

# Mekong-Japan Action Plan 63

November 7, 2009

Pursuant to the Tokyo Declaration of the First Meeting between the Heads of the Government of Japan and the Mekong region countries, Japan and the Mekong region countries adopt 63 actions and measures as follows.

To materialize and to review some of the actions included in this Action Plan, Japan and the Mekong region countries will organize a Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM) in the first half of the year 2010.

## Comprehensive Development in the Mekong Region

### 1. Further Development of Both Hard and Soft Infrastructure

1.1. Japan will make further assistance to the construction of infrastructure including roads and bridges to complete remaining parts of the East-West Economic Corridor and the Southern Economic Corridor. Japan shares the view with the Mekong region countries on the importance of a bridge over the Mekong River in Neak Luang in Cambodia.

1.2. Japan reaffirms its commitment to support projects in the Development Triangle, in the borders of Cambodia, Laos and Viet Nam (CLV countries), and the Mekong region countries will ensure the efficient and expeditious implementation of the 22 projects to which Japan committed 20 million USD at the First Mekong-Japan Foreign Ministers' Meeting in January 2008.

1.3. Japan will promote the development of key seaports and airports which are significant for logistics, distribution and movement of people in the region, such as Sihanoukville Seaport in Cambodia.

1.4. Japan will promote the support for the construction of power lines and information web, such as projects related to the development of power transmission and distribution in the areas near the Mekong River and Delta in CLV countries.

1.5. Thailand will provide further assistance to the construction, improvement and maintenance of roads and bridges connecting to neighboring countries in accordance with its constitution and laws.

1.6. Japan and the Mekong region countries will enhance cooperation based on the Mekong-Japan Economic and Industrial Cooperation Initiative (MJ-CI) which was decided to be reported to the leaders at the Mekong-Japan Economic Ministers' Inaugural Meeting on 24 October 2009.

1.7. Japan will support the Mekong region countries in conducting more efficient and effective operations at customs. Japan will implement a regional cooperation project on risk management

for customs in the Mekong region by Official Development Assistance (ODA) (technical assistance) and projects for the improvement of efficiency of logistics and distribution of the East-West and Southern Economic Corridors, to which Japan committed 20 Million USD at the First Mekong-Japan Foreign Ministers' Meeting in January, 2008, such as providing X-ray equipments and other instruments and training of custom officials.

1.8. Japan will organize logistics workshops for logistics service providers and shippers.

1.9. Japan will implement a training program on Special Economic Zones (SEZs) development for Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Viet Nam (CLMV countries).

1.10. Japan will dispatch expert teams and hold seminars to develop the areas identified as the core nodes (hubs of industrial and logistical network) of the development in the Mekong region. Japan will conduct feasibility studies to develop and improve hard infrastructure to promote subregional development in the Mekong region.

1.11. Japan will develop a network of the existing Japan Centers in CLV countries and start joint training programs for fostering of entrepreneurs in the Mekong region countries.

1.12. Thailand will continue its economic and technical support for human resource development in CLMV, through Thailand International Development Cooperation Agency (TICA) and Neighboring Countries Economic Development Cooperation Agency (NEDA).

1.13. The Mekong region countries are determined to take necessary anti-corruption measures and to implement the Japanese ODA effectively. Japan welcomes such measures and implementations.

1.14. Japan and the Mekong region countries welcome that the Economic Research Institute for the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and East Asia (ERIA), together with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the ASEAN Secretariat, will develop a matrix of the cooperation initiatives in the Mekong region which is a part of the Comprehensive Asia Development Plan, in order to promote effective development in the region.

1.15. Japan and the Mekong region countries welcome various activities to promote trade and investment between the Japan and the Mekong region countries conducted by Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO), such as promotion of Japanese investment, human resource development in logistics, measures to support development of supporting industries, strengthening export industries and one village one product exhibition.

## **2. Promotion of Public-Private Cooperation**

2.1. Japan and the Mekong region countries will make efforts to expand participants of the existing public-private joint dialogues for the promotion of trade and investment. They will welcome the participation of Japanese companies in the Mekong region countries to the public-private joint dialogue held in a country in the Mekong region where they do not run business.

2.2. Japan will launch a new forum for the promotion of Public-Private Cooperation in the Mekong region, consisting of public, private and academic sectors of Japan and the Mekong region countries, to discuss issues of common interest among public and private sectors, including hard and soft infrastructure, logistics and distribution and industrial development.

