

**VIENTIANE DECLARATION
OF THE 10TH AYEYAWADY-CHAO PHRAYA-MEKONG
ECONOMIC COOPERATION STRATEGY SUMMIT**

7 November 2024

“Towards Seamless Connectivity for Mekong Sub-Regional Integration”

1. We, the Heads of State/Government of the Kingdom of Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, the Kingdom of Thailand and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, gathered in Kunming, Yunnan Province, China on 7 November 2024 for the 10th Ayeyawady-Chao Phraya-Mekong Economic Cooperation Strategy (hereinafter referred to as ACMECS) Summit under the theme **“Towards Seamless Connectivity for Mekong Sub-Regional Integration”**.
2. We recalled with satisfaction that since its inception in 2003, ACMECS has made substantial progress in materialising the vision of “bridging the economic gap in the region and promoting prosperity sustainably”, based on the spirit of long-lasting harmony and solidarity and win-win cooperation at its heart; and contribute significantly to regional integration and development with immense economic potentials, enhance socio-economic development and improve well-being and the livelihood of the peoples in each Mekong Countries and the whole Mekong sub-region, as well as contributed to the ASEAN’s integration and ASEAN Community building process.
3. We reiterated the Phnom Penh Declaration of the 9th ACMECS Summit in 2020 and recognised that the Mekong sub-region has been confronting multidimensional challenges, including the issues of global supply chains, energy, water and food security, transboundary crimes, transboundary air pollution, climate change, transboundary plastic pollution, natural disaster, and other environmental issues, unemployment and job security, public health crisis and newly emerging health crisis posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, which have caused an immense disruption to our social and economic development, aggravated poverty, inequality and hunger, as well as severely threatened the well-being, livelihood and safety of our peoples.

4. We acknowledged that sustainable development is essential for addressing socio-economic and environmental and climate issues arising from non-traditional security threats since we recognised that those issues had caused rapid river level fluctuations along the Mekong River, disrupting the eco system and daily life of local people in the sub-region. Therefore, we reiterated our common aspiration and collective commitment to enhance the implementation of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change in order to build a better and more resilient future for our peoples. We also acknowledged the key role of financial sector in bridging the gap to achieve Paris Agreement and Sustainable Development Goals. In addition, we call on partners and donors to accelerate the flow of climate finance in the ASEAN region to respond to the needs and priorities of the ASEAN Member States in addressing global environment and climate change challenges.
5. We reiterated the Hanoi Declaration of the 7th ACMECS Summit in 2016 and reaffirmed our ongoing collective efforts to carry forward the ACMECS reforms and improve its coordination with other relevant sub-regional cooperation framework and ASEAN; narrowing the development gap of the economic integration among ACMECS Member Countries through the enhancement and simplification of rules and regulations to reduce unnecessary barriers and facilitate the intra-sub regional travelling and transactions of cross-border trade, services, and investment; advancing cooperation on human resource development and the effective utilisation of modern technology to enhance the competitiveness of ACMECS; further promoting multidimensional connectivity, including logistics and multimodal transport (Road, Water and Air), civil aviation cooperation, making full use of the economic corridors, particularly the Ease-West Corridor; digital economy; ensuring the safe and sustainable recovery of the tourism industry; and smoothing the mobility of goods and global value chain.
6. We expressed appreciation for the efforts made by the ACMECS Ministers, Senior Officials, Senior Finance Officials, and Coordinating Committees of Three Pillars: (1) Seamless ACMECS, (2) Synchronised ACMECS Economies, (3) Smart and Sustainable ACMECS in implementing the ACMECS Master Plan (2019-2023) and prioritised projects amidst severe challenges and socio-economic impacts brought by the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as the current regional and global tension and non-traditional security threats.

