

Eleventh ASEAN Transport Ministers Meeting Vientiane, 17 November 2005

1. We, the ASEAN Transport Ministers, held our Eleventh ASEAN Transport Ministers Meeting (ATM) in Vientiane, Lao PDR on 17 November 2005. H.E. Mr. Bouathong Vonglokham, Minister of Communication, Transport, Post and Construction of Lao PDR presided over the Meeting, with H.E. Mr. Mahidol Chantrangkurn, Vice Minister for Transport for Thailand as Vice-Chairman.
2. We discussed the implementation progress of the transport initiatives under the Vientiane Action Programme (VAP) 2004-2010 and policy measures to accelerate integration of the transport sector. We also deliberated on strategies to mitigate the adverse impacts of rising fuel costs on the transport sector.

Opening Ceremony

3. H.E. Mr. Bounnhang Vorachith, Prime Minister of Lao PDR, officially opened the Eleventh ATM. In his Keynote Address, the Prime Minister emphasized that transport infrastructure development is essential to ensuring the success of the socioeconomic development. He cited Lao PDR, with her strategic geographical location, while having no access to the sea, is transforming herself as a transport transit service center with neighboring countries in the sub-region. He stated that transport transit service could be an important factor for Lao PDR to spur growth rate and for integration into regional and international mainstream.
4. The Prime Minister also emphasized that the development of transport infrastructure linkages in the sub-region would ensure high return on the investment only when regulations, the rule of law, inter-state and multimodal transport agreements and protocols are in place. He therefore sees the need to enhance cooperation for the early conclusion of the cross-border transport agreement and other related protocols, as well as to accelerate the realization of all already signed agreements. He called upon the ASEAN Transport Ministers to ensure the 11th ATM's success with the conclusion of related agreements.

Promoting Multimodal Transport

5. We signed the ASEAN Framework Agreement on Multimodal Transport, which will further facilitate the door-to-door delivery of goods, using various modes of transport, under a single transport document. This Agreement also will provide the common policy framework for the further specialization and competency of freight forwarders and multimodal transport operators in the region, which will help to reduce the cost of doing business.

Gearing-Up the Transport Initiatives of the Vientiane Action Programme (VAP)

6. Recognizing that an efficient, cost-effective and secure transport system is a critical component of a single market and production base as envisaged under the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC), we reiterate our commitment to expeditiously and effectively implement the transport programmes of the VAP. We believe that mobility of and accessibility to transport services are key engines for socio-economic development and employment creation in ASEAN.

7. We are pleased with the progress of implementation of the transport programmes of the VAP, and, in particular, the active participation of the private sector, including the ASEAN associations of freight forwarders, national airlines, ports, ship-owners and shippers' councils, in the formulation of concrete work activities in their sub-sectors.

8. Recognizing that acceleration of the Air Travel Sector will have far greater impact on other ASEAN economic integration initiatives, we are working towards innovative and dynamic ways to realize additional and improved measures for passenger and air cargo services liberalization in the region. In this regard, we agree to also work towards possible conclusion of multilateral agreements for passenger and air freight services, in line with the ASEAN Roadmap for Integration of Air Travel Sector. In addition, we look forward to concluding the Fifth Package of Commitments on Air Transport Services by next year, with expanded coverage.

9. On land transport, efforts are being made to improve road safety through the implementation of the second phase of the Asian Development Bank (ADB)-ASEAN Road Safety program. For greater interoperability of the ASEAN Highways Network, we are harmonizing our highway's road signage design (with white inscription on green or blue background) and placement. The Singapore-Kunming Rail Link Project has also made progress with feasibility studies being conducted on the Sai Gon-Loc Ninh missing link in Viet Nam and on the spur line connecting Nam Tok-Three Pagoda Pass-Thaphuyayay on the Thailand-Myanmar border.

10. A Roadmap towards an Integrated and Competitive Maritime Transport in ASEAN is also being developed to promote further development and integration of maritime transport.

Mitigating High Fuel Costs and Environmental Protection

11. In response to rising fuel costs and environmental concerns, we agree to promote the use of alternative fuels including bio-fuel and compressed natural gas, as well as joint research activities in the transportation sector, by working with relevant ASEAN bodies and national agencies.

Partnership in Development

12. We are pleased to note the tangible results of our partnership with our dialogue partners and international organizations over the past year.

13. We have conducted a number of joint projects with China in areas of inland waterway

improvement, maritime search and rescue, compensation for oil pollution caused by ships and transport security, among others. We have also been exploring ways to further improve the ASEAN-China air and maritime passenger and cargo services.

14. We are also fostering closer cooperation with Japan through the implementation of various joint projects under the ASEAN-Japan Transport Partnership, covering, inter alia, transport logistics improvement, air and maritime transport security and safety, sustainable urban transport development and maritime transport management.

15. We are strengthening partnership with India in the areas of transport infrastructure integration and facilitation and human resource development in the road, port, inland waterway transport and shipping, railway and air sectors.

16. In addition, four projects on promotion of maritime safety and security and environmentally sound marine transportation are being carried out under the technical assistance of the International Maritime Organization. Under Germany's assistance, two ASEAN ports will be selected for the development of an integrated port safety, health and environmental protection management system.

17. We thank our dialogue partners and international organizations for providing technical assistance and support to ASEAN transport programs and activities in 2004-2005.

18. We express our appreciation to the Government of Lao PDR for the excellent arrangements made and agree to hold our next meeting in Thailand in 2006.

List of Ministers

- a) H.E. Dato Paduka Yusoff Abd Hamid, Deputy Minister of Communications for Brunei Darussalam;
- b) H.E. Mr. Sun Chanthol, Minister of Public Works and Transport for Cambodia;
- c) H.E. Mr. Wendy Aritenang, Secretary General, Ministry of Transportation for Indonesia;
- d) H.E. Mr. Bouathong Vonglokham, Minister of Communication, Transport, Post and Construction for Lao PDR;
- e) H.E. Dato' Sri Chan Kong Choy, Minister of Transport for Malaysia;
- f) H.E. Maj. Gen. Thein Swe, Minister of Transport for Myanmar;
- g) H.E. Mr. Ricardo E. Alfonso, Undersecretary (Deputy Minister) for Land Transport for

the Philippines;

h) H.E. Mr. Yeo Cheow Tong, Minister for Transport for Singapore;

i) H.E. Mr. Mahidol Chantrangkurn, Vice Minister for Transport for Thailand;

j) H.E. Mr. Dao Dinh Binh, Minister of Transport for Viet Nam; and

k) Mr. Worapot Manupipatpong, Director, the ASEAN Secretariat, representing the Secretary General of ASEAN.