiveness and dynamic economic exchange. It also emphasized the importance for the success of RCI programs of a unified and strong support at the local level, good coordination among all levels of government, and acceptance and support of the business sector.

8. Mr. Massimo Lupis, Managing Director, Fdl Servizi presented the experience of the development of the **Pan-European Corridor VIII**. This initiative, which involved the revival of the old corridor which dated back to the time of the Roman Empire, reaffirmed the importance of roads/transport infrastructure in stimulating intra-regional trade, cultural and other beneficial contacts among peoples, growth of towns and communities, and thus, in creating wealth and overall regional development. The experience of dealing with non-EU members like Macedonia and Albania, where there are transport bottlenecks, tracked the GMS experience of missing infrastructure links and the need for persistence and patience in taking forward trade facilitation at the borders.

III. Session 2: Trade and Transport Facilitation in the GMS Economic Corridors: Progress, Issues, Way Forward

9. Mr. Arjun Goswami, Head of the Regional Cooperation and Integration Group of the Southeast Asia Department, Asian Development Bank, gave a presentation on the role of transport and trade facilitation (TTF) in the transformation of transport corridors into economic corridors, including the results of national consultations conducted from end July to early September 2009 on how to strengthen institutional mechanisms for effective implementation of TTF measures. To structure his presentation, he gave a conceptual framework on the stages involved in the evolution of transport corridors into economic corridors, as follows: Stage 1 – Transport Corridor; Stage 2 – TTF Corridor; Stage 3 – Logistics Corridor; Stage 4 – Urban Development Corridor; and Stage 5 – Economic Corridor. He noted that these stages did not always need to be strictly sequential, but key milestones needed to be met to move from one stage to another. In all stages, however, it is imperative that associated environmental and social externalities are adequately addressed.

10. He noted that with the physical connectivity stage almost fully attained by the GMS corridors, to the next major step was to achieve effective TTF along them. The key to the transformation of the GMS corridors from transport to TTF corridors was the accelerated and effective implementation of the CBTA and other TTF initiatives. This, in turn, depended greatly on the strengthening of the institutional framework within each country to support implementation.

11. Mr. Goswami then presented the results of the consultations with individual GMS countries as regards the possible reforms in their respective institutional arrangements in order to accelerate and enhance the effectiveness of CBTA implementation. Mr. Goswami invited the views of individual countries on the appropriate institutional arrangement to effectively and expeditiously implement the CBTA and other TTF measures. He noted that despite the expected differences in individual country solutions, there were certain common guiding principles, among which were: (i) that the arrangement should be tailored to specific country circumstances – there is no one-size-fits-all solution; (ii) accountability should rest with the right agency, which is appropriately equipped; (iii) need for strong secretariat arrangements; (iv) strengthening of institutions not just at national, but also at regional level.

Open Discussion

12. The country delegations gave their views on the presentation on TTF. They all recognized the urgency of acting swiftly on CBTA and TTF implementation and all also expressed their commitment to cooperate in this regard. There was also a common recognition that to be able to accelerate the implementation of the CBTA and other TTF measures, an integrated approach to TTF was needed, backed by strong and effective institutional arrangements.

13. A comment was made that the issue of institutional strengthening required strong commitment and political will. It was further suggested that a definite timeframe or deadline be set for the countries to make a final decision on their respective institutional arrangements for the CBTA and other TTF measures. ADB representatives indicated that they would facilitate the processing of multi-year TAs to support the TTF-related institutional restructurings and capacity building if ADB could have a confirmation or firmer action on the countries' institutional arrangements by about the end of October 2009, so that TA processing could be concluded by about the time of the SOM in January 2010, and the final decision on the arrangements could then be presented as a deliverable for the 16th GMS Ministerial Conference (16th MC) in March 2010 (which timeframe was confirmed by the host, Viet Nam).

14. Moreover, there was wide agreement that institutional arrangements must be strengthened not only at the country level but also at the regional level. In this regard, there was a suggestion to have the CBTA Joint Committee (JC), which was composed of the heads of the countries' NTFCs, meet more regularly, at least once a year. Likewise, there was a suggestion to have the Heads of Customs (DG-Level) of the GMS countries meet regularly and that their next meeting could be held back-to-back with the JC. Further, the idea of having a meeting of the sanitary and phyto-sanitary (SPS) authorities of the GMS countries was also considered, perhaps also back-to-back with the meetings of the abovementioned regional bodies. It was further suggested that the experience of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) on trade facilitation be referred to.

15. There were also suggestions that a stocktaking be done and that a scorecard be developed to monitor the progress of CBTA and other TTF measures' implementation in individual countries as well as regionwide. This would help in determining at any point in time what has already been done and what still needs to be done in order to advance toward full and effective implementation of the CBTA/other TTF measures.