2.3. Japan will assist in developing Lach Huyen Port in Viet Nam as a development model for Public-Private Partnership. The international deep-sea port and related infrastructure there will be developed by Japanese ODA loan, while maintenance and implementation of berth facility will be made by a consortium of multiple Japanese companies and Vietnamese companies.

2.4. Japan will utilize a special trade and investment finance framework by Nippon Export and Investment Insurance (NEXI) for the improvement of infrastructure in Asia to promote private companies to move into the market in the Mekong region together with Japanese ODA loan.

2.5. Japan will support investment to the Mekong region countries by Japanese companies on an individual project basis through financial measures including two-step loans by Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC).

2.6. Japan will support improvement of infrastructure related to major mine reserves in the Mekong region through ODA and other schemes to promote Japanese companies to participate in the development of infrastructures in the Mekong region. The Mekong region countries will welcome the activities of Japanese companies that will promote mutual benefit and ensure local development.

2.7. Japan and the Mekong region countries welcome the efforts of the ASEAN-Japan Centre such as organizing seminars on investment and dispatching investment missions to each of the Mekong region countries.

2.8. Japan and the Mekong region countries welcome the cooperation implemented by the Mekong Institute in Thailand and other institutions, in the field of human resource development on issues of common interest such as tourism, human trafficking, climate change, the Greater Mekong Subregion Cooperation (GMS) Cross Border Transport Agreement (CBTA), poverty reduction, public sector reform, immigration, environment, promotion of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and development of Mekong River region.

### **3. Support of the Development of Cross-regional Economic Rules and Systems**

3.1. Japan will promote human resource development for the improvement of the intellectual property system by holding seminars, accepting trainees and by dispatching experts conducted by Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), JETRO, the Association for Overseas Technical Scholarship (AOTS) and other relevant organizations. The Mekong region countries will provide appropriate protection in this field, in accordance with their respective laws and related international agreements.

3.2. Japan will implement support on economic legal infrastructure (seminar, acceptance of trainees, dispatch of experts), such as dispatch of custom administration advisors to improve economic legal infrastructure.

3.3. The Mekong region countries will conclude the necessary Memorandum of Understandings between/among relevant countries for the promotion of the full implementation of the CBTA. In this regard, Japan and the Mekong region countries welcome that JETRO will provide an opportunity for both administrative officers and logistics providers to learn knowledge and experiences of others on the CBTA in workshops regarding logistics and distribution organized by JETRO.

3.4 Japan will implement a logistics study on qualification/training system including truck driving.

## **Construction of a Society that values Human Dignity**

### **4. Environment and Climate Change - "A Decade toward the Green Mekong"-**

4.1. In the SOM to be held in the first half of the year 2010, Japan and the Mekong region countries will discuss the relevant issues materializing the concrete goals and actions to be implemented under "A decade toward the Green Mekong." The principal issues to be discussed in the SOM will be as follows:

- (1) Support by Japan in promoting sustainable forest management and related human resource development in the Mekong region, including a reforestation plan in coastal or dry areas;
- (2) Projects by Japan that contribute to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, including a program of the control of mangrove swamps for the improvement of life at community level, taking into account the fact that the 10th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity will be held in Japan in October 2010;
- (3) Cooperation between Japan and the Mekong region countries to promote the Mekong water resource management;
- (4) Cooperation by Japan related to energy-saving and clean energy providing technology and human resource development, such as the development of systems and human resources in the field of scientific and technological strategy of photovoltaic generation, and accepting trainees and promoting joint research in biomass;
- (5) Support by Japan to city planning resistant to flood, such as consolidation of sewage facilities and improvement of drainage system;
- (6) Support by Japan for the building of a society resistant to natural disasters through giving assistance to the improvement of weather and flood forecasting system, flood and drought management and mitigation of the Mekong River, and enhancing capability of local citizens to cope with, to protect themselves from and to recover quickly from the damages of natural disasters;
- (7) Projects for enhancing policy making capabilities in the field of environment and climate change of the governments of the Mekong region countries;

- (8) Cooperation between Japan and the Mekong region countries to ensure that all major economies agree on an ambitious target and on a fair and effective international framework beyond 2012 for addressing climate change; and
- (9) Efforts to be made by the Mekong region countries in the fields such as sustainable forest management, conservation, sustainable use of biodiversity and management of water resources.

