

**Joint Media Statement of the 7th Mekong-Japan Economic Ministers Meeting
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 24th August, 2015**

1. The 7th Mekong-Japan Economic Ministers Meeting was held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on 24th August 2015. The meeting was co-chaired by H.E. Pan Sorasak, Secretary of State, Ministry of Commerce, Cambodia, and H.E. Yoichi Miyazawa, Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry, Japan. It was attended by Economic Ministers and Representatives from Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand, and Viet Nam, as well as the Secretary-General of ASEAN, Business representatives from Mekong countries and Japan, President of Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA), and Chairman and CEO of Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO).

2. The Ministers noted outcomes at the 7th Mekong-Japan Summit held on 4th July 2015 in Tokyo, which includes the “New Tokyo Strategy 2015 for Mekong-Japan Cooperation”. As noted by the Leaders in this Strategy, the Ministers reaffirmed the spirit of "Specialization & Collaboration" by surrounding countries for the development of Mekong sub-region, which means the advancement of industries and the enhancement of value-chains by reflecting unique advantages of each country and mutual complementarity. The Ministers also shared the importance of integrating the Mekong sub-region as the core of the production network in Asia and the world.

3. The Ministers noted the achievement and progress under Mekong Development Roadmap. This includes the improvement of the business environment in Mekong sub-region, mainly due to the improvement of hard infrastructure, such as the completion of the Neak Loeng Bridge (Tsubasa Bridge)construction in Cambodia, maintenance of the National Route No.9 in Lao PDR and the completion of the Myawaddy-Kawkareik route by Myanmar and Thailand, and the completion of the Cai Mep-Thi Vai International Seaport. Noting the steady growth of trade and investment between Mekong sub-region and Japan, the Ministers welcomed increased presence of Japanese companies in Mekong sub-region. Additionally, the Ministers noted that these accomplishments have been made by the cooperation of relevant organizations, including JBIC, JETRO, JICA, HIDA, NEDO, ADB, and ERIA, and appreciated the comprehensive support from Japan.

4. The Ministers highly valued the third survey on Business Needs and Strategies in Mekong sub-region by JETRO. According to the survey, foreign direct investment flow from Japan to Mekong sub-region has spread to various industries and the active cross-border business expansion is happening. On the other hand, towards the optimal value chain formation in Mekong sub-region, JETRO pointed out various challenges, especially unpredictability of business environment and low productivity along the value chain.

5. The Ministers adopted the Mekong Industrial Development Vision, which was discussed at AEM-METI Economic and Industrial Cooperation Committee's West-East Corridor Development Working Group (AMEICC WEC-WG). This vision is the medium and long term economic cooperation framework between Mekong countries and Japan. The Ministers mandated AMEICC WEC-WG to develop the detailed work programme in order to realize this vision and to submit this work programme to the 8th Mekong-Japan Economic Ministers Meeting in 2016.

6. Business representatives reported the discussion in the 8th Mekong-Japan Industry and Government Dialogue. The Ministers appreciated the input, especially the suggestion that public and private sector should cooperate to upgrade the hard and soft infrastructure, especially steady implementation of CBTA and establishment of cold chain, and industrial resources such as SME and human resource, as well as to address growing electricity demand and climate change through power generation such as highly efficient coal-fired power generation with continuing public financial support.

7. The Ministers confirmed that the 8th Mekong-Japan Economic Ministers Meeting will be held back-to-back with the 48th ASEAN Economic Ministers Meeting in 2016 in Lao PDR.



List of Ministers

1. H.E. Pan Sorasak, Secretary of State, Ministry of Commerce, Cambodia (representing H.E. Sun Chanthol, Senior Minister and Minister of Commerce, Cambodia)
2. H.E. Yoichi Miyazawa, 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 of National Planning and Economic Development, Myanmar
5. Dr. Porametee Vimolsiri, Deputy Secretary-General of National Economic and Social Development Board, Thailand (representing Minister of Transport/ Secretary-General of National Economic and Social Development Board, Thailand)
6. H.E. Nguyen Cam Tu, Deputy Minister of Trade and Industry, Viet Nam
7. H.E. Le Luong Minh, Secretary General of ASEAN
