

Seventeenth Meeting of the MRC Council

**Session 2: Joint Meeting with the MRC Donor Consultative Group
Mekong River Commission
26 January 2011
Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam**

CLOSING STATEMENT

by

H.E. Dr. Pham Khoi Nguyen

Minister of Natural Resources and Environment of Viet Nam
Chairman of the Viet Nam National Mekong Committee
Member of the MRC Council for Viet Nam
Chairman of the MRC Council for 2010/2011

Excellency Mr. Lim Kean Hor,

*Minister of Water Resources and Meteorology of Cambodia
Chairman of the Cambodia National Mekong Committee,*

Excellency Mme Khempheng Pholsena,

*Minister to the Prime Minister's Office
Chairperson of the Lao National Mekong Committee*

Excellency Mr. Suwit Khunkitti,

*Minister of Water Resources and Environment of Thailand
Chairman of the Thai National Mekong Committee*

Excellency Dr. Nguyen Thai Lai

*Deputy Minister of Natural Resources and Environment of Viet Nam
Vice Chairman of the Vietnam National Mekong Committee*

***Representatives of the Union of Myanmar, ADB, UNDP, World Bank,
IUCN, and WWF***

***Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,***

We are now approaching the end of this important event that marks the strong partnership generated over the years between MRC and its development partner community. I would like to convey my sincere gratitude to the valuable contributions and demonstrated cooperation from all Delegations. The number of important documents and decisions taken during this meeting demonstrates our continued close cooperation.

To our delightedness, there were reports about promising progress that would lay a foundation for the maturity of the organisation during its transition. One of the key goals of the Commission, on which we are actively working towards, is strengthening Member Countries' ownership

and their capacity in integrated water resource management. The direction we are taking ensures that the capacity building needs of the Member Countries staff as well as those of the agencies of the four Member Countries would ensure shouldering the core functions after the transfer of skills from international experts.

Last year we successfully resolved the issue of the permanent location of the organisation. This year, it is encouraging to see the MRC adopting key strategic directions with the approval of the Strategic Plan for 2011-2015 and the Integrated Water Resource Management-based Basin Development Strategy¹. This is also success for close cooperation amongst Member Countries enjoying valued support from our Development Partners and Dialogue Partners with Mekong cooperation spirit. I look forward to the implementation of this works, and how it collectively contributes, to management and conservation of the water and water related resources for the sustainable development of our Mekong River Basin.

As we agreed on these strategic documents, I am pleased to see the MRC responding to the major current events in the region such as proposed mainstream hydropower development, Mekong environment and climate risks, and increased frequency and intensity of flooding and drought. It demonstrates MRC's relevance to the sustainable development of the Basin which is now widely recognised throughout the world.

Being aware of protecting the best interest of the peoples of our countries, it is satisfying to learn of a commitment from China to assist in areas of disaster risk reduction and I would like to mention that we appreciate China's sharing hydro – meteorological data as a special measure of cooperation during the period of record low water levels during the dry season of 2010 and which we hope will be a first step in wider cooperation for addressing drought situations that face us all.

***Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,***

A number of important decisions made today at this Joint Meeting of the MRC Council with Donor Consultative Group demonstrate that the true Mekong Spirit is being upheld and we have proved that by working in close cooperation and partnership we can achieve the future prosperity of the people of the Mekong countries. We are very delighted with the event of Signing Ceremony of the Procedures for Water Quality we have today. It must be one of the most expected achievements of our Meeting. But we cannot be complacent and our Strategic Plan for 2011-

¹ Check TB EIA and CCAF

2015 on which we are now embarking has set out some challenging targets set out in the Strategic Plan 2011 – 2015 to which we now need to immediately respond to.

In closing, let me express my sincere thanks to all Council Members and Development Partners for their full cooperation and support. We must also extend our gratitude to the Donor Consultative Group for joining this session of our Meeting which, I think you will agree, has again been a very effective forum for direct interactions. The contribution of the Joint Committee has been invaluable, and we are really satisfied with their assistance. We equally appreciate the efforts of the staff of the Viet Nam National Mekong Committee Secretariat and the MRC Secretariat's staff for making this Meeting a reality.

Finally and on a lighter note, I would encourage all of you to take opportunity to further engage in informal discussions and enjoy one another's company at the dinner on the cruising boat this evening. Once again, I wish all of you Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen good health, happiness, and success in the year 2011..

With this, I declare this Second Session of the Seventeenth MRC Council and Donor Consultative Group Meeting closed.

Thank you very much for your attention.