4.2. Japan and the Mekong region countries will promote further cooperation in water environment management under the Water Environment Partnership in Asia (WEPA) by providing information and human resource development. In this regard, Japan will continue to support water resource management in the Mekong region countries, as well as to hold seminars aiming to reduce damages inflicted by water-related disasters in Asia.

4.3. Japan will continue to implement the Partnership Project on Impact Assessment of Climate Change, and support the Asia Pacific Climate Change Adaptation Network which enhances capacity of institutions working on adaptation in the Mekong region. The Mekong region countries affirm the importance of information and knowledge exchange on adaptation measures, and expressed their appreciation and support to the Network.

4.4. The Mekong region countries welcome Japan's initiative on Strengthening Monitoring, Assessment and Reporting on Sustainable Forest Management in collaboration with Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the Study on the Strengthening of Methodological and Technological Approaches for Reducing Deforestation and Forest Degradation within the Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries (REDD) Implementation Framework, and the Study Project on Forest management for mitigation of natural disaster.

4.5 Japan will continue to support the wide use of biomass through promoting construction of 'biomass towns' which realize comprehensive system for producing, collecting, converting and utilizing biomass, and making the most of the system in the region with ties between community and local stakeholders.

## **5. Overcoming vulnerability**

5.1. Japan will continue to support the Mekong region countries in their achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

5.2. Japan will continue to support the construction of hospitals in poverty areas and to diffuse medical knowledge to strengthen health systems in the region.

5.3. Japan will continue to support the construction of schools in poverty areas, such as three southern provinces in Laos, the northern mountainous area in Viet Nam and the area of the Ayeyawady delta in Myanmar affected by the cyclone "Nargis".

5.4. Japan and the Mekong region countries will continue to cooperate in the field of disaster relief, including the next ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) Field Exercise to be held in Indonesia in 2011.

5.5. Japan will continue to dispatch experts to improve resilience against water-related disasters such as river erosion and floods. The Mekong region countries appreciated Japan's contribution to develop measures and systems to reduce vulnerability to disasters and to minimise damage from disasters.

5.6. Japan will continue to actively support activities of the clearance of landmines and unexploded ordnances (UXOs) including cluster munitions, such as a project for strengthening support for the clearance of mines in CLV countries and their bordering areas.

5.7. Japan, in cooperation with NGOs, will assist clearance of UXOs in the Lao side of the Development Triangle, which was heavily affected by the Typhoon Ketsana in September, 2009.

5.8. Japan will implement the support to people easily affected by the slowdown of economy in the following fields:

- (1) Support for the poor population in cross-border regions (secure lifelines, improve educational standard, provide vocational training, etc.)
- (2) Measures against concerns that expand beyond borders (strengthen capacity to tackle rapidly-spreading infectious diseases, etc.)
- (3) Support to areas most easily affected by natural disasters (support recovery/improvement of the living environment of areas affected by typhoon/cyclones and heavy rains, improve resilience against natural disasters, etc.)

5.9. Japan will continue to support promoting agriculture and farming communities, improvement of food security, and improvement of quality of food products and safety in the Mekong region countries through measures such as dispatching experts.

5.10. Japan and the Mekong region countries will cooperate to tackle their common threat of pandemic influenza H1N1 and avian influenza H5N1. Japan, in cooperation with World Health Organization (WHO) and ASEAN, will continue to support the efforts in the Mekong region countries to strengthen pandemic preparedness and response through various measures such as extending technical cooperation.

5.11. Japan will promote collaborative joint research initiative between Japanese universities and their counterparts in ASEAN/Asia to counter infectious diseases such as avian flu and H1N1 influenza.

5.12. Japan will continue to promote Science and Technology cooperation through joint research with the Mekong region countries, in the areas of regional common issues such as environment, energy, disaster risk reduction and infectious diseases.

5.13. Japan and the Mekong region countries will cooperate in counter human trafficking.

5.14. Japan will strengthen its partnership with the NGOs, such as through a project of capacity building for the youths in the rural areas and construction of a bridge for the improvement of life in small villages.

## **6. Strengthening Cooperation for the Stability in the Region**

6.1. Japan and the Mekong region countries believe that the upcoming general elections to be held in 2010 in Myanmar would be transparent, democratic and inclusive, with participation of all parties concerned. They expect that the Government of Myanmar would take more positive steps in its democratization process. They also believe that the development of the Mekong region, including Myanmar, will be further progressed while its democratization proceeds.

