

BOARD INFORMATION PAPER

Greater Mekong Subregion Economic Cooperation Program 4th GMS Summit Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar 19–20 December 2011

A. INTRODUCTION

1. The 4th Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) Summit was held on 19–20 December 2011 in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar. The Summit was attended by President Thein Sein of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, who chaired the Summit, Prime Minister Hun Sen of Cambodia, Prime Minister Thongsing Thammavong of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra of Thailand, Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung of Viet Nam, and State Councilor Dai Bingguo of the People's Republic of China. The ADB President (the President) participated in the Summit Closed Door Meeting or Retreat.

2. The Summit theme was “Beyond 2012: Towards a New Decade of GMS Strategic Development Partnership”. In line with this theme, the key deliverable and result of the Summit was the adoption of a new GMS Ten-Year Strategic Framework (2012-2022), which aims at ensuring the sustainability and continued effectiveness of the GMS Program as it starts its third decade amidst a complex and evolving regional and global environment.

3. The new GMS Strategic Framework 2012-2022 (SF) marks a generational gear-shift in the GMS program, marking a transition into a multisector approach to regional connectivity and competitiveness anchored on a corridor-development approach that provides a spatial and thematic focus over the medium term. The new SF recognizes that further development of first generation transport corridors in GMS into economic corridors entails focusing on widening and deepening of these corridors through development of areas along and contiguous to the corridors; this will enhance the impact of GMS regional cooperation on poverty reduction through inclusive growth.¹ A substantial investment program will be needed to implement the new SF, encompassing multisector investments in urban development, secondary and rural roads linking to established corridors, integrated area development in semi-urban and rural corridor nodes, and multimodal transport, along with strengthening of software related to trade and transport facilitation, logistics, regional power market, and sustainable development. These next generation projects will also require increased emphasis on knowledge-based outputs facilitating empirically and analytically informed policy formulation and investment decisions.

B. HIGHLIGHTS OF FOURTH GMS SUMMIT EVENTS

4. The Summit consisted of the following key events: (i) a closed-door meeting or retreat among the GMS Leaders and the President; (ii) ceremonies for the presentation of the new GMS Strategic Framework (SF) and of various sector outputs; (iii) signing ceremonies for various agreements on subregional initiatives; and (iv) a business and investment conference organized by the private sector. (The Summit Program is in Appendix 1.)

¹ The new GMS Strategic Framework 2012-2022 is available at <http://beta.adb.org/documents/greater-mekong-subregion-economic-cooperation-program-strategic-framework-2012-2022>.

i. Leaders' Closed Door Meeting or Retreat

5. The closed-door meeting among the GMS Leaders and ADB President started with an overview report on the GMS Program by the ADB President. This was followed by discussion on the nature and extent of commitment and support that each country can provide for implementation of the new SF, focusing particularly on resource mobilization and ways of effectively engaging subnational public and private stakeholders in the implementation of the new SF. (The meeting agenda is in Appendix 2).

6. In his report, President Kuroda noted the GMS Program has achieved progress in infrastructure, including implementation of road and power interconnection projects, as well as in software and other sector work, including start of implementation of the Transport and Trade Facilitation Action Plan and preparation of the second phases of key sector programs in environment, agriculture, and tourism. Significant challenges remain ahead for the region, including economic uncertainty in the western economies; climate change, energy sufficiency, food safety, and international health hazards. In this regard, the report emphasized a continued focus on infrastructure investment anchored on enhanced economic corridor development; innovative approaches; policy, institutional reforms and capacity building; inclusive engagement of all stakeholders; and intensified mobilization of resources.

