

**REPORT ON CONCLUSIONS OF THE PRIME AND CO-PRIME MOVERS'
CONSULTATION
22 MAY 2006
DOHA, QATAR**

The Prime and Co-Prime Movers' Consultation, attended by representatives from ACD member countries, took place in Doha, Qatar on 22 May 2006. The Consultation reviewed the progress made in various ACD cooperation projects and exchanged views on how to enhance ACD cooperation.

Recommendations were made for Ministers' consideration and/or endorsement in 9 project areas, namely Agriculture, e-Education, Energy, Environmental Education, Financial Cooperation, IT Cooperation, Natural Disaster, Poverty Alleviation and Tourism (summary of recommendations attached).

The Consultation also reiterated the important roles of ACD member countries in consolidating and concretizing the ACD cooperation projects and thereby, encouraged the Prime and Co-Prime Movers in other areas of cooperation to meet and/or coordinate their possible future activities and action-oriented recommendations in their respective areas.

Agriculture
(China, Pakistan, Kazakhstan)

Status Update

China has hosted 4 activities in this area, i.e., 1) the Workshop for ACD Agricultural Ministers between 22-23 May 2004; 2) the ACD Workshop on Asian Rice Development between 23-25 September 2004; 3) the ACD Agricultural Policies Forum between 10-12 January 2005; and 4) the ACD Training Course on Agricultural Biotechnologies between 15-21 August 2005. In addition, China plans to host a technical training course for agricultural officials in the latter half of 2006.

Recommendations

- Recognise priority areas for further agricultural cooperation under the ACD framework, such as 1) agricultural policy exchange, especially in the area of agricultural management; 2) transfer of agricultural techniques and technology; 3) sustainable agricultural development (clean/renewable energy; early warning and prevention of natural disasters); and 4) rural education, especially with a view to alleviating poverty
- Endorse the “Review and Future Proposals on Agricultural Cooperation Under the ACD Framework” paper drafted by China which proposes, among other things
 - the establishment of a coordinating mechanism with China as general coordinator and member countries volunteering to be leads for agricultural sub-sectors in which they have expertise;
 - strengthening financial support for agricultural cooperation by exploring diverse sources of funding;
 - strengthening agricultural R&D;
 - strengthening information exchanges and facilitating project implementation
 - promoting agricultural trade (e.g., through expos or trade talks on agricultural products etc.)

E-Education **(Malaysia)**

Status Update

Malaysia hosted the ACD Workshop on E-Education between 29-30 April 2004 and a follow-up Roundtable Meeting on the Concept and Establishment of the Asia e-University (AeU) between 28-29 November 2005.

Participants to the Roundtable discussed fundamental practical and policy issues related to the establishment of the AeU, such as academic model, e-learning initiatives/collaboration projects, programmes and quality. The Roundtable produced several recommendations for the establishment and implementation of the AeU. It also reaffirmed that the AeU will help bridge the digital divide and spearhead e-education efforts for the benefit of the region.

Malaysia is currently putting in place the necessary facilities to establish and implement the AeU, e.g., a virtual e-learning platform, strategic academic projects, partners from other institutions of higher learning in ACD member countries. To this end, Malaysia has drafted a paper on the Establishment and Implementation of the AeU.

Recommendations

- Endorse in principle the paper on the Establishment and Implementation of the AeU drafted by Malaysia
- Reaffirm ACD member countries' support for the AeU and encourage member countries to contribute to the implementation of the AeU as an instrument for human capacity building, bridging the digital divide, increasing access to higher education and spearheading e-education efforts for the benefit of all member countries

Energy
(Bahrain, China, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, the Philippines, Qatar)

Status Update

The energy sector is one among the important areas of ACD cooperation. Three meetings have been held in this area, i.e., the 1st ACD Working Group on Energy Security hosted by Bahrain on 13 January 2004; the 2nd Working Group on Energy Security hosted by the Philippines between 19-20 May 2004; and the 1st ACD Energy Forum hosted by Indonesia between 26-28 September 2005.