6.2. Japan and the Mekong region countries urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) to fully comply with all relevant UNSC resolutions as well as to fully implement its commitments in the Six-Party Talks. They urge the DPRK to return immediately and without preconditions to the Six-Party Talks, which remains the most effective framework to discuss outstanding issues of concern regarding the DPRK. They also stress the need for the DPRK to address the humanitarian concerns of the international community including the abduction issue.

6.3. Japan and the Mekong region countries reaffirm the urgent need for the United Nations reform as indicated in the subsequent relevant resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly, especially the Security Council reform through expanding both its permanent and non-permanent membership. Japan highly appreciated the Mekong region countries' continuous support for Japan to become a permanent member of the UN Security Council.

## **7. Japan's ODA Policy to the Mekong region countries**

7.1. Regarding the Mekong region as a prioritized area, Japan will continue the policy to expand its Official Development Assistance (ODA) to CLV countries respectively as well as to the Mekong region as a whole. Japan commits more than 500 billion JPY of ODA in the next 3 years for the Mekong region to flourish further more. This commitment, which facilitates in part the flow of private investment, is expected to fully mobilize Japan's knowledge and financing, and lead to the promotion of the measures stated in the Tokyo Declaration in a more effective way. In this regard, the leaders of the Mekong region countries reaffirmed their commitment to utilize efficiently, effectively and properly ODA from Japan.

## **Expansion of Cooperation and Exchanges**

### **8. Enhancing Human Exchanges**

8.1. Japan will start a new initiative to invite a total of around 30,000 people, including the youths from the Mekong region countries in three years from 2010.

8.2. Japan will continue to enhance the exchange of youths between Japan and the Mekong region countries to achieve its intention to receive more than 10,000 youths of the Mekong

region countries in five years, stated in the Chair's Statement of the First Mekong-Japan Foreign Ministers' Meeting in January 2008.

8.3. Japan will continue to welcome students from the Mekong region countries to Japanese universities and other educational institutions, as well as to dispatch more students to the Mekong region countries. The Mekong region countries welcome this effort by Japan.

8.4. The Mekong region countries express their appreciation to the JENESYS (Japan-East Asia Network of Exchange for Students and Youths) Programme implemented by Japan, which will continue to promote mutual understanding between the Mekong region and Japan.

8.5. Japan and the Mekong region countries will activate exchange on parliamentarians and political parties. In this regard, Japan and the Mekong region countries appreciate Laos for its hosting "Mekong-Japan Seminar of Women Parliamentarian" on 21 and 22 December, 2009 and its inviting the delegation from Japan and other Mekong region countries.

8.6. Japan and the Mekong region countries promote exchange and cooperation between Kominkan in Japan and Community Learning Centers (CLCs) in the Mekong region countries to enhance the exchange in the field of non-formal education.

## **9. Promotion of tourism**

9.1. Japan and the Mekong region countries appreciate Viet Nam for its hosting "Mekong-Japan Festival of Tourism and Culture" in Can Tho City on 1 to 5 December, 2009 and its inviting the delegation from Japan and other Mekong region countries.

9.2. Japan and the Mekong region countries will encourage the ASEAN-Japan Centre to promote activities of tourism in the Mekong region (holding a fair on tourism, human resource development in the field of tourism, improvement of the contents of websites, etc.)

9.3. The Mekong region countries will make efforts ensuring tourist safety to establish an image of a "safe and secure Mekong region," and Japan will provide relevant assistance to these efforts. In particular, Japan and the Mekong region countries will explore measures to support enhancing the capabilities of "tourist police" in the Mekong region countries, such as the implementation of training programs.

9.4. Japan and the Mekong region countries welcome the promotion by the Mekong Area Tourism Promotion Committee of the Japan Association of Travel Agents (JATA) of the "Action Plan," including tourism promotion programs, exchange programs and information and intermediary services programs.

## **10. Protection of Cultural Heritages**

10.1. Japan will hold a symposium in Nara city, Japan, with the participation of representatives of ancient capitals in Japan and the Mekong region countries to reaffirm the importance of the



protection of cultural heritage and to exchange views on the utilization of cultural heritages for the economic development and tourism in Japan and the Mekong region countries.

10.2. Japan will continue to support the efforts of the Mekong region countries to safeguard and restore tangible and intangible cultural heritage, such as the restoration and capacity-building programs in the Angkor Temples in Cambodia and the Thang Long Royal Citadel in Viet Nam.

10.3. Japan and the Mekong region countries appreciate the activities of private sectors, NGOs and academic institutions for the excavation, conservation and restoration of cultural properties.