7. The ensuing discussion focused on possible ways to support the successful implementation of the new SF. It was recognized that effective implementation of the new GMS SF will need an investment framework and regional plan comprising a new generation of specific, time-bound and well-coordinated activities, programs and projects, and called on ADB to support development of the same. The need for ADB to help mobilize the substantial financial, knowledge and technical resources necessary was also noted. Other issues emphasized included: (i) complementing infrastructure with policy and institutional reforms, including capacity building; (ii) greater decentralization; (iii) increased coordination and links across the different sectors of cooperation; and (iv) developing a GMS knowledge platform.

ii. Presentation Ceremonies for the New SF and Sector Outputs

8. During these ceremonies, the following were presented to and endorsed by the GMS Leaders:

- a) New GMS Strategic Framework (2012-2022);
- b) Refocused GMS Tourism Strategy, which aims to strengthen the tourism industry in the subregion through greater distribution of its economic benefits, gender equality, preservation of ecological and cultural heritage, and contribution to poverty alleviation
- c) Core Agriculture Support Program Phase II (CASP II), which seeks to expand subregional trade in agri-food products; promote climate change adaptation, including the use of climate-friendly and gender-responsive bioenergy technologies; and ensure sustainable agricultural development as well as food safety and security;
- d) Phase II of the Core Environment Program- Biodiversity Conservation Corridor Initiative (CEP-BCI), which will consolidate and enhance gains made under the first phase of the program toward preserving and utilizing the subregion's vital natural assets, thus ensuring the subregion's sustainable development.

iii. Signing Ceremonies

9. During these ceremonies, the Leaders witnessed the signing of the following agreements on key areas of subregional cooperation:

- a) MOU for Joint Action to Reduce HIV Vulnerability Related to Population Movement;
- b) MOU on the Joint Cooperation in Further Accelerating the Construction of the Information Superhighway and its Application in the GMS; and
- c) MOA on the Establishment the GMS Freight Transporters Association (FRETA)

iv. Business and Investment Conference

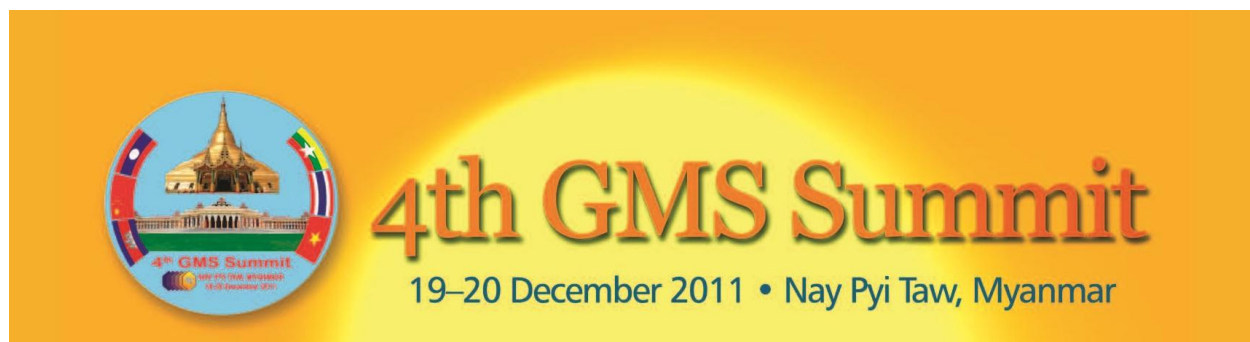
10. A Business and Investment Conference (BIC) was held in the afternoon of 19 December 2011, organized by the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI) in coordination with the GMS Business Forum (GMS-BF) and attended by private sector participants from the six GMS countries. The BIC discussed possible ways to further facilitate cross-border transport, including the establishment of the GMS FRETA; to improve small and medium enterprises' (SMEs) access to finance; and to promote cross-border investments in the GMS. The BIC's report and recommendations were presented to the Leaders by the President of the UMFCCI.

