

# Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS): Twenty-third Meeting of the Subregional Transport Forum 23 (STF-23)

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# Greater Mekong Railway Association (GMRA)

## Mission

To increase railway connectivity throughout the GMS  
in order to promote efficient, safe, and environmentally sustainable rail transport  
of goods and people with and beyond the subregion

## Goals and Priority Actions

- ❖ Ensure that all GMS countries are connected to a GMS rail network by 2020.
- ❖ Promote the development of a seamless GMS rail network by:
  - Agreeing on technical standards of interoperability
  - Streamlining and harmonizing procedures for cross border movement of goods and people
- ❖ Develop the institutions and procedures to effectively integrate the national railways across the GMS.
- ❖ Ensure that railways, rolling stock and equipment are modern and sufficient to meet the demand for rail services.
- ❖ Involve the private sector, as required, in the planning and development of the GMS railway network.

# GMRA Activities

- ❖ The activities are organized into two (2) working groups:
  - General Meeting Group (every 18 months):
    - ❖ First in Kunming, Yunnan, PRC on 10 March 2015
    - ❖ Second in Beijing, PRC on September 2016
    - ❖ Third in Vientiane, Laos on March 2018
    - ❖ The next meeting will be held in Myanmar
  - The Technical Working Group Meetings:
    - ❖ Started on October 2014, have been held in Cambodia, Thailand, Vietnam, Myanmar, Laos, PRC and Philippine.
    - ❖ The previous meeting held in Manila, Philippine on May 2019
    - ❖ The next working group meetings are still consider by ADB



# GMRA Technical Assistance (TAs)

- ▶ **TA 8529-REG** Support for the Establishment of the Greater Mekong Railway Association (April 2014 – June 2016)
- ▶ **TA 8748-REG** Support for Implementing the Action Plan for Transport and Trade Facilitation in the Greater Mekong Subregion Subproject 2 (On-going)
- ▶ **TA 9123-REG** Connecting the Railways of the Greater Mekong Subregion (On-going)

# Tasks of Working Groups

Working Group	Objectives (ToR)	Country Co-Leads
<b>Network Connectivity (future steering group for proposed TA)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li># Develop plan for completing missing links (ADB has proposed TA to look at pre-feasibility/feasibility studies including costs and timelines)</li> <li># Develop investment requirements and identify financing options</li> <li># Develop marketing program to sell to potential financiers</li> <li># Define reporting requirements and data to be collected</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li># Cambodia</li> <li># Vietnam</li> </ul>
<b>Network Integration and Inter-operability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li># Develop agreements/ recommendations               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Intergovernmental and</li> <li>✓ Bilateral/Technical, to define                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equipment and infrastructure specifications and standards</li> <li>• Safety standards</li> <li>• Modifications to customs, immigration and quarantine (CIQ) systems to ensure enhanced connectivity</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li># Develop Institutions – ticketing and freight billing</li> <li># Train inter-operability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li># Lao PDR</li> <li># Thailand</li> </ul>

# Tasks of Working Groups

Working Group	Objectives (ToR)	Country Co-Leads
<b>Partnerships and GMRA Operations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li># Identify various membership options, including outside GMS member countries</li><li># Develop approach &amp; methods for attracting private participation/funding in the GMRA, to include best practices of UIC and OSJD</li><li># Identify GMRA operational requirements and funding options, especially post ADB support (ending 2016)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li># Myanmar</li><li># PRC</li></ul>
<b>Secretariat</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Support for GMRA Activities</li></ul>	

# GMS Priority Missing Links

STF  
23  
2019

GREATER MEKONG RAILWAY  
ASSOCIATION (GMRA)

Link 4:  
MYA-PRC  
Muse/Ruili

Link 3:  
MYA-THA  
Banpunamron

Link 1:  
CAM-THA  
Border Bridge/  
Aranyaprathet

Link 5:  
LAO-PRC  
Boten/Mohan

Link 9:  
VIE-PRC  
Hekou/Lao Cai

Link 6:  
LAO-VIE  
Mu Gia

Link 7:  
THA-LAO-VIE  
Chongmek/Vangtao  
Lao Bao

Link 8:  
LAO-CAM  
Dong Kralor/Voun Kam

Link 2:  
CAM-VIE  
Snoul/Loc Ninh



Note: First Proof, 3 March 2015  
Second Proof, 6 March 2015  
Third Proof, 5 May 2015  
Fourth Proof, 2 June 2015  
Fifth Proof, 19 June 2015

National Capital  
 City/Town  
 Road  
 River  
 Provincial Boundary  
 International Boundary  
 Boundaries not necessarily authoritative.