7. We reiterated the Bangkok Declaration of the 8th ACMECS Summit in 2018 to establish the ACMECS Development Fund (ACMDF), which called for the establishment of the ACMDF as a mechanism to mobilise resources for projects under the ACMECS Master Plan. Recognising the complexity involved in establishing the fund and its management system, we encourage active collaboration with international organisations and Development Partners, whose expertise and insight will be instrumental in creating a solid and sustainable foundation for the ACMDF. Therefore, we tasked the ACMECS Ministers to guide the Senior Finance officials and relevant agencies to further discuss the establishment of the ACMDF and operational mechanism that is practical and agreeable to all member countries. We look forward to a progress update at the next Summit.
8. We noted with satisfaction the establishment of two working groups with detailed Terms of Reference (TORs) developed under the ACMECS Senior Finance Officials, namely (i) Working Group on ACMECS Financial Cooperation Coordination and (ii) Working Group on ACMECS Infrastructure Financing, which will strengthen the financial coordination under the three pillars in funding mobilisation from Development Partners.
9. We noted the outcomes of the 6th ACMECS Senior Finance Officials' Meeting, held on 24 August 2022 in Vientiane, Lao PDR, during which the Meeting discussed issues relevant to the establishment of the ACMDF. While reiterating the principle of contribution from member countries on a voluntary basis, the majority of members preferred that the financial contribution to the ACMDF would be based on shares subscriptions owned by the ACMECS Member Countries and Development Partners. We encouraged relevant authorities of the ACMECS Countries, in collaboration with Development Partners and International Institutions, to further explore ways and means to expedite the setting up of the ACMDF.
10. We appreciated and welcomed the contribution from our ACMECS Development Partners, in which Japan's contribution of approximately USD 1.3 million to support ACMECS-branding projects on the business communities and SMEs affected by COVID-19 in the Mekong sub-region, and the Republic of Korea's contribution of USD 1 million for financing the ACMECS Branding Project to promote Pillar II (Synchronized ACMECS Economies) of the

ACMECS Master Plan (2019-2023), particularly in the area of cross-border facilitation.

11. We welcomed the successful outcome of the first ACMECS – Development Partners Senior Officials’ Meeting held on 21 November 2022 in Bangkok, Thailand, at which the six Joint Development Plans (JDPs) between ACMECS and Development Partners in the first batch, namely Australia, China, India, Japan, Republic of Korea, and the United States, were adopted. We look forward to actively engaging with the Development Partners to collectively promote Mekong development through the ACMECS mechanism, particularly in a number of significant cooperation areas as stated in the JDPs, including the post-COVID-19 recovery, human resource development and capacity building, sustainable development, transboundary water resources management, energy and food security, and climate resilience, amongst others.
12. We commended concerted efforts and determination of the ACMECS Working Groups for convening several meetings to deliberate on the Joint Development Plans (JDPs) between ACMECS and the first batch of ACMECS Development Partners, namely Australia, China, India, Japan, the Republic of Korea and the United States, which led to a comprehensive guideline for interaction between ACMECS and Development Partners so as to leverage diversity and foster prosperity of the Mekong sub-region through the implementation of prioritised projects under three pillars of the ACMECS Master Plan.
13. We appreciated New Zealand’s strong interest to engage with ACMECS, which we, hereby, endorsed the status of New Zealand as Development Partner (DP) of ACMECS. We will continue working closely on the details of cooperation areas for the benefit of both sides and ensure a positive contribution to the ACMECS’ development goals, particularly in fostering the integration and prosperity of ACMECS and reinforcing New Zealand’s cooperation in the Mekong sub-region through the implementation of projects and activities aligned with the three goals of the ACMECS Master Plan (the 3S), namely (1) Seamless Connectivity (2) Synchronized ACMECS Economies and (3) Smart and Sustainable ACMECS. We encouraged active cooperation with international organizations, development partners, and private sectors to improve resource mobilisation and accelerate the implementation of the prioritized projects.

14. We welcomed the successful convening of the 5th ACMECS Tourism Ministers' Meeting held on 3 November 2022, in Siem Reap, Cambodia, and commended the outcomes as appears in the Joint Statement of the Meeting. We also highly noted the efforts and endeavour of the ACMECS Tourism Ministers in upgrading the Plan of Action on ACMECS Tourism Cooperation (2019-2023) to the Plan of Action on ACMECS Tourism Cooperation (2023-2025) and adopting the Siem Reap Declaration on Future of ACMECS Tourism aimed at reactivating the tourism cooperation activities according to the current trend towards sustainable and resilient tourism recovery, which consists of (1) tourism promotion and marketing, (2) tourism product linkages, and private sector investment, (3) tourism information exchange, (4) tourism product development, (5) human resource development, and (6) Institutional Framework Enhancement to consider the possibility in establishing the ACMECS Tourism Secretariat or Coordinating Office in order to effectively conduct and coordinate the ACMECS activities.
15. We welcomed the successful establishment of the ACMECS Interim Secretariat (AIS) at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Thailand. We also took note with satisfaction of the signing ceremony of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Thailand, on behalf of the ACMECS Member Countries, and the Mekong Institute on the support to the ACMECS Interim Secretariat on 2 February 2024, in Bangkok, Thailand, which signified a commitment to collaborate in advancing regional cooperation and integration for sustainable development within the ACMECS framework. The AIS, with the support of the Mekong Institute as a back office, is aimed at propelling the ACMECS development agenda by operating under four core functions, namely (1) policy, planning and coordination (2) conferencing services (3) project management and (4) communication strategy.
16. We praised the launching ceremony of the official ACMECS Logo on 18 July 2024 in Bangkok, Thailand, which marked a milestone in celebrating the 20th anniversary of the establishment of ACMECS cooperation (2003-2023). The official logo reflects the identity of ACMECS as a forward-looking and Mekong-centric cooperation framework truly driven by the Mekong Countries. We also acknowledged the ACMECS Official Website launched on the same occasion to further promote public awareness of the ACMECS cooperation. In addition, we further acknowledged with great appreciation the adoption of

