

ECONOMIC CORRIDORS FORUM

Terms of Reference

1. Introduction

Pursuant to Article 4 of the Memorandum of Understanding Toward Sustainable and Balanced Development of the Greater Mekong Subregion North-South Economic Corridor and Enhanced Organizational Effectiveness for Developing Economic Corridors (hereinafter referred to as the GMS) signed by the GMS Ministers on 31 March 2008 in Vientiane, Lao PDR, an Economic Corridors Forum (hereinafter referred to as the ECF) is hereby established within the GMS organizational framework. The detailed terms of reference (hereinafter referred to as the TOR) of the ECF is set forth below.

2. Role and Tasks

The ECF shall serve as the main advocate and promoter of economic corridor development in the GMS. It shall raise the profile and increase awareness of the needs and priorities of GMS economic corridor development, and enhance collaboration among areas along the GMS economic corridors and among GMS forums and working groups. It shall promote coordination, networking, and facilitation of initiatives to develop economic corridors. More specifically, the ECF shall:

- (i) Provide a platform for strengthening cooperation among areas in the East-West Economic Corridor, North-South Economic Corridor and Southern Economic Corridor (hereinafter referred to EWEC, NSEC and SEC, respectively) and among the GMS forums and working groups;
- (ii) Serve as a venue for networking and sharing of information and views among central and local officials, business people and international agencies on strategies, approaches, programs and projects to accelerate economic corridor development;
- (iii) Highlight concerns, approaches, initiatives and priorities in the transformation of transport corridors into economic corridors;
- (iv) Discuss the implementation of strategies and action plans for economic corridor development, identify gaps in implementing such strategies and action plans, and propose actions to resolve implementation issues;
- (v) Help increase the involvement of local authorities and communities, encourage and support the Governors Forum, and expand the participation of the private sector in economic corridor development;
- (vi) Bring to the attention of higher authorities issues that need resolution at the central level; and
- (vii) Assist in mobilizing technical and financial resources for economic corridor development.

3. Status

The ECF shall be a standing body dealing with economic corridor development within the GMS organizational framework. It shall recommend measures to the GMS Ministerial Conference to promote economic corridor development. The GMS Ministerial Conference shall remain as the highest decision-making and coordinating body under the GMS Economic Cooperation Program next to the Leaders' Summit. Initiatives and measures discussed during ECF meetings shall be considered by the GMS Ministerial Meeting, Senior Officials Meeting and forums and working groups, with appropriate actions being taken by the concerned ministry or agency in the GMS countries in accordance with agreements reached among them.

4. Participation, Organization and Chairmanship

Participants in ECF meetings shall consist of (i) representatives of central government agencies; (ii) representatives of local governments and communities, particularly from the border provinces; (iii) representatives of the private sector, including those from the GMS Business Forum; and (iv) representatives of the Asian Development Bank (hereinafter referred to as the ADB) and other international organizations.

A Governors Forum, which shall be a mechanism for coordination among governors of the provinces along the GMS economic corridors, shall be constituted within the ECF.

The Chairperson of the ECF shall come from the country hosting the ECF meeting; a co-chairperson and vice-chairperson shall be designated, with the co-chairperson being a nominee of the ADB, and the vice-chairperson coming from the host of the next ECF meeting. Meetings of the ECF shall be held at the ministerial level. The Minister participating in ECF meetings may be the GMS Minister and/or some other Minister, depending on the focus of the agenda of the ECF meeting, with the specific arrangements being made through the GMS National Coordinators. A task force meeting shall be convened prior to an ECF Meeting to prepare the Meeting's theme, agenda, and program in line with the strategies and action plans for the economic corridors.

The GMS organizational framework showing the relation of ECF to the existing organizations is attached.

5. Frequency of Meetings

The ECF shall meet every year or as and when required by the circumstances.

6. Venue of Meetings

The first meeting of the ECF shall be held in Kunming, Yunnan Province, People's Republic of China. Venue of subsequent meetings shall be rotated among the GMS countries or as agreed to by the GMS countries.

7. Work Program and Secretariat Support

The ECF shall prepare its own work program and schedule to achieve its objectives.

ADB shall provide the necessary secretariat support to the ECF and work closely with the National Coordinators of the GMS countries for this purpose. Such support shall include assistance in coordinating and arranging meetings of the ECF.

8. Financing

Financing of ECF meetings shall be borne by the country and/or province hosting the ECF meeting to the extent possible. ADB and other international organizations may be requested by the host country to provide the necessary technical, administrative and logistical support to ECF meetings in cases where local expertise and resources are limited.