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# Agreed Priority GMS Missing Links (1)

LINK	CORRIDOR	MISSING LINK	Length (km)	Cost Estimate (USD Million)
1	Kunming, Ha Noi, HCMC, Phnom Penh, Bangkok (SKRL Main Line)	CAM: Poipet - Border Bridge/Aranyaprathet	6.5	6.5
		THA: Aranyaprathet - Klong Luk Bridge (Border Bridge with CAM)	6	3.5
2	Kunming, Ha Noi, HCMC, Phnom Penh, Bangkok (SKRL Main Line)	CAM: Bat Doeung - Snoul (Loc Ninh)	258	1300
		VIE: Loc Ninh (Snoul) - Ho Chi Minh City	129	900
3	Kunming, Mandalay, Mawlamyine, Yangon, Bangkok (SKRL West Spur Line)	MYA: Dawei - (Banpunamron)	170	N/A
		THA: Banpunamron - Kanchanaburi	88	136
4	Kunming, Mandalay, Mawlamyine, Yangon, Bangkok (SKRL West Spur Line)	MYA: Lashio - Muse (Ruili)	232	N/A
		PRC: Ruili (Muse) - Baoshan	196	3000
5	Kunming, Vientiane	LAO: Vientiane - Luangprabang - Boten (Mohan)	414	6000
		PRC: Mohan (Boten) - Yuxi	504	7200

# Agreed Priority GMS Missing Links (2)

LINK	CORRIDOR	MISSING LINK	Length (km)	Cost Estimate (USD Million)
<b>6</b>	Kunming, Ha Noi, Vung Ang, Thakek, Vientiane (SKRL East Spur Line)	LAO: Vientiane - Thakhek - Mu Gia	450	4119
		VIE: Mu Gia - Vung Ang	119	N/A
<b>7</b>	GMS East-West Corridor	THA: Mukdahan - Savannakhet	N/A	N/A
		LAO: Thakhek - Savannakhet - Pakse - Vangtau (Chongmek)	342	5000
		THA: Ubonrachatani - Chongmek (Vangtau)	78	N/A
		LAO: Savannakhet - Lao Bao	220	5000
		VIE: Lao Bao - Dong Ha	114	800
<b>8</b>	Vientiane - Pakse - Phnom Penh	LAO: Pakse - Dong Kralor (Voun Kam)	N/A	N/A
		CAM: Voun Kam (Dong Kralor) - Snoul	249	1200
<b>9</b>	Kunming, Ha Noi, HCMC, Phnom	VIE: Lao Cai - Hekou	4	N/A
		PRC: Hekou - Lao Cai	4	20
			Total Estimated Cost	35.685 Million

# SKRL ROUTE



## Regional Railway Connectivity:

- There are totally 9 missing links in the GMS Railway Lines.
- The estimated budget to construct all the missing links in GMS is estimated US\$40 Billions.
- One of Potential GMS Railway Lines through Cambodia: Bangkok-Phnom Penh-Ho Chi Minh City – Hanoi-Kunming and Nanning.
- The SKRL Line within Cambodia is 612km, including missing 258km (Batdoeung to Snuol)

# Framework Agreement for Cross-Border Railway Transport Connectivity in the GMS

## ► At the Asian Development Bank in Manila, Philippines 24 May 2019

The representatives discussed the 44 Articles of the draft Framework Agreement, with the following objectives:

- (i) facilitate the cross-border movement of rolling stock and the cross-border railway transport of goods and people between and among the Contracting Parties;
- (ii) simplify and harmonize legislation, regulations, procedures, and requirements relating to the cross-border railway transport of goods and people;
- (iii) promote the development of an interoperable Subregional railway network; and
- (iv) promote multimodal transport.

At the conclusion of the negotiation meeting, the participants agreed that the draft Framework Agreement will be further revised, in line with the discussions, with a view to finalizing the text for adoption at the next general meeting. Following the signing of the Framework Agreement, the dedicated future Annexes and Technical Arrangements mentioned in the Framework Agreement will be negotiated and subsequently implemented.

## ► Second Phase of the Regional Knowledge and Support Technical Assistance

- (i) establishing the preferred organization structure of the GMRA;
- (ii) developing an operational readiness plan for GMRA; and
- (iii) updating the GMS railway strategy



# Challenges

- ▶ Investment required to develop a connected railway network could cost as much as \$40 Billion, after feasibility studies are updated
- ▶ GMRA's priority challenge is to obtain funding to build these lines – without a railway network the “soft” activities on developing institutions and on interoperability may show little progress
- ▶ GMRA Member Countries face many other issues related to the implementation of the GMRA railway network outside of funding
  - policy issues related to financing options (Government, BoT, Regional)
  - need to ensure that the existing national networks are upgraded and operating efficiently as it make little sense to connect if the national railways are performing poorly
  - environmental and social impact issues related to new railway construction
  - lack of railway regulatory institutions in GMRA Member countries, except for PRC

# Issues

- ▶ Investment required to develop a connected railway network could cost as much as \$40B
- ▶ Need to ensure that the both national networks and regional connections are upgraded and operating efficiently
- ▶ With the current TAs, Working Group 3 on GMRA Operations and Membership is currently not being funded.
  - secretariat operations
  - structure of the organization
  - conditions for participation by other organizations and private companies

# Future

- ▶ GMS countries agreed to continue realization of greater GMS railway connectivity, in the areas of
  - improving the GMRA organization structure;
  - developing an operational readiness plan for GMRA;
  - updating the GMS railway strategy;
  - preparing bankable railway projects for investment opportunities
  
- ▶ ADB, as secretariat of GMRA, will pursue for further assistance to GMRA for:
  - developing governance principles;
  - draft job descriptions for the GMRA staff and Working Groups;
  - formulate a three-year business plan;
  - strengthen its technical capacity and planning tools; and
  - negotiation and finalization of the revised Cross-Border Railway Transport Connectivity Agreement (CBRTCA) among the GMS countries