C. CONCLUSION

11. The Fourth GMS Summit was successful on several counts. It marked the adoption by the Leaders of a new GMS Strategic Framework to guide the cooperation program as it enters its third decade. The countries appreciated the shift in the program towards a multisector investment approach backed by increased emphasis on the software of institutional and policy reforms as well as a knowledge platform, enhanced engagement with development partners and increased role for private sector. The Summit also provided an opportunity for the GMS leaders and the ADB President to renew commitment to regional cooperation and to engage in discussion on the directions for the GMS program and implementation of the new SF. Finally, the Fourth GMS Summit reaffirmed the crucial role that ADB plays in the GMS Program and the GMS countries' continued trust and mandate for the Bank to be the Program's lead coordinating agency and secretariat.

12. At a different level, the GMS Summit was an important milestone for the host nation, being the first international summit in a long period, which will be useful as Myanmar increases engagement with the global community, including hosting the ASEAN Summit in 2014. The GMS Summit also provided a useful mechanism for ADB, as the secretariat for the GMS program, to strengthen its links with the host country that will facilitate implementation of the roadmap for engagement with Myanmar.

13. The GMS Leaders issued a Joint Summit Declaration, entitled "Nay Pyi Taw Declaration", which sums up the key achievements of the GMS Program that they reviewed during the Summit, their continued commitment to it, and the key directions for the Program going forward. (The Declaration is in Appendix 3.)



PROGRAM OF ACTIVITIES

Myanmar International Convention Center, Nay Pyi Taw

Monday, 19 December 2011

Morning/Afternoon	Arrival of GMS Leaders (<i>Timing and Logistics to be determined by Host</i>)
0900 - 1200	Final Task Force Meeting for the Fourth GMS Summit Venue: Delegates Listening Room (1), Ground Floor Participants: GMS Summit Task Force members and ADB
1215 - 1330	Lunch for the SOM and Official Delegates Venue: Banquet Hall, 1st Floor, section A
	Lunch for the Business and Investment Conference Participants – Hosted by Minister/Deputy Minister for Commerce, Myanmar Venue: Banquet Hall, 1st Floor, section B
1330 - 1700	GMS Business and Investment Conference: Organized by the Host with the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Chamber of Commerce and Industry and GMS Business Forum Venue: Delegates Listening Room (2), Ground Floor Participants: Invited Business Representatives from the private sector (20-25 participants from each GMS Country), Representatives of GMS National Coordinator Offices, and other invited guests
1900 - 2100	Gala Dinner and Cultural Performance Venue: Banquet Hall, 1st Floor Participants: By invitation; to be determined by Host

Tuesday, 20 December 2011

0900 - 0930	Opening Ceremony <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group Photo of GMS Leaders • Opening Statement by the Chairperson of the GMS Summit • Video on GMS Activities in Myanmar Venue: Banquet Hall, 1st Floor Participants: GMS Leaders; GMS Ministers and Other Ministers; GMS
--------------------	--

delegations; ADB; private sector/business representatives; and other invited guests
(Summit Participants should be at the Banquet Hall, 1st Floor, by 0845 hours.)

