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[Home](#) > GMS Senior Officials' Meeting Reviews COVID-19 Response Initiatives and Prepares for Upcoming Events

GMS Senior Officials' Meeting Reviews COVID-19 Response Initiatives and Prepares for Upcoming Events

Events

11 September 2020



Top row, left to right: Dr. Danucha Pichayanan, Deputy Secretary General, Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council (Thailand); Mr. Liu Weihua, Deputy Director General, Department of International Economic and Financial Cooperation, Ministry of Finance (PRC); Mr. Alfredo Perdiguero, Director, SERC, ADB. Middle row: Mr. Than Aung Kyaw, Director General, FERD, Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations (Myanmar). Bottom row, left to right: Ms. Sisomboun Ounavong, Director General, Department of International Cooperation, Ministry of Planning and Investment (Lao PDR); Dr. Pham Hoang Mai, Director General, Foreign Economic Relations Department, Ministry of Planning and Investment (Viet Nam); and H.E. Mr. Ros Seilava, Secretary of State, Ministry of Economy and Finance (Cambodia)

A GMS Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) was held on 11 September 2020 via web-based conferencing to review (i) proposed key GMS strategic planning documents and knowledge products, which includes GMS COVID-19 response initiatives and the new long-term strategy for the GMS program, and (ii) preparations for upcoming GMS events—the 11th Economic Corridors Forum (ECF-11), the 24th GMS Ministerial Conference (MC-24), and the 7th GMS Summit (Summit-7).

Mr. Liu Weihua, Deputy Director General, Department of International Economic and Financial Cooperation, Ministry of Finance of the People's Republic of China (PRC), chaired the meeting. Mr. Alfredo Perdiguero, Director, Regional Cooperation and Operations Coordination Division, Southeast Asia Department, Asian Development Bank, co-chaired the meeting.

The meeting successfully

- Briefed senior officials on the key elements of the latest GMS Long Term Strategy 2030 (GMS-2030) draft, and gathered feedback on the update. The revised draft retains the same Vision and Mission statements, key principles and cross-cutting themes, but incorporates comments on earlier versions made by GMS Ministers and Senior Officials. The draft also takes into account the impact of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic on the medium- to long- term future of the GMS, and the needed responses to address it;
- Outlined the proposed medium-term GMS COVID-19 Response Plan, including its rationale, objectives, key principles, and proposed pillars. The Plan was discussed with the Senior Officials. The GMS Ministers and Senior Officials will guide the drafting of the plan, and determine its objectives and substance. The SOM agreed in principle to the preparation of the COVID-19 Response Plan, and committed to undertake the needed internal consultations;
- Presented updates on the Report of the Pilot Study on the Development of the PRC-Myanmar Sections of the North-South Economic Corridor (NSEC). The Study exemplifies the new GMS Strategy's enhanced spatial approach to subregional development. It focuses on specific sections of the GMS NSEC between the PRC and Myanmar, the Kunming-Muse-Mandalay-Yangon-Thilawa Subcorridor, or NSEC-5. Its key outputs include (i) a review and assessment of NSEC-5 areas in Myanmar and the PRC, and (ii) a proposed strategic framework and action plan for NSEC-5 development, containing a pipeline of projects which will be a subset of the GMS Regional Investment Framework (RIF). With NSEC-5 being a principal trade route in the GMS, the study results will benefit the PRC, Myanmar, and NSEC-5 areas, as well as the whole subregion;
- Discussed the outcome of the Dialogue on Labor Migration in the GMS held on

8 September 2020, co-organized by ADB and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), which aimed to further strengthen subregional cooperation through enhanced labor migration management. Properly managing labor migration has gained even greater relevance in light of the health and socioeconomic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. In view of its importance, ADB and IOM have jointly proposed the establishment of a Task Force on Labor Migration, and presented the key elements of its proposed TOR. The proposal received positive response and support from the countries in general;

- Briefed Senior Officials on the progress of work and next steps in the RIF Third Progress Report and Update covering the year 2020, which will be presented for endorsement by the Ministers at MC-24; and
- Reviewed the progress of preparations for the ECF-11, MC-24, and Summit-7. The upcoming meetings in brief:
 - The ECF-11 will be held on 28 October 2020 as a virtual 3-hour meeting to be chaired by Thailand. It will highlight the 3 Cs—Competitiveness, Connectivity, and Community, and the GMS countries' capacity to integrate among themselves and with the larger international economy.
 - The MC-24 will be held on 4 November 2020 to be hosted by the PRC. The MC-24 will combine elements of both the Ministerial Retreat and the Plenary Meeting. Other related events will be held virtually on separate dates, as follows: the Development Partners' Meeting will be held on 20 October 2020 and the SOM on 27 October 2020.
 - The Summit-7 will be held in March 2021 to be hosted by Cambodia.

Documents

[Agenda](#) [3]

Last Updated: 25 September 2020

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[1]

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