

## **「Han-River Declaration」 of Establishing the Mekong-ROK Comprehensive Partnership for Mutual Prosperity**

We, the Foreign Ministers of the Republic of Korea, the Kingdom of Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Republic of the Union of Myanmar, the Kingdom of Thailand and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, met in Seoul, Republic of Korea, on 27-28, October 2011, for the Inaugural Mekong-ROK Foreign Ministers' Meeting.

Recalling with deep satisfaction that the mutually beneficial relationship between the Mekong region countries and the ROK, underpinning the broader developments underway in the ASEAN-ROK Strategic Partnership set in 2010, Hanoi, Viet Nam, has made significant progress in recent years across the board in the areas of political, economic, and socio-cultural cooperation,

Sharing the view that the development of the Mekong region is essential to accelerating ASEAN integration, enhancing ASEAN Connectivity, and achieving the goal of building an ASEAN Community by 2015, and thus lending further impetus to regional cooperation and integration in wider East Asia,

Recognizing the Mekong region's vast potential for economic growth and development,

Acknowledging the need to address various global and regional challenges affecting the Mekong region such as climate change, poverty, food and energy insecurity, global economic instability and others,

Responding to the aspirations of the peoples of the Mekong region and the ROK for peace, prosperity and welfare,

Welcoming the ROK's reaffirmed commitment to expand its Official Development Assistance (ODA) to ASEAN by two-fold, in comparison to 2008 by the year 2015, much of which will be channelled into the Mekong region, as well as Thailand's strong commitment to providing development assistance to the region,

We hereby agree to set forth 'The Mekong-ROK Comprehensive Partnership for Mutual Prosperity' (referred to as the Partnership hereinafter) with the following objectives, principles, priority areas and mechanism of cooperation.

### **1. Objectives**

We shared the view that the Partnership should aim to promote friendship and cooperation between the Mekong region countries and the ROK in a wide range of areas, and thereby,

- > deepen the ASEAN-ROK Strategic Partnership established at the 13th ASEAN-ROK Summit held in October 2010, Hanoi, Viet Nam
- > contribute to sustainable development of the Mekong region
- > narrow the development gap within ASEAN, accelerate the ASEAN integration and expedite the process of ASEAN Community building scheduled for the year 2015
- > enhance regional cooperation and community building in East Asia with ASEAN playing a driving force

## **2. Principles**

Bearing in mind the above-mentioned objectives, we recognized that the Partnership should be guided by the following principles:

- > develop in an open, transparent and inclusive manner
- > pursue bilateral ties in a mutually beneficial way contributing to achieving the goals set by the ASEAN-ROK Strategic Partnership
- > reinforce and complement other bilateral cooperation mechanisms with the Mekong region such as the Mekong-Japan cooperation and the Lower Mekong Initiative (LMI).
- > seek to expand exchanges with the existing multi-lateral Mekong cooperation mechanisms such as Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS), Ayeyawady-Chao Phraya-Mekong Economic Cooperation Strategy (ACMECS), Mekong River Commission (MRC) and Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific (ESCAP)
- > support dialogue between public and private sectors on the socio-economic development and encourage the private sector to participate in related projects.
- > undertake development cooperation in line with the global principles of aid such as the Paris Declaration for Aid Effectiveness and G20 Seoul Development Consensus.

## **3. Priority Areas in Development Cooperation**

In consideration of the needs of the Mekong region and the strengths and aid capacities of the ROK, we agreed to launch the cooperation with a focus on the following priority areas:

ASEAN Connectivity: Infrastructure, ICT

Sustainable Development: Green Growth, Water Resource development

People-oriented Development: Agriculture and Rural Development, Human Resource Development

The priority areas listed above will be reviewed by both sides on a regular basis to timely cope with changing environments of development cooperation in the Mekong region. We task the Senior Officials to convene in due course to discuss appropriate plan of action to implement the vision set forth in this Declaration.

#### **4. The Mekong-ROK Foreign Ministers' Meeting**

To develop the Mekong-ROK cooperation into a more coordinated, systematic and sustainable mechanism, we decided to regularize the Mekong-ROK Foreign Ministers' Meeting.

The Meeting will be held annually back-to-back with the ASEAN Ministers' Meeting and related Meetings, co-chaired by one of the Mekong countries and the ROK. The Meeting will be held in Korea every three years. The Mekong countries will rotate the chairmanship in alphabetical order.

The Meeting will also discuss political and economic cooperation, with development cooperation at the center of the agenda.

In addition, the Meeting will be supported by a Mekong-ROK Senior Officials' Meeting, which will be held prior to the Foreign Ministers' Meeting. An efficient and effective working mechanism will be developed by Senior Officials to undertake Mekong – ROK cooperation activities.

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