

Greater Mekong Subregion Economic Cooperation Program**Ninth Meeting of the GMS Working Group on Human Resource Development
(WGHRD-9)**

Guilin, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, PRC
20-21 May 2009

Opening Statement

Mr. Li Dongxiang
Director, International Department, Ministry of Finance, PRC

Ms Lateef,
Distinguished Participants,
Ladies and Gentlemen,
Good Morning.

On behalf of the Government of the People's Republic of China, I welcome you to the 9th meeting of the GMS Human Resource Development Working Group. We are very pleased to host this meeting in Guilin, in the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, which is part of PRC's border with the GMS.

I am pleased to welcome GMS country representatives from central government agencies as well as the line ministries covering education, health, labor and migration, and social development. I also extend a warm welcome to our development partners and, of course to the ADB team supporting the GMS human resource development program.

The 8th meeting of the working group in Phnom Penh, Cambodia in May 2007, endorsed a regional technical assistance to develop a strategic framework and action plan for human resource development in the GMS. Since then there have been national and subsector consultations to develop the proposed strategic framework and action plan. The proposal was also considered at the GMS Senior Officials' Meeting last November. I was pleased to participate in both the national consultation in Beijing and the Senior Officials' Meeting. I look forward to the presentation of the proposal during this meeting and formal endorsement of the proposal to the 15th GMS Ministerial Meeting next month.

This strategic framework and action plan will help guide the work of the whole working group and its subsector working groups over the next few years. As we know, the health subsector has been active regionally. In fact the 2nd Regional Public Health Forum co-hosted by PRC was held here in Guilin earlier this year in February, and preparations are on-going for the second phase of the Communicable Disease Control project funded by ADB. In the years ahead, we would like to see more subregional projects implemented in the other subsectors of education, labor and migration, and social development. As we move forward with the operationalization of the strategic framework through the implementation of the action plan, we expect all subsectors will become more active and solid progress will be made.

To realize this progress will require the commitment and ownership from the GMS countries. As stressed during the consultation phase, continuity of membership is an important element in achieving steady progress. Also very important is the technical and financial support of our development partners. We look forward to strengthening these ties through this meeting and other activities at subsector level over the next few months and years. The PRC representatives are ready and looking forward to actively participating in the upcoming subsector work.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I thank you for taking time from your busy schedules to attend this important meeting of the GMS human resource development working group. I look forward to a successful meeting that will set the scene for a more active and effective working group. Thank you.