- 0930 - 1005 Ceremonies to be participated by the GMS Leaders**
- Video highlighting GMS achievements, with focus on sector deliverables (tourism, agriculture, and environment)
1. Ceremony to present the Refocused GMS Tourism Strategy
 2. Ceremony to present Core Agriculture Support Program Phase II (CASP II)
 3. Ceremony to present Phase II of the Core Environment Program-Biodiversity Conservation Corridor Initiative (CEP-BCI)
 4. Presentation to the Leaders of the New GMS Strategic Framework, 2012-2022
- 1005- 1020 Reporting to the GMS Leaders from GMS Business and Investment Conference**
- 1020-1025 Hand-Over of the Chairmanship of the GMS Business Forum**
- 1025- 1040** *GMS Leaders will proceed to the Holding Room next to the Summit Room to wait for the Fourth GMS Summit Closed Door Meeting.*
- 1040 - 1230 Fourth GMS Summit Closed Door Meeting**
Venue: Summit Room, 1st Floor
Participants: GMS Leaders and ADB President
Each Leader will be joined by 4 high-ranking officials.
- Five (5) persons per country delegation will be allowed to view and listen to the closed door meeting at the Ministers' Listening Room located at the 1st Floor.*
- 1230 - 1330 Lunch**
- **Lunch for GMS Leaders** (Venue: VIP Lunch Room, 1st Floor)
 - **Lunch for Ministers, GMS National Coordinators plus 3** (Venue: Signing Room, 1st Floor)
 - **Lunch for other participants** (Venue: Delegates Listening Room 2 and SOM Holding Room, Ground Floor)
- 1330 - 1400** *After Lunch, the GMS Leaders will proceed to and wait in the VIP Holding Room prior to the next events, the Signing Ceremonies they will witness.*
- 1400- 1435 Signing Ceremonies to be Witnessed by the GMS Leaders**
- **MOU for Joint Action to Reduce HIV Vulnerability Related to Population Movement**
 - **MOU on the Joint Cooperation in Further Accelerating the Construction of the Information Superhighway and its Application in the GMS**

- **MOA on the Establishment the GMS Freight Transporters Association (FRETA)**

Venue: Banquet Hall, 1st Floor

Participants: GMS Leaders; GMS Ministers and other Ministers; GMS delegations; ADB; representatives from the GMS Business Forum; and other invited guests

1450- 1530

Briefing to the Media on the Fourth GMS Summit

Venue: News Briefing Room, Ground Floor

Participants: Chair of the Fourth GMS Summit to be accompanied by Ministers and other officials; and Media

1700

Departure from Nay Pyi Taw

VIP Spouses Program

Monday, 19 December 2011

1300 - 1500

Visit to Gem Museum

1530 - 1700

Visit to Uppatasanti Pagoda and Integrated Model Farm

1900 - 2100

Gala Dinner and Cultural performance

Tuesday, 20 December 2011

0930 - 1130

Visit to Village of National Races

1200

Lunch

1330 - 1500

Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association

1700

Departure from Nay Pyi Taw



**Leaders' Retreat
(Closed Door Meeting)²
20 December 2011, 1115–1230 hrs**

Annotated Agenda

1040–1045 Opening Statement of the President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and Chair of the 4th GMS Summit

[The President's Opening Statement will include an explanation of the Retreat's purpose and topic/key questions.]

1045–1055 ADB President's Report on the GMS Program

[The ADB President will give a report on the developments in and achievements of the GMS Program since the last Summit.]

1055–1225 Open Discussion Among Leaders on Key Questions

[The Chair will open and moderate the discussions on the main topic (consisting of two key subtopics or questions).]

Main Topic:

The nature and extent of commitment and support that each country can provide for the implementation the new Strategic Framework.

Subtopic/question No. 1:

How can GMS resource mobilization be enhanced?

[In the first round of discussions, each of the other 5 Leaders and ADB President can give, in his/her turn, which is in alphabetical

² Participants: GMS Leaders and ADB President. *[Each Leader will be joined by 4 high-ranking officials (Leaders will be accompanied by their respective GMS Ministers, 2 other designated Ministers, and GMS National Coordinators). The ADB President will be joined by 4 other senior ADB officials.] Each GMS country and ADB will be requested to designate a maximum of five representatives for the viewing/listening room.*

order based on country name, his/her views on the overall topic and his/her proposed response to the first subtopic/question; then the Chair can give his views last and wrap up the first round.]

Subtopic/question No. 2:

Given the new SF's strong focus on corridor development in the GMS Program, how can subnational public and private stakeholders at the corridor levels be more closely and actively engaged in effective implementation of the new SF? What role can public investment have in attracting private investments in corridor development?

[The discussions can follow the same procedure as in the first subtopic/question.]

