



Opening Statement

by

His Excellency Mr. Bharat Singh

Deputy Minister, Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations

Republic of the Union of Myanmar

Excellencies, GMS Ministers and Vice Ministers,
Madam Chair, H.E. Ms. Zou Jiayi, Vice Minister, Ministry of Finance, China and
Mr. Co-Chair, Mr. Ahmed M. Saeed, Asian Development Bank Vice-President,
Distinguished Delegates from Member Countries,
Representatives of Development Partner Agencies and Private Sector Organizations,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

A very good morning to you all and mingalarpar from Myanmar!

First of all, I am very pleased to see our GMS colleagues on the screen – safe and in good health during these challenging times.

It is a great pleasure to deliver this opening statement at this 24th GMS Ministerial Meeting.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to the People's Republic of China for hosting this important event, and also thank the ADB for the facilitation of today's event. I would also like to express our appreciation to the ADB for standing ready to provide further support to its member states in response to the adverse impact of COVID-19.

With the theme of this year's Ministerial Conference: "Pave the way to a more integrated, inclusive, sustainable and prosperous GMS", I would like to encourage all to continue to explore effective ways to combat COVID-19 and strengthen our subregion's economic resilience to achieve our vision of a more integrated, sustainable, prosperous, and inclusive GMS.

Taking this opportunity, I would like to briefly touch upon several initiatives that we in Myanmar are undertaking to respond to the impact of COVID-19 in recent times. In this regard, the Government has been expending every effort to protect public health and mitigating the economic impact based on the principle of “leaving no-one behind”.

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

To overcome this pandemic an unprecedented scale of global cooperation is required.

We recognize that enhancing regional cooperation and integration in different layers and sectors can bring countries together into a network of inter-dependence network.

Therefore, we encourage all stakeholders seeking to tap synergies and complementarities between the GMS program and other global and regional initiatives.

Today, we will discuss our GMS Strategy 2030, a long-term plan, and the GMS COVID-19 Response and Recovery Plan, a medium-term plan, as well to seek the guidance of Ministers and members.

To this end, we must continue to work together to strengthen existing cooperation in all sectors, including under regional free trade agreements, and to maintain regional and global supply chains to ensure the free flow of essential goods and services.

Doing so will be necessary to combat the negative effects of the pandemic and to lead our subregion toward an early and strong economic recovery. I rest assured that our GMS members and all development partners will work hand in hand for a brighter future of the GMS in this regard.

In conclusion, I would like to express again my special appreciation to ADB for its continuous support to the GMS Program.

I also express our heartfelt gratitude to the PR China for their gracious hosting of today's Ministerial Conference.

I do not doubt that with the collective will and dedicated work of the GMS countries and our partners; the program will overcome any challenges and continue to flourish well into the future.

I wish us all a very productive Ministerial Conference!

Thank you!