the logo of ACMECS Tourism by the ACMECS Tourism Ministers at the 5th ACMECS Tourism Ministers' Meeting to promote "Five Countries, One Destination."

17. We endeavoured to create favourable conditions to move forward economic integration among our respective countries, emphasising the development of multimodal transport links, advancement of civil aviation cooperation, enhancement of digital infrastructure, and elimination of dispensable measures on cross-border trading activities to facilitate the movement of goods, services, and investment within the sub-region. We further underlined the necessity to apply technological capacities in all economic sectors to stimulate digital economy transformation and enable ACMECS to become a logistics hub with seamless regional value chains.
18. We reaffirmed our shared aspiration to reinforce the balanced, inclusive and sustainable development in ACMECS Countries towards a three-S ACMECS Community of "Solidarity, Strength, and Sustainability" and further cooperation with other mechanisms in the Mekong Sub-region. We have attached great importance to strengthening human resource development through educational and vocational training cooperation and academic exchanges within the sub-region in order to build a future generation of skilled workforce, and a hub of industrial base to fulfill the requirements of the regional and global marketplace, especially in the 4th Industrial Revolution era.
19. We reaffirmed our share commitment to advancing connectivity agenda to seize opportunities, and towards effectively addressing present and emerging challenges, and leveraging on synergies with other connectivity-related initiatives and frameworks across the region, including the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity 2025.
20. We acknowledged the importance of the prioritized projects which appears as Annex 1 of the ACMECS Master Plan (2019-2023) and the need to extend the implementation period of the ACMECS Master Plan (2019-2023) since it remains relevant to the current development trends so as to bring about more practical achievements to the sub-region. Therefore, we tasked the ACMECS Ministers, Senior Officials, the Interim Secretariat, and the Coordinating Committees of the Three Pillars, to review and assess the implementation outcomes of the current ACMECS Master Plan (2019-2023), select feasible

project to be implemented while prepare a draft of the new ACMECS Master Plan with an updated vision and additional focus areas on enhancing cross-border digital trade, digital literacy and capacity, life-long learning, strengthen capacity of public health system, green growth and other areas aligned with digital and green transformation and digital economy amongst other, in order to report in the next Summit.

21. We emphasised the need for enhanced environmental cooperation, particularly in sustainable and effective water resources management, as it is crucial for sustainable development, food and energy security, climate resilience and adaptation, as well as the well-being of our people in the region. On that note, we welcomed the incorporation of the Concept Note on Water Resources Management in the Mekong Sub-Region as an annex of the ACMECS Master Plan (2019-2023). The initiative aimed to propose a coordinated strategy for sustainable water resources management in the Mekong region and enhance cross-border cooperation to strengthen the region's resilience to climate related challenges.
22. We recognised the devastating impact of natural disasters, including water related disasters, and climate change on sustainable development of the ACMECS Countries. In this regard, we reiterated our commitment to further collaborating with regional and international organizations, especially the Mekong River Commission (MRC) to further enhancing water resources management, disaster risk reduction and building disaster resilience in the Mekong sub-region, including through mainstreaming disaster risk reduction into various development sectors with the active engagement of both local and national stakeholders, enhancing knowledge and capacity on building resilient infrastructure, and strengthening disaster risk management systems to deliver anticipatory action, including but not limited to the risk information, forecasting and early warning systems of the Mekong countries.
23. We welcomed the offer of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to host the eleventh ACMECS Summit. The specific date and venue will be coordinated through diplomatic channels.
24. We expressed our appreciation to the Government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic as the Chairman of ACMECS, in collaboration with the People's Republic of China, an ACMECS Development Partner, for the

warmest hospitality accorded to all member delegations and excellent arrangements made for the Summit.

Adopted on 7 November 2024.