

**Joint Media Statement of the 6th Mekong-Japan Economic Ministers Meeting
Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar, 27th August, 2014**

1. The 6th Mekong-Japan Economic Ministers Meeting was held in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar on 27th August 2014. The meeting was co-chaired by H.E. Dr. Kan Zaw, Minister for National Planning and Economic Development, Myanmar, and H.E. Toshimitsu Motegi, Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry, Japan and attended by Economic Ministers and representatives from Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand, and Viet Nam, as well as the Secretary-General of ASEAN. Business representatives of 7th Mekong-Japan Industry and Government Dialogue and Executive Director of ERIA also attended.

2. The Ministers well-noted the steady growth of both trade and investment relationship between Mekong sub-region and Japan; total trade between Mekong sub-region and Japan in 2013 was JPY 8.4 trillion increased by 9% (USD 84.7 billion decreased by 11%) from 2012. Foreign direct investment flow between Mekong sub-region and Japan also increased by 406% to JPY 1.3 trillion (USD 13.5 billion increased by 314%) in 2013.

3. The Ministers also noted the outcomes at the 5th Mekong-Japan Summit held on 14th December 2013 in Tokyo, which includes the adoption of the mid-term review of the “Tokyo Strategy 2012”, and its emphasis on Mekong connectivity and narrowing development gaps and commencement of easing visa requirements for all Mekong countries in 2013, as well as the leaders’ instruction to the Economic Ministers to formulate a medium and long term industry development vision of the Mekong region countries for enhancing region wide value chain network.

4. The Ministers welcomed the steady progress under Mekong Development Roadmap, which includes Thailand’s support to develop the Myawaddy route and maintain 1st Thai-Myanmar Friendship Bridge, the 1st Legal System Sub-WG held under AMEICC WEC-WG on 29 May 2014, as well as the establishment of JETRO Vientiane Office in April 2014.

5. The Ministers adopted the revised Mekong Development Roadmap under the Mekong-Japan Economic and Industrial Cooperation Initiative (MJ-CI) Action Plan. Noting the timeframe of the Roadmap which will be completed next year, the Ministers also tasked AEM-METI Economic and Industrial Cooperation Committee’s West-East Corridor Development Working Group (AMEICC WEC-WG) to compile the progress of the projects in the whole terms of the Roadmap (2012-2015) to be submitted to the 7th Mekong-Japan Economic Ministers Meeting.

6. Welcoming business representatives’ report of the Dialogue held on 16th July in Viet Nam with 127 attendees, Ministers appreciated inputs from the Dialogue especially towards the development of the “Mekong Industry Development Vision” as follows:

- A) Importance of reflecting unique advantages and competitiveness of each country,
- B) Ensuring that SMEs benefit from regional integration,
- C) Strengthening Mekong sub-region both as a production and export site,
- D) Necessity for more skilled labor force to invite more FDI,
- E) Enhancing industries that improve “quality of life” such as food value chain,
- F) Involving relevant ministries for effectively implementing the Vision,
- G) The indispensability of carefully referring to the national and sub-regional priorities/strategies,
- H) The necessity to develop appropriate criteria for evaluating and prioritizing policy recommendations.

7. The Ministers welcomed the presentation from WEC-WG’s Co-chairs on WEC-WG’s deliberation of “Mekong Industry Development Vision”, and together emphasized the importance of this Vision. The Ministers also welcomed ERIA’s draft concept on the industrial cluster research which will be one of a core elements and theoretical backbone of the Vision, and endorsed its basic concept and framework.

8. Taking note of the importance to utilize the Vision as a common reference for discussing the policy priorities in each member country, the Ministers agreed to jointly develop the Vision with inputs from related ministries, industry and academia in Mekong region and Japan. The Ministers also underscored the indispensability of reflecting latest/future business strategies to the Vision, and agreed to request that JETRO conducts its 3rd study on business needs and strategies in Mekong sub-region.

9. The Ministers confirmed that the 7th Mekong-Japan Economic Ministers Meeting will be held back-to-back with the 47th ASEAN Economic Ministers Meeting (47th AEM) in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.



List of Ministers

1. H.E. Sun Chanthol, Senior Minister and Minister of Commerce, Cambodia
2. H.E. Toshimitsu Motegi, Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry, Japan.
3. H.E. Mrs. Khemmani Pholsena, Minister of Industry and Commerce, Lao PDR
4. H.E. Dr. Kan Zaw, Minister for National Planning and Economic Development, Myanmar
5. Dr. Porametee Vimolsiri , Deputy Secretary General of National Economic and Social Development Board, Thailand (representing Minister Attached to Prime Minister’s Office, Thailand)
6. H.E. Nguyen Cam Tu, Vice Minister of Industry and Trade, Viet Nam
7. H.E. Le Luong Minh, Secretary-General of ASEAN