

**Myanmar will work together to take her rightful place in international
community and to develop the country**
President U Thein Sein addresses 4th Greater Mekong Subregion Summit



NAY PYI TAW, 20 Dec-Hosted by Myanmar, 4th Greater Mekong Subregion Summit was opened at Meeting Hall of Myanmar International Convention Center (MICC) here this morning, with an address by President U Thein Sein.

The full-text of his address is as follows:

On behalf of the Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, it is my great honour and pleasure to host the 4th GMS Summit in Nay Pyi Taw.

I also take this opportunity to extend the most cordial and sincere welcome of the people of Myanmar to H.E Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia, H.E Mr Dai Bingguo, State Councilor of the People's Republic of China, H.E Mr Thongsing Thammavong, Prime Minister of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, H.E Ms Yingluck Shinawatra, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Thailand, H.E Mr Nguyen Tan Dung, Prime Minister of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and all delegates to this Summit.

I would also like to extend our warm welcome to the president and officials of ADB and express our appreciation to their participation in the Summit as well as their valuable support to the preparatory work of this Summit.

I am delighted to see all of you attending this important event.

The 4th GMS Summit is taking place at a critical juncture for our sub-regional group, while the global economic situation is gloomy. Hence, it is more important than ever to review the progress made in the 3rd GMS Summit in Vientiane.

We are pleased to note that despite global economic uncertainties, the GMS economic cooperation programme has made good progress. In fact, our subregion has shown remarkable resilience in facing recent global economic crisis.

However, we should not be complacent about the current achievements and the Group needs to strive more in order to achieve our shared vision of an integrated, harmonious and prosperous subregion. It is widely acknowledged that the GMS programme has greatly enhanced cooperation among GMS countries in various sectors and the programme is now entering into its third decade of cooperation.

As you are all aware, the implementation of the countries of the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) have embarked on a programme of economic cooperation (the GMS programme) since 1992. This year, implementation of GMS programme has passed its midway of the Vientiane Plan of Action for GMS Development (2008-2012) which was adopted at the third GMS Summit. At the 4th GMS Summit, we will be reviewing the progress so far and what still needs to be done. Above all, the more important why we are meeting here is to endorse a new Strategic Framework intended to guide GMS cooperation in the next ten years.

As the GMS programme is successful gradually, the GMS cooperation needs to focus on second generation initiatives. Emerging issues and concerns are posing potentially more serious risks to our group's continued growth and development.

These include climate change, energy sufficiency, food security, natural resource sustainability, logistics and human resource development.

In the light of new and emerging challenges, the GMS programme needs guidance for the subregion's development.

I would like to recall that the 17th GMS Ministerial meeting held in October 2011 reviewed the final draft of the proposed new GMS Strategic Framework 2012- 2022, which aims to provide such guidance. Hence, at this Summit, we hope that leaders will be able to endorse and adopt the new Strategic Framework.

Indeed, the new Strategic Framework is not only a starting point but also a broad guidance for our future actions. In reviewing the GMS activities after the 3rd Summit, our Sub-regional group should continue to work for the implementation of Vientiane Plan of Action for GMS development. This GMS Plan of Action serves as a concise road map for cooperative action in the medium term in the nine priority sectors of GMS cooperation.

The Strategic Framework should be effectively implemented to face the new challenges for all GMS members. More importantly, we wish to emphasize that the new Strategic Framework must be followed by a plan of action, which will provide monitorable projects and activities. As a matter of fact, the pipeline of projects will also be a successor to the Vientiane Plan of Action for GMS development adopted at the 3rd Summit.

In order to promote the GMS economic cooperation and regional efforts, the theme of the 4th GMS Summit is set as "Beyond 2012":

Towards a New Decade of GMS Strategic Development Partnership.

So, our deliberations will be focusing on this main theme. The Summit aims to come out with new ideas on how to move the GMS process forward, in cooperation with our development partners. The Summit also needs to review the past activities and also lay down plans for future cooperation. We believe that in line with the new theme of the Summit, our sub-regional group will continue to explore new opportunities, working with our development partners, so that all member countries can benefit from various cooperative activities.

Taking this opportunity, we would like to call on GMS countries and stakeholders to show their commitment to successfully implement the new Strategic Framework towards its goals. As recent natural disasters in the region indicate that our region is vulnerable to climate change, which will affect the ability of individual member countries to pursue food security and energy efficiency.

The next decade will also require greater efforts to deal with an increasingly complex agenda. In this regard, the new Strategic Framework will be guiding GMS cooperation into new frontiers. We would also like to call on our development partners to expand their cooperation with GMS countries to a new level without discrimination to any member state.

It is also satisfying to note that some of the achievements of our subregional group will be endorsed at the 4th GMS Summit. Myanmar is also undertaking its commitments in the GMS economic cooperation programme.

Furthermore, Myanmar fully supports accelerating the implementation of the core Agriculture supply programme.

In the sector of human resource development, we have benefited in terms of capacity building for Myanmar officials under the Phnom Penh Plan for development management programme.

In fact, there are other sectors where Myanmar is involved and is benefitting under the GMS programme.

We are also encouraged to note that endeavours have been made towards accelerating development of the GMS transport corridors into economic corridors.

These efforts also aim at strengthening the role of corridors to serve as platforms for increased GMS competitiveness. The three main economic corridors-the East-West, North-South and Southern economic corridors-need further development to enhance our connectivity in the region. In striving for better connectivity, GMS needs to further develop the economic corridors with the participation of all stakeholders, particularly the provincial and local authorities and the individuals/ persons concerned from GMS countries.

May I also take this opportunity to apprise you of recent political developments in my country. Since 30 March 2011, a new democratically elected government has entered the Myanmar political scene. The new government is making endeavours to transform the nation into a peaceful, modern and developed state.

The government has now embarked on a series of reform process in various sectors to bring about democratization, economic development and improved livelihood of the people. The steps taken are concrete and visible. The reform process is incremental, systematic and dynamic as well.

We are ready to work with the international community including the friendly countries, the United Nations, international and regional organizations and partners.

We will work together to take our rightful place in the international community and to develop our country.

These will contribute to regional peace and prosperity.

In conclusion, I would like to express my wholehearted appreciation to the GMS leaders, ministers, ADB President and all distinguished guests for honouring us with their presence at this Summit.

I am confident that through our deliberations and exchange of views, the Summit will be able to produce a fruitful result. I wish all participants a pleasant stay in Nay Pyi Taw.

Thank you for kind attention.