16. Ministers were all in agreement that ADB should maintain its coordination role and provide assistance in the GMS TTF efforts, and in particular in supporting the institutional improvements that countries will undertake.

IV. Session 3: Southern Economic Corridor Development: Progress, Issues, Way Forward

17. Mr. Ros Seilava, Deputy Secretary General, Ministry of Economy and Finance, Royal Government of Cambodia gave the presentation for the Southern Economic Corridor. He first presented the development potentials and advantages of the SEC, the outline of the strategy and action plan (SAP) for its development, including the development vision for the SEC. Then, he discussed the key issues with regard to the attainment of the main objectives of SEC development, among which are: (i) with regard to infrastructure and connectivity, the need to address the missing links, the construction and rehabilitation rural/feeder roads and connecting them to the main SEC road network, improving border facilities, and improving infrastructure and utilities in border towns and cities; (ii) on promoting and facilitating trade and investment, the delay in implementing the CBTA -- particularly in pilot border crossings in the SEC—Aranyaprathet-Poipet and Bavet-Moc Bai and the

need to further improve the investment climate; (iii) on addressing social and environment concerns, the low level of labor skills in Cambodia and Lao PDR, labor migration issues, dealing with environmental degradation especially in major cities; and effectively responding to climate change; (iv) on enhancing private sector participation, how to increase private sector involvement in developing the SEC, specifically how to strengthen the role of provincial chambers of commerce and business associations, and how to attract private sector investments in transport, power and telecommunication projects through public-private partnership (PPP) arrangements.

V. Session 4: East-West Economic Corridor Development: Progress, Issues, Way Forward

18. Mr. Arkhom Termpittayapaisith, Deputy Secretary General, National Economic and Social Development Board, Royal Government of Thailand gave us a report on the East-West Economic Corridor Development. He gave a background on the infrastructural and institutional achievements and interventions in the EWEC since its launching 10 years ago. He noted some lessons learned from the earlier strategy and efforts in developing the EWEC, among which are: numerous and wide-ranging initiatives are less likely to be implemented than are a few targeted initiatives, the limited port expansion in both gateway nodes prevented the EWEC from tapping emerging markets, and few private sector development initiatives were implemented because of insufficient institutional mechanisms, capacity limitations, and lack of financing mechanisms. He then presented the outlines of the new strategy and action plan for the EWEC, highlighting its integrated approach to pro-poor private sector growth and development. This approach uses two types of action plans, focusing on the following, respectively: (i) cross-border activities that enhance the competitiveness of the private sector in traded goods, service-based activities, and cross-border investments; (ii) mechanisms that improve equity and alleviate poverty, specifically targeting capacity building activities and programs directed at the social sector. Examples of pro-poor growth activities are: corridor towns development; integrating micro, small and medium size enterprises (MSMEs) into corridor-based activities; amelioration of negative effects of corridor development, e.g., HIV/AIDS, communicable diseases. Institutional capacity building and coordination of the growing number of subregional institutions are an integral part of the new strategy.

VI. Session 5: North-South Economic Corridor Development: Progress, Issues, Way Forward

19. Mr. Zhang Kening of the International Trade and Economic Affairs Department, Ministry of Commerce, People's Republic of China, gave the presentation for the North-South Economic Corridor (NSEC). He discussed the strengths and development potentials of the NSEC, and its strategic role in overall GMS development. He noted that the development of the physical infrastructure is nearing completion but the software aspects have to catch up. He summarized the key issues and constraints that have to be addressed as follows: (i) on physical infrastructure -- problems remain in some segments of the corridor (e.g., shortage of rail capacity and poor road conditions in the mountainous areas); some border areas lack telecommunications facilities, water supply, power and other utilities; lack facilities for inspection and clearing formalities in some border checkpoints; (ii) on logistics -- lack of and high cost of logistics is holding back the growth of trade and investment; (iii) policies, regulations, procedures and standards on cross border movement of people, goods and vehicles, including transit cargo, are still cumbersome and unclear; provisions of the CBTA, especially the exchange of traffic rights, have not yet been implemented in the main NSEC border checkpoints; (iv) officials at the local level still lack awareness, knowledge and skills in transport and trade facilitation; (v) there are potential negative social and environmental effects of NSEC development such as spread of communicable diseases and trafficking of women and children, loss of biodiversity and environmental degradation; (vi) on institutional factors -- inadequate coordination among agencies

involved in transport and trade facilitation at both central and local levels has contributed to delays in implementing the CBTA and other agreements; (vii) lack of local and community participation and inadequate private sector involvement; (viii) sluggish information leading to ineffective inter-agency coordination, lack of response from the private sector, and limited involvement of local authorities and communities. In the near term, therefore, action will be focused on: (i) accelerating the implementation of CBTA; (ii) putting more emphasis on trade facilitation; (iii) increasing business participation to and addressing the concerns of the private sector; (iv) exploring ways to attract investment, e.g., through PPPs; and (v) coordination among the three GMS corridors.

