



Opening Statement

by

His Excellency Mr. Thaworn Senneam

Deputy Minister, Ministry of Transport

Kingdom of Thailand

H.E. Zou Jiayi, Vice Minister, Ministry of Finance and GMS Minister of the People's Republic of China,

GMS Ministers,

Mr. Ahmed Saeed, Vice President, Asian Development Bank,

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to attend the 24th GMS Ministerial Meeting. On behalf of the Royal Thai Government, I would like to thank the Government of the People's Republic of China as the host of this meeting, Asian Development Bank, and GMS member countries that have together arranged for the 24th GMS Ministerial Meeting, amid an on-going pressure from the COVID-19 pandemic. This is an important opportunity to discuss coordinated measures to mitigate pandemic-related impacts, with dialogues to accelerate implementation on relevant development issues in an integrated and concrete manner.

Over the past year, GMS members have worked closely to develop infrastructure connectivity as indicated within the 2022 Regional Investment Framework. In this regard, Thailand is determined to advance the sub-regional connectivity through the recently-signed Thai-Chinese high-speed railway contract that worth 50.6 billion baht, covering the railway system, electrical, signaling and communication systems, procurement of train carriages, and personnel training. Ultimately, this investment aims to upgrade a strategic transport route that would increase the country's competitiveness and development of North-South Economic Corridors.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Therefore, it is my true belief that in order to improve entrepreneurs' capacities, and pave the way for them to be a part of the global value chain, GMS members should double our efforts to facilitate cross-border economic activities as described under the CBTA, in particular, through streamlining border checkpoint and logistics regulations for equal standards and safety.

Thailand would like to thank all parties that work in concerted efforts in drafting the GMS Strategic Framework 2030, which resonates with development agendas under Thailand's 20-Year National Strategy. These shared aspects will help propel the sub-regional collaboration to become an integrated, prosperous, and inclusive GMS with no one is left behind.

In addition, the GMS COVID-19 Response and Recovery Plan (2021-2023) will complement Thailand's Covid-19 Contingency Plan (2021-2022), supporting synchronized operations, which lead to the synergy of development outcomes both at national and regional levels.

Finally, I would like to thank the Government of the People's Republic of China, and Asian Development Bank once again for an excellent preparation. I hope today's discussion will be a crucial driving force for the future to accomplish the said GMS Vision and Mission Statement.

Thank you very much.