1225–1230 Summing Up and Closing Remarks by the Summit Chair

1230-1235 Consideration and Formal Endorsement of the Fourth GMS Summit Joint Declaration (Nay Pyi Taw Declaration)



Joint Summit Declaration
THE FOURTH GMS SUMMIT
Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar
19–20 December 2011

NAY PYI TAW DECLARATION
“BEYOND 2012: TOWARDS A NEW DECADE OF
GMS STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP”

**THE FOURTH GMS SUMMIT
Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar
19–20 December 2011**

**NAY PYI TAW DECLARATION
“BEYOND 2012: TOWARDS A NEW DECADE OF GMS STRATEGIC
DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP”**

WE, the Heads of the Governments of the Kingdom of Cambodia, the People’s Republic of China, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, the Kingdom of Thailand, and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, on the occasion of the Fourth GMS Summit:

Witnessing the substantial achievements in the first two decades of cooperation under the GMS Program, particularly in terms of the enhanced connectivity in the subregion as well as in ongoing efforts to address shared social and environmental concerns;

Realizing that this success was achieved through pragmatic and results-oriented joint undertakings broadly guided by the sound principles, thrusts and programs set in the first Ten-Year GMS Strategic Framework (2002–2012) adopted by the First GMS Summit in Phnom Penh in 2002, further refined by the Second Summit in Kunming in July 2005 to emphasize greater competitiveness, reviewed and refocused by the Third GMS Summit in Vientiane in 2008 to enhance its effectiveness;

Being aware of the serious challenges and risks that the region and the world now face and that potentially threaten the sustainability of the gains already achieved as well as the realization of further benefits from cooperation;

Recognizing also that the GMS Program has matured considerably since its formation in 1992, with a wealth of lessons learned as well as greatly changed aspirations and requirements;

Appreciating the value of even stronger and closer cooperation and of responsive and innovative approaches in addressing and surmounting the challenges ahead and tapping the opportunities that the new regional and global landscape offers:

HEREBY REAFFIRM our commitment to GMS cooperation and our resolve to pursue with great vigor a new generation of shared undertakings, guided by a new strategic framework that is designed not only to enable the subregion to survive this new and challenging decade but also to bring it significantly closer to our vision of an integrated, prosperous, and harmonious subregion.

Continued Progress amidst Challenges

1. The global and regional economic landscape has greatly changed in the three years since the last GMS Summit. Uncertainties from the worst economic recessions in recent history still dominate the global economy. Fortunately, our region is leading the way toward recovery, though the road ahead remains rough, volatile and fraught with

risks. Moreover, serious concerns that go beyond the economy, such as environmental sustainability, climate change, disaster risks, communicable diseases, energy sufficiency, and food security have grown into real threats to the subregion's survival and sustained development.

2. Despite this difficult backdrop, our cooperation program has continued to give good results. We moved steadily toward the completion and expansion of the physical base of regional connectivity. Our main road corridors are now essentially complete, with the few missing links already being filled, and their reach is being widened through linked secondary roads. We are giving increasing attention to railways in line with the overarching goals of multimodalism and efficiency as well as with the demands of energy and environmental conservation. A broad long-term strategy for connecting our railways is in place and a plan is underway for jointly setting up an office to coordinate railway development in the subregion. On the software side, a comprehensive program for facilitating transport and trade has been formulated and adopted, with its components including expansion of exchange of traffic rights and improvement of the customs transit system. A GMS freight transport association has been established to help in professionalizing and strengthening the transport industry and to give the private sector a voice in designing and implementing transport and trade facilitation measures in the region. A system for monitoring progress in transport and trade facilitation along the GMS corridors has been developed and will soon be implemented.