Open Discussion

Among the points raised during the discussions on the issues regarding the development of the three GMS corridors are:

20. Among the 3 corridors, there seems to be more transport infrastructure gaps in the SEC, but this is at least partly because many of the road links are in Cambodia, which has just recently come out of a conflict situation.

21. There is a need for TTF measures to go hand in hand with infrastructural development in the SEC. The Bilateral Exchange of Traffic Rights between Cambodia and Thailand is a positive development in this regard. Another prospective achievement is the trilateral exchange of traffic rights among Cambodia, Lao PDR and Viet Nam; this could be implemented under the auspices of the GMS CBTA since all three countries have already fully ratified the agreement and its annexes and protocols. A trilateral agreement among Cambodia, Thailand and Viet Nam would still be unimplementable under the CBTA since only 2 of the 3 countries have ratified.

22. The new EWEC strategy and action plan differs significantly from the previous one that was prepared about ten years ago, in the sense that it:

- shifts the vision of the Corridor to its socio-economic development, with a poverty-based focus;
- focuses on only a few high-profile initiatives rather than trying to do too much simultaneously; and
- broadens the sector coverage to private sector development and social and environmental concerns.

23. With regard to the comment made by a private sector representative that transport and border formalities are so much more efficient along the EWEC than in the two other corridors, especially the SEC, it was noted that this poses a challenge to the other corridors, which hopefully will be eventually met. But even with regard to the EWEC, there is still much work to be done in terms of TTF and spurring economic activity along the corridor areas.

24. There were certain common threads found in the three corridors' SAPs, among which are:

- The pressing need to promote and facilitate cross-border trade, tourism, and investment;
- The need to provide an enabling environment for business, particularly for SMEs, in the corridor areas and to enhance private sector participation and public-private collaboration; and
- The need to address social and environmental concerns.

V. Session 4: Closing Session

25. H.E. Cham Prasidh, ECF-2 chair, gave a summary of the discussions, focusing on the actions that need to be undertaken in the important area of TTF, as follows:

- (i) There was a need to digest the experience of economic corridor and growth area initiatives elsewhere in the world, and to learn lessons from them;

- (ii) There was a pressing need to speed up and enhance the effectiveness of CBTA implementation. This required strong and resolute actions and interventions, particularly on institutional arrangements. The decision on what arrangement was best would be left to individual countries, as long as it led to speed and efficiency.
- (iii) Given the urgency of the matter, countries should consider setting a deadline for them to make their decisions on the TTF institutional arrangement.
- (iv) A detailed scorecard should be prepared, with assistance from ADB, that would enable GMS countries to monitor progress on the required actions on TTF, and that would therefore help in spurring the needed further actions and interventions. This scorecard could also include the suggestions and concerns given by the Governors' Forum and the GMS-BF/other private sector representatives.
- (v) Heads of Customs of GMS countries should also meet regularly, at least on an annual basis. They would also have to come up with their own scorecard/monitoring mechanism.
- (vi) The mechanism for dialogue on SPS/other TTF areas should likewise be firmed up and also meet on a regular/annual basis.
- (vii) The possibility of having these two other mechanisms (SPS and Customs), especially the Heads of Customs, meet back-to-back with the 16th Ministerial Conference in March 2010 should be explored, so that the Conference would have substantial results and aggressively move forward the TTF agenda.

26. He also emphasized the importance of information dissemination and building public awareness of the activities and programs being undertaken in developing the GMS economic corridors. The public's understanding of these efforts and their beneficial impact on them is crucial to generating public interest and involvement in these endeavors.

27. Vice President Greenwood, ADB, co-chair, congratulated the meeting participants for the very useful exchange of ideas that will help propel the economic corridor development agenda forward. He particularly lauded the Governors' Forum, which emphasized the importance to the overall economic corridor development efforts of fully understanding the situation at the local level. He also noted the useful insights and lessons from the presentations on the experience of corridor and growth area development in other parts of the world. With regard to the discussions on TTF, he reiterated the need to act swiftly on the institutional arrangements for the CBTA and other TTF measures, and in this regard repeated the request that the countries apprise ADB as soon as possible on their definite action on this matter so that ADB could move quickly on the supporting TAs. He also reaffirmed the need to develop a scorecard on TTF efforts and ADB's readiness to assist in this undertaking. He concluded by saying that ADB was committed to serve the countries in their efforts in developing the economic corridors.

28. The Chair thanked all the participants for their contributions in making ECF-2 a success. He reiterated that the economic corridors are crucial to the overall success of the GMS and expressed appreciation to ADB for its support to these efforts. He then declared the meeting closed.