

Aid Effectiveness & Regional Economic Integration

Seminar on Challenges in Cooperation and
Communication for Development in Southeast Asia

26-27 April 2010, Hanoi, Viet Nam

WELCOME SPEECH

**DELIVERED BY MR. MARIO AMANO
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Minister Vo Hong Phuc,
Excellencies and Distinguished Participants,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to this seminar on *Challenges in Co-operation and Communication for Development in Southeast Asia*. On behalf of the OECD, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to our co-hosts, the Government of Viet Nam - in particular the Ministry of Planning and Investment - for making it possible to organise this seminar here in Hanoi. I would also like to thank two OECD member countries, Korea and Japan, for their kind support and co-operation in co-hosting this event.
2. First of all, we are very pleased to learn that the 16th ASEAN Summit was a great success under Viet Nam's Chairmanship of ASEAN in 2010. ASEAN Leaders have set the goal and roadmap towards building the ASEAN Community by the year 2015. We believe that Viet Nam's strong leadership will foster the region's inherent dynamism and move forward to accomplishing the set goals and plans for this year and beyond. The OECD Secretariat, of course, will be delighted to provide any assistance the authorities might wish to seek. Indeed, OECD's co-operation with Viet Nam has made great strides over the past 5 years.
3. Let me give you some concrete examples. Viet Nam has been a full participant in the Working Party on Aid Effectiveness of the Development Assistance Committee since 2005. It also became a full member of the OECD Development Centre in March 2008. Furthermore, Viet Nam took part in the OECD Investment Policy Review, a self-assessment of the participating country's investment policy based on the OECD's peer review instrument, *Policy Framework for*

Investment. In March 2009, the OECD, jointly with Korea, co-hosted a high-level seminar in Hanoi on “Developing Measures for Educational Co-operation to Improve National Competencies of Viet Nam.

4. Looking ahead, the Vietnamese authorities have expressed their intention to engage in a number of priority areas for future co-operation. These involve a dozen OECD activities in wide-ranging fields, from administrative reform to sustainable development and agriculture, and from enhanced competitiveness to education and health care.
5. Our increased activities with Viet Nam and other ASEAN countries imply that Southeast Asia is a region of strategic importance to the OECD. In May 2007, the OECD Council at Ministerial level adopted a resolution to expand the Organisation’s relations with the region. Within this mandate, we have been pursuing a strategy of “Enhanced Engagement”. This means a dual-track approach, combining regional initiatives with country-specific work, in co-operation with ASEAN, APEC, the Asian Development Bank, the United Nations/ESCAP and other international organisations.
6. In the framework of the regional initiatives, the OECD Development Centre launched its new regional outlook project, the *Southeast Asian Economic Outlook (SAEO)*, last April. The first edition will be released in November 2010. The SAEO is currently being prepared collectively with several Asian governments and the ASEAN Secretariat. The country-specific work involves the participation of several Southeast Asian countries in OECD bodies through various country and policy reviews and integration into the relevant OECD databases. The OECD also provides them with technical assistance and helps with capacity building, if required.
7. Ladies and Gentlemen, the OECD will celebrate its fiftieth anniversary next year. As we approach this important milestone, we are transforming ourselves to ensure that our global relevance will continue for the next fifty years. To do so, we must be ready to broaden and deepen our relationship with the Enhanced Engagement partner countries significantly. Another challenge for the OECD is to integrate the development dimension further into all our work. We need to share best practices and understand better the role of development as a driver of global growth. We, thus, very much welcome Viet Nam’s participation in our work and look forward to sharing your development experience with us. This is why we are here today and tomorrow: to discuss

the growth and development challenges facing Viet Nam and other economies of Southeast Asia after the crisis. In particular, we will talk about the role of economic integration in Southeast Asia to overcome global economic challenges and how development aid can promote regional integration.

8. Tomorrow we will move to the specific theme of this seminar, that is, improving the effectiveness of development co-operation and better demonstrating benefits to countries and people in need of support. I am therefore delighted to see many policy makers in the field of aid effectiveness and senior staff from communication units of DAC donor agencies, as well as those of emerging donors and partner countries, at this gathering. We must deliver development results better and communicate them better. I am confident that this seminar will lead to new ideas on how to achieve this goal.
9. In conclusion, I would urge you to make this seminar a fruitful one by taking a practical and constructive approach. This is the kilometre zero of our long road to the 2011 High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Seoul. Asia's contribution to global development will become even more important in the coming years. The international community can be enriched and enabled by the expertise and the sharing of experience this region can offer. I therefore encourage you to use this event and make your voice heard. I am looking forward to a very productive meeting.

Thank you.