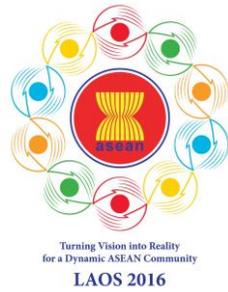


Welcoming Remark by Dr. Laohoua CHEUCHING, Director-General, Foreign Trade Policy Department, Ministry of Industry and Commerce, Lao PDR

ASEAN-OECD Good Regulatory Practice Network Meeting 2016
Vientiane, 16 March 2016

Excellencies,
Distinguished Participants
Ladies and Gentlemen,

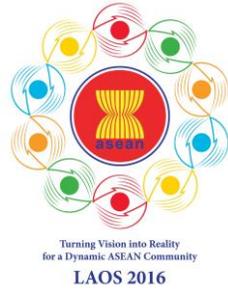
1. Good morning. On behalf of the Ministry of Industry and Commerce of Lao PDR, I would like to extend a warm welcome to all of you to the ASEAN-OECD Good Regulatory Practice Network Meeting 2016. The meeting will provide an opportunity for ASEAN and OECD to share experiences to support the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) Blueprint 2025 through enhancing regulatory systems and frameworks, with a focus on creating an enabling environment for small and medium enterprises (SMEs). The deliberations in this meeting will provide timely input into Lao PDR's ASEAN Chairmanship in 2016.
2. The fact that Vientiane is the venue of this important meeting bears testimony to the commitment of the Government of Lao PDR to support good regulatory practices which is a critical tool for preventing unnecessary technical barriers to trade (TBTs).
3. As you may know well that ASEAN's business economy is dominated by small and medium enterprises. The implementation of good regulatory practice will support trade facilitation which will allow SMEs participating effectively in the regional and global value chains.
4. I am pleased to inform you that 2 out of 8 priority deliverablesⁱ under the Lao PDR's ASEAN Chairmanship are related to SMEs, namely:
 - a) Institutional Framework on Access to Finance for SMEs with its objective to assist SMEs to have access to finance through elaboration of high-level principles.
 - b) Establishment of Enabling Environment for SME establishment and operation with its objective to undertake the mapping of business registration processes and develop a work plan to streamline business registration and to provide a practical tool for



business, esp. SMEs, to search for tariffs for their products under ASEAN and ASEAN+1 FTAs.

5. The 8 priority deliverables were initiated with the organisation of two national AEC Workshops on 28 July 2015 and 15-16 September 2015, respectively. Following up on these two workshops, the Ministry of Industry and Commerce of Lao PDR had undertaken further internal and inter-ministerial consultations. These priority deliverables were then approved in the inter-ministerial meeting on 6 November 2015.
6. The priorities deliverables were presented to SEOM 1/47 held on 19-20 January 2016 in Vientiane, Lao PDR. SEOM 1/47 expressed support to these priority deliverables and noted that they would be submitted for consideration of the ASEAN Economic Ministers and other relevant ASEAN Ministerial Bodies as appropriate.
7. The priorities deliverables will benefit regional economic integration and at the same time contribute to advancing Lao PDR's national priorities and integration into ASEAN. We are confident that with the support of ASEAN Member States and development partners, Lao PDR can deliver successful outcomes in 2016.
8. To conclude I would like to thank all resources persons who will be making useful contributions to this Meeting. I thank you for taking time from your busy schedules to come and contribute to the Meeting.
9. Last but not the least I would like to thank Faisal Naru and his team for the excellent preparation for the substantive matters and the support in organizing this meeting.
10. I wish everyone a productive and successful meeting, and I wish all of you an enjoyable time in Vientiane.

Thank you for your kind attention.



ⁱ The 8 priority deliverables are:

1. ASEAN Trade Facilitation Framework;
2. ASEAN Regulatory Framework for Food Safety;
3. Institutional Framework on Access to Finance;
4. Create SME Enabling Environment;
 - Business Registration Process
 - Tariff Finder
5. Vientiane Declaration on Ecotourism;
6. ASEAN Sustainable Tourism Awards;
7. Guidelines for Special Economic Zone (SEZ) Development & Collaboration; and
8. Master Plan for CLMV Development.