

## **Co-Chairs' Statement of the 3rd Mekong-ROK Foreign Ministers' Meeting**

Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam, 30 June 2013

The Third Mekong-ROK Foreign Ministers' Meeting was held in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam on 30 June 2013, back to back with the 46th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting.

The Meeting was co-chaired by H.E. Mr. Yun Byung-se, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea, and H.E. Mr. Wunna Maung Lwin, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, and participated by H.E. Mr. Kao Kim Hourn, Secretary of State of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Kingdom of Cambodia, H.E. Mr. Alounkeo Kittikhoun, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, H.E. Mr. Surapong Tovichakchaikul, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Thailand, and H.E. Mr. Pham Binh Minh, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam.

### **Review and Future Direction of the Mekong-ROK Cooperation**

- The Ministers reviewed the progress and discussed the future direction for the Mekong-ROK cooperation, and exchanged in-depth views on regional and global issues and reaffirmed the importance of cooperation to enhance physical, institutional, and people-to-people connectivity in the Mekong region.
- The Ministers agreed to play important roles in the process of the implementation of the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity. In this regard, the Ministers tasked the Mekong-ROK Senior Officials to coordinate with the ASEAN Coordinating Committee on Connectivity to enhance connectivity in the Mekong region.

### **The pilot projects in the six priority areas of cooperation**

- The Ministers reviewed the status of the pilot projects in the six priority areas of cooperation, namely Infrastructure, ICT, Green Growth, Water Resources Development, Agriculture and Rural Development, and Human Resources Development (HRD).
- The Ministers appreciated the progress made in the implementation of pilot projects such as the project of the establishment of the "Mekong Transportation Institute", and human resources projects including the "Trade Policies and Agricultural Value Chains in the context of ASEAN Integration project", and the "GMS Capacity Building on Logistics project". The Ministers agreed to expand cooperation projects in the six priority areas for cooperation between the Mekong region and the ROK.
- The Ministers appreciated the successful convening of the 1st Mekong-ROK Business Forum in Bangkok, Thailand on 23 May 2013, and agreed to hold the 2nd Mekong-ROK Business Forum in Vietnam in 2014. The Ministers expect that the forum will contribute to promoting trade and investment between the Mekong countries and the ROK by greater engagement of private sectors.
- In order to encourage people-to-people interaction and to foster better understanding between the Mekong countries and the ROK, the Ministers agreed to pursue a variety of

cultural events in 2014 as the "Mekong-ROK Exchange Year", and will continue to discuss specific plans.

- The Ministers appreciated that the AFoCO (Asian Forest Cooperation Organization) has carried out the "Mekong RRR-DFE (Reclamation, Rehabilitation and Restoration of Degraded Forest Ecosystems)" project in collaboration with governments, private sectors and NGOs in the Mekong countries and the ROK. In addition, the Ministers welcomed the implementation of the "Saemaul Movement Project", the ROK's own development model in the past, in the Mekong region so as to share the ROK's development experience with the Mekong countries.

### **Mekong-ROK Cooperation Fund**

- The Ministers welcomed the establishment of the Mekong-ROK Cooperation Fund, which will provide financial resources for the implementation of mid-to long term cooperation projects between the Mekong countries and the ROK, and adopted the Terms of Reference of the "Mekong-ROK Cooperation Fund".

### **Mekong-ROK Action Plan**

- In order to come up with the "Mekong-ROK Action Plan" to be announced at the Fourth Mekong-ROK Foreign Ministers' Meeting, hosted by the ROK in 2014, the Ministers tasked senior officials to continue discussing specific strategies, actions, and procedures.

### **Strengthening Cooperation on Regional and Global Issues**

- The Ministers exchanged views on regional and global issues of mutual interest in the region such as natural disasters, food security, and the Korean peninsula. The Ministers shared the view that the Mekong countries and the ROK should cooperate more closely in this regard.

### **Mekong-ROK Meetings**

- The Ministers agreed to hold the Fourth Mekong-ROK Foreign Ministers' Meeting in 2014 in the Republic of Korea which is to be co-chaired by Thailand and the ROK. The venue and timing will be discussed through a diplomatic channel in due course.