3. The GMS power sector master plan, which was updated in 2010, now guides efforts in planning and implementing key projects for power generation and cross-border interconnections and for improving individual country transmission systems toward the establishment of regional power trade arrangements. Good progress is being made in the establishment of a regional coordination center for power trade, which will facilitate increased exchange of information on member countries' energy sector plans. In broader energy cooperation, ongoing work under the GMS energy road map aims to promote clean and renewable energy sources, energy access, efficiency and supply security, and public-private partnerships in the sector. In telecommunications, a Memorandum of Understanding on the Joint Cooperation in Further Accelerating the Construction of the Information Superhighway and Its Application in the GMS has been signed, providing the directions and parameters for promoting universal access to ICT applications that will help accelerate the subregion's development, particularly in the areas of e-commerce to meet the demands of industries, rural ICT to bridge the digital divide, and green ICT technology to promote energy efficiency.

4. On the environment, we endorse the framework for the second phase of the GMS Core Environment Program (CEP)-Biodiversity Conservation Corridor Initiative (BCI) that will cover the period 2012–2016 and will consolidate and enhance gains made under the first phase of the program toward preserving and utilizing our vital natural assets, thus ensuring the subregion's sustainable development. This will be done through strengthening of development planning systems, methods and safeguards; improving the management of conservation landscapes for sustainable livelihoods; enhancing climate change resilience and promoting low-carbon development; and strengthening of institutions and promoting sustainable financing for environmental management.

5. We also endorse the new vision and broad strategy embodied in the second phase of the Core Agriculture Support Program covering the period 2011–2015, and

welcome work being undertaken to further expand subregional trade in agri-food products; promote climate change adaptation, including the use of climate-friendly and gender-responsive bioenergy technologies; and ensure sustainable agricultural development as well as food safety and security. We are also pleased to note the efforts to strengthen the GMS Agriculture Information Network Service through the development of a paperless trading platform for healthy and safe food products.

6. We endorse the refocused GMS Tourism Sector Strategy and Road Map for 2011–2015, which will further strengthen sustainable tourism industry in the subregion through greater distribution of the economic benefits of tourism and significant contribution to sustainable development, gender equality, preservation of ecological and cultural heritage, and poverty alleviation in the GMS. Tourism growth is being accomplished through the development of thematic multi-country tour packages, more focused marketing and product development, intensive capacity building for tourism human resources, and accelerated development and implementation of pro-poor sustainable tourism. We are also pleased to note the progress being made under the GMS Human Resource Development Strategic Framework and Action Plan (2009–2012), such as the successful pilot implementation of a framework for the mutual recognition of skills and qualifications to address skills shortages and enhance subregional competitiveness; the ongoing Communicable Disease Control Project, now in its second phase; continuing efforts to support safe labor migration and address the human trafficking problem; and interventions aimed at HIV/AIDS prevention, including a Memorandum of Understanding for Joint Action to Reduce HIV Vulnerability Related to Population Movement. We are also proud to see that the Phnom Penh Plan for Development Management, launched at the First GMS Summit now in its 4th phase, remains vibrant, continuing to help build needed skills and capacities in the subregion, including a stronger corps of civil servants and improved academic and research institutions.

Meeting the Challenges of the New Decade

7. The GMS Program has a deep and solid base of achievements to build on. With its success and greater maturity, the Program has been undergoing changes internally, in terms of both its requirements and future aspirations. The overarching challenge now is to ensure its sustainability and continued effectiveness in this new context, even as it is faced with a complex external environment both regionally and globally. While we appreciate and commend the current strategic framework that has guided GMS cooperation since its adoption at the First GMS Summit in 2002, yielding as it did the remarkable success of the GMS Program in the last ten years, a new set of directions and approaches is clearly now needed to guide the Program in the third decade of GMS cooperation.

