

**GMS PUBLIC PRIVATE CONSULTATION MEETING
9-11 SEPTEMBER 2004
BANGKOK THAILAND**

MEETING NOTE

The Context of the PPCM Initiative

1. The PPCM was conceived at the threshold of the first GMS Summit that took place in November 2002. After a successful first decade of cooperation, the GMS Program was gradually expanding its horizons. Building on past success, a 10-Year GMS Strategic Framework with 11 flagship programs (presented in the form of a development matrix) was adopted in September 2002 that set the broad directions and priorities for the second decade of cooperation. The enormous challenge of implementing the 10-year strategy and 11 flagship programs required further strengthening of partnerships with official development assistance (ODA) institutions, the private sector, academe, and civil society.

2. A Development Partners' Meeting was held for the first time in September 2002 as part of the 11th Ministerial Meeting. The DPM was an opportunity to present the 11 flagship programs to bilateral and multilateral organizations to inform them about the GMS Program priorities and areas of possible cooperation. At the 11th Ministerial Meeting, Cambodia proposed, and the GMS countries agreed, that a high-level public private consultation meeting (PPCM) should be organized to present the development matrix to the private sector, similar to the DPM. The PPCM would be a forum for informing the private sector on planned development initiatives in the GMS from a regional perspective, identifying areas of interest to the private sector, and conducting dialogue on issues and concerns affecting the private sector in the region. Subsequently, Thailand agreed to organize and host the first-ever PPCM in Bangkok. The GMS Business Forum is co-organizer of the event, with the Asian Development Bank lending its support as cooperating agency.

3. The GMS countries intended the PPCM to be the starting point for engaging the private sector (through the GMS BF) in the GMS Program. This is to be done initially through awareness raising of the GMS Program Strategy and the 11 flagship initiatives. The PPCM is the first meeting to be organized under the GMS Program that would bring GMS governments and the private sector together at a high level. Apart from awareness-raising on the GMS Program, the PPCM would discuss the modalities for greater involvement of the GMS BF in the GMS Program activities.

The GMS Business Forum

4. The GMS Business Forum (GMS BF) was formally launched in October 2000 as the official private sector channel of communication with the GMS Governments under the GMS Program framework. As such, it is the logical counterpart of the GMS Governments for the PPCM.

5. The GMS national chambers of commerce comprise the core members of the GMS BF. Membership is open to other GMS national industry/business associations as well as foreign chambers. The chairmanship of the Forum rotates every three years

among the GMS countries following alphabetical order. The GMS BF Secretariat is located in Vientiane. Myanmar currently holds the chairmanship of the Forum, following from Lao PDR.

6. The GMS BF is co-organizer of the PPCM and will play a key role in the follow-through activities. In preparation for the PPCM, the GMS BF, through their core group members, have held consultations with members of the national chambers and other business representatives on issues that they may wish to raise during the PPCM, in particular during the dialogue session with the GMS Ministers.

The PPCM: Objectives, Program, and Expected Outcomes

Objectives

7. The PPC would have the following objectives:
- To provide a forum for dialogue between the public and private sectors at a high level in order to seek ways for further strengthening public-private sector collaboration and enhancing private sector participation in the development process.
 - To exchange views on issues and challenges involving the private sector in the GMS and to discuss means of addressing these issues in order to further promote private sector participation in the development of the subregion
 - To strengthen networking among public and private sector partners
 - To build confidence for investment in the subregion.

Participants

8. Around 150-200 that includes GMS Ministers and senior officials, representatives from the GMS Business Forum, non-GMS private sector representatives, development partners, and international organizations.

Program: Key Elements

9. As reflected in the provisional agenda (attached), the PPCM program will have four major parts:

- Opening Session (0830 –0955 am, 10 September 2004)
- Statements from the GMS Ministers and the ADB Presentation (1030am – 1230 pm, 10 September 2004)
- Sector Discussion Groups in Parallel Sessions (1430-1700 pm 10 September 2004)
- Dialogue Session between the GMS Ministers and the GMS BF (0830- 0930 am 11 September 2004).

10. **Opening Session (0830 –0955 am, 10 September 2004).** The keynote speakers will include the Deputy Prime Minister of Thailand, U Aung Win, Chairperson of the GMS Business Forum, and Mr. Liqun Jin, Vice President, Asian Development Bank.

11. **Statements of the Ministers from the GMS Countries --- (1030am –1230 pm, 10 September 2004).** Ministers heading their respective delegations from the GMS countries will address the Meeting following the Opening Session. They are expected to

reaffirm their commitment to private sector development in the GMS and outline policies and strategies to help promote private investments. A short presentation from ADB will follow, indicating how ADB is supporting the GMS countries in this process.

12. **Sector Group Discussions (Sector Groups) --- (1430-1700 pm 10 September 2004).** The sector group discussions seek to focus the discussion of issues on 6 specific sectors, namely: infrastructure, agriculture, trade, industry and investment, tourism, and social development and environment. Participants may chose the sector group they wish to attend.

13. The objectives of the sector group discussion are to:

- Build awareness on regional development strategies and plans, in particular, the GMS flagship programs as reflected in the GMS development matrix;
- Identify short and medium term business and development opportunities in the sector
- Discuss constraints and risks for doing business in the sector; and
- Propose concrete actions for cooperation between the public-private sectors to address these issues and constraints.

14. Each of the six sector groups will be chaired by a senior official from a GMS country, and will have three lead discussants representing the GMS Business Forum, the non-GMS private sector, and an international organization or development partner institution.

15. Background papers to be circulated to all participants will reflect the goals of cooperation in the sector, the achievements so far, strategies and priorities, issues and challenges, and the opportunities for the private sector. Issues and challenges identified in the Background Paper are not exhaustive and are intended primarily to serve as starting points for discussion. Participants are free to raise other issues, share experiences, and propose innovative ways for closer collaboration between the public and private sectors.

16. The Chair, assisted by the sector group rapporteur, will render a summary of the discussions and report to the plenary session on 11 September.

17. **Dialogue session between the GMS Ministers and the GMS Business Forum (0830-0930 am, 11 September.** The dialogue session is intended to provide an opportunity for a frank and candid exchange of views between the GMS Ministers and the GMS BF, representing the GMS private sector, on key GMS issues. The dialogue session will cover major concerns raised in the sector discussion groups and specific recommendations to address them. The specific courses of action will be reported to the 13th GMS Ministerial Meeting (14-16 December 2004, Vientiane, Lao PDR) as well as to the second GMS Summit (July 2005, Kunming, Yunnan Province, PRC).

Expected Outcomes

18. The PPCM is expected to promote increased awareness of business opportunities in the GMS arising from greater economic cooperation and interaction among the countries. Given the broader regional perspective, the private sector can make better-informed business choices. More importantly, through the dialogue

mechanism that is offered under the GMS Program framework, both the GMS governments and the private sector can work more closely together to enhance the investment environment in the GMS.

19. In addition, the PPCM would have generated a compilation of major issues affecting the private sector in general as well as issues that they face in particular sectors; concrete recommendations to be forwarded to the 13th Ministerial Meeting and reported to the second GMS Summit; and last but not least, a directory of PPCM participants that could help promote networking among public and private business sector interested in the Mekong subregion.

The PPCM Provisional Agenda is attached.