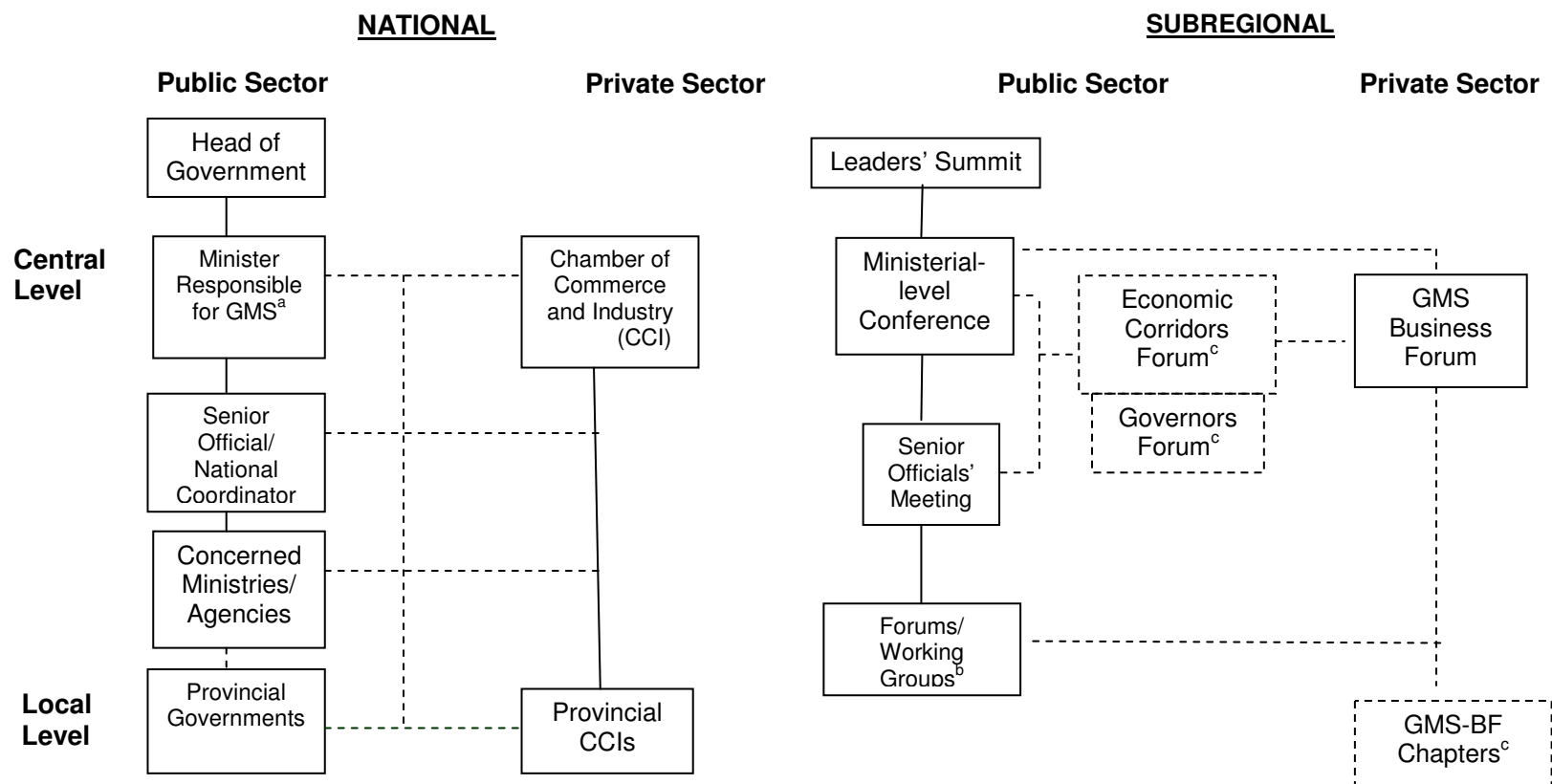
9. Reporting

The ECF shall report its proceedings to the Ministerial-level Conference through the Senior Officials Meeting. As secretariat of ECF, ADB will post a summary of ECF meetings and activities in its GMS webpage.

10. Review

The TOR of the ECF shall be reviewed periodically. If deemed necessary, amendments may be made in the TOR to make the ECF more effective in achieving its objectives.

Proposed Organizational Framework



- ^a Deputy Prime Minister in certain cases.
- ^b Forums and working groups could adopt respective work programs focusing on the GMS priority corridors.
- ^c Proposed.