8. We are therefore pleased to endorse the new GMS Ten-Year Strategic Framework (2012–2022). The new framework, while maintaining the pragmatic, action-based and results-oriented character of our cooperation program, proposes broad shifts in direction to enable the GMS Program to meet the challenges ahead. Among these are:

- complementing the continued attention on the hardware of physical infrastructure investments by an increased focus on software, including policy and institutional

dimensions, knowledge-related issues, and strengthened inter-country coordination;

- greater selectivity and prioritization of areas for intervention, both across and within sectors, combined with more efficient utilization of available resources and institutional capacities to enhance the overall effectiveness and impact of the Program;
- more attention given to multi-sector coordination and cross-sectoral links, including a careful balancing of development with concern for the environment;
- giving appropriate recognition to the spatial aspects of regional development and rebalancing attention and resources toward greater involvement of stakeholders at the subnational level, while bearing in mind organizational capacities and potential for achieving results;
- greater emphasis on improved monitoring of the impact of regional interventions under the GMS Program; and
- closer links and complementarity with the broader regional agenda and coordination and synergy with other regional initiatives, including contributing to the realization of the ASEAN community.

9. The economic corridor approach to subregional development will continue to have a central role under the new strategic framework drawing on the abovementioned initiatives, as we recognize that concentrating efforts and limited resources on identified strategic geographical areas is the most manageable way to attain significant and lasting results. Economic corridor development under the new framework will emphasize the need to broaden and deepen existing transport corridors by taking account of inter-linkages across sectors; ensuring that benefits are spread extensively along and around the corridors, such as through the development of border and corridor towns, the establishment of feeder roads and integrated area development; accelerated and vigorous implementation of transport and trade facilitation measures; promotion of logistics and investments along the corridors; strengthening the role of SMEs; and due attention to social and human resource concerns, including ensuring regulated cross-border movements of people and promoting food and energy security, and appropriately addressing climate change concerns. The complexity and challenges of the new agenda, encompassing multi-sector approaches, inter-sector coordination, and software or policy and institutional reforms, is evident, but we stand convinced that our cooperation in the GMS is ready to grow and move forward in these areas. The Economic Corridors Forum (ECF) will continue to help coordinate overall development of the corridors and encourage more active role of local stakeholders and the private sector.

10. We recognize that while the new strategic framework was formulated through a highly consultative process and is sound and reflective of our collective wisdom, its effective implementation will require an integrated investment framework based on careful regional planning to generate a portfolio of second generation cooperation projects that can be translated into specific and time-bound interventions. We have therefore directed our GMS Ministers to oversee the preparation of such an investment framework, utilizing the various levels of the existing GMS institutional mechanisms.

11. In preparing the investment framework and in implementing the new strategic framework through it, the following key aspects must be highlighted:

- alignment with the sub-regional and national economic development strategies, based on a comprehensive assessment of current cooperation modalities and thrust;
- the need for the investment program to be forward-looking, consistent, pragmatic and feasible;
- the need to build a strong knowledge platform, given the complexity of the issues and challenges involved in second-generation cooperation initiatives, and of the required interventions to address them, and also to build the capacities of institutions and human resources that will implement them;
- more proactive and innovative resource mobilization, given the exceedingly large resource requirements of implementing the framework; and
- stronger engagement of development partners, the private sector and other stakeholders in all these undertakings.

12. We acknowledge and greatly appreciate the role that the ADB has played as secretariat, coordinator, advisor, catalyst, financier and lead development partner of the GMS Program. We are also grateful for the support and increasing participation of other development partners in our cooperative endeavors. We trust that ADB and other development partners will heed our request for their continued support, particularly in capitalizing on the opportunities available through implementing the ambitious new strategic framework in the challenging period ahead.

Conclusion

13. We are proud of what we have accomplished over the last two decades of the GMS cooperation initiative. We have shown the world that a region that used to be an area beset by conflict can rise up and through cooperation and goodwill build a zone of peace, increasing prosperity, and resilience. While we realize that the road ahead will be difficult, we are confident that armed with the trust built and lessons gained through our joint undertakings over the years and their tangible results, we will not only weather the tumult and uncertainties of this new decade but also bring our subregion to a higher level of success. We appreciate that this can only be achieved through even closer cooperation, careful preparation, and sustained and arduous work, to all of which we hereby commit.

Endorsed in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar on 20 December 2011.