

**FIRST TRIPARTITE MEETING ON DRAFT AGREEMENT BETWEEN AND AMONG THE GOVERNMENTS OF
THE LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC, THE KINGDOM OF THAILAND, AND THE SOCIALIST
REPUBLIC OF VIET NAM FOR FACILITATION OF CROSS-BORDER TRANSPORT OF GOODS AND PEOPLE¹**

21–22 December 1998

Bangkok, Kingdom of Thailand

Minutes of Discussion

I. Introduction

1. The First Tripartite Meeting on the Draft Agreement Between and Among the Governments of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the Kingdom of Thailand, and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam for Facilitation of Cross-Border Transport of Goods and People was held in Bangkok, Kingdom of Thailand, on 21–22 December 1998. The Meeting was hosted by and organized by the Government of the Kingdom of Thailand with assistance from the Asian Development Bank (Bank).

2. The purpose of the Meeting was to discuss the Draft Agreement Between and Among the Governments of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the Kingdom of Thailand, and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam for Facilitation of Cross-Border Transport of Goods and People and come to agreement on the Articles presented in the Draft Agreement, and determine the next steps toward signing the Agreement and continuing the process of developing the Annexes and Protocols and matters relating to implementation. The Meeting Agenda is attached as Annex 1.

3. The participants included delegations from the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the Kingdom of Thailand, the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, and the Bank. The List of Participants is attached as Annex 2.

4. The Meeting was chaired by Mr. Mahidol Chantrangkurn, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Transport and Communications (MOTC), Kingdom of Thailand.

II. Opening Session

5. His Excellency Suthep Thaugsuban, Minister of Transport and Communications welcomed the participants to the Meeting and stressed the importance of this Meeting as an important step in realizing the long-term benefits of the facilitation of transit and inter-state transport in bringing about a more harmonious and efficient transport system in support of the expansion of trade, industrial linkages and closer economic integration in the region. The heads of the delegations from the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the Kingdom of Thailand, the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, and the Bank also made opening statements in support of this general theme. The Opening Statements are attached as Annexes 3 to 7.

III. Discussion of the Agreement

6. Dr. Kristiaan C. Bernauw, the Consultant engaged by the Bank, provided the Meeting participants with an overview of the Draft Agreement after which the Chairman requested the Meeting to discuss the Draft Agreement article by article with the objective of reaching agreement on the substance and the wording of each of them. The first draft is attached as Annex 8. This was accomplished with the exception of Articles 9, 19, 23, and 32. The Viet Nam delegation will consider further and advise their position on Articles 9, 19, and 23 in writing to the Bank and the Thailand delegation will consider their position on Article 32

¹ Editor's Note: Annexes listed in these meeting minutes are not included in this publication

and similarly advise the Bank (Manager, Transport and Communications Division (West)). The Official Draft Agreement is attached as Annex 9.

IV. Next Steps

7. Once the wording of the entire Agreement is settled, the Agreement will be formally signed at a Meeting to be held in Vientiane, Lao People's Democratic Republic no later than 30 April 1999.

8. The designated contact persons for the purpose of this Agreement will be:

Vice Minister, MCTPC, Lao People's Democratic Republic
Permanent Secretary, MOTC, Kingdom of Thailand
Permanent Vice Minister, MOT, Socialist Republic of Viet Nam
Manager, IWTC, ADB

9. For the presentation of the Annexes and Protocols to the Agreement, the Meeting requested the Bank to provide additional assistance for the provision of international and local consultants to work with the three countries to develop them.

V. Acknowledgements

10. The three delegations expressed satisfaction with the results of the First Tripartite Meeting which was held in an amicable atmosphere and spirit of friendship. They also expressed their sincere thanks to the Bank for its continued support to the GMS program.

11. The Meeting also expressed its sincere appreciation to the Government of the Kingdom of Thailand for the warm hospitality accorded as well as the excellent arrangements for this Meeting in Bangkok, Kingdom of Thailand.

Signed in Bangkok, Kingdom of Thailand, on 22 December 1998

(Signed) H. E. Xay
PHAKASOUM
Vice Minister
MCTPC
Lao People's Democratic
Republic

(Signed) H. E. Mahidol
Chantrangkum
Permanent Secretary
MOTC
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(Signed) H. E. Dr. Dao Dinh
Binh
Permanent Vice Minister
MOT
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