Following the meeting in Indonesia, all energy Prime/Co-Prime Movers (Bahrain, China, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, the Philippines and Qatar) agreed to the establishment of the ACD Energy Forum as the sole platform for energy cooperation under the ACD framework (combining the Energy and Energy Security fora). The meeting in Indonesia also agreed to draw up an ACD Energy Action Plan, which, as stipulated in the Joint Declaration of the 1st ACD Energy Forum, should include, among other things, increasing energy exploration activities, facilitating energy-related innovations and developing energy-efficient technologies; advancing development of energy alternative resources and technologies, including geothermal, bio-fuel, solar, hydro-power and wind; conducting joint research and studies towards the development of renewable energy resources; sharing information, best practices and experience in energy exploration, development and conservation of fossil energy and renewable energy; and encouraging closer economic ties among ACD member countries by promoting foreign direct investment and project financing in the energy sector.

Recommendations

- Endorse the establishment of the ACD Energy Forum as the sole platform for energy cooperation under the ACD framework
- Encourage the ACD Energy Forum to advance cooperation in four tangible areas, such as research and assessment on energy, investment for energy infrastructure development, contingency plans for security of energy supply and reinvestment of profits gained from the oil trade
- Support cooperation in research and assessment on energy, among other things, including the area of renewable energy; energy alternative to oil, namely biofuels and compressed natural gas; and energy management and conservation
- Support the Philippines' offer to host a seminar workshop on renewable energy resources and alternative fuels to be held in mid-2007
- Support the convening of the 2nd ACD Energy Forum in Pakistan in November 2006 to discuss, among other things, the possibility of re-investing revenues that accrue from the energy trade in ACD member countries to ensure the overall sustainable growth and development of the Asian region

Environmental Education **(Japan, Qatar)**

Status Update

Japan has hosted 2 activities in this area, i.e., 1) the ACD Workshop on Environmental Education between 7-8 June 2004; and 2) the 2nd ACD Dialogue on Environmental Education: Towards Green Production and Green Life between 20-21 September 2005. These two meetings brought together government officials, experts, educators from ACD member countries as well as representatives of NGOs and international organizations. The main objectives of these meetings are to raise awareness of the importance of environmental education, exchange and share information, experiences and best practices and to enhance member countries' capabilities and efforts to implement the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (UNDESD) initiative.

Japan plans to hold the 3rd ACD Dialogue on Environmental Education under the theme "Decade of Education for Sustainable Development" between 14-15 June 2006 in Sendai, Japan.

Recommendations

- Reaffirm ACD member countries' commitment to strengthen ACD cooperation in the area of environmental education through, among other things, sharing best practices and experiences in the effort to promote implementation of the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development
- Encourage ACD member countries to send representatives to the 3rd ACD Dialogue on Environmental Education to be held in Sendai, Japan between 14-15 June 2006

Financial Cooperation **(Thailand)**

Status Update

Thailand has organised 4 activities related to Asian bond market development, i.e., 1) the 1st Working Group Meeting on 12 May 2003; 2) the ACD Special Experts' Group Meeting on 27 March 2004; 3) the ACD Informal Meeting on Promoting the Supply of Asian Bonds on 1 May 2004; and the ACD High-Level Seminar on "Enhancing Financial Cooperation Through Asian Bond Market Development" between 24-25 March 2006.

The High-Level Seminar held in March 2006 brought together more than 150 participants comprising high-level officials from ACD member countries as well as representatives from key market institutions, private practitioners and academics. Participants engaged in policy-related and technical dialogue on key issues related to Asian bond market development, covering the demand, supply and infrastructure dimensions. The outcomes of the Seminar will lay the substantive groundwork for the 1st ACD Finance Ministers' Meeting to be hosted by Thailand this year.

Recommendations

- Note the outcomes of the ACD High-Level Seminar on "Enhancing Financial Cooperation Through Asian Bond Market Development" held in Bangkok, Thailand between 24-25 March 2006
- Support the convening of the 1st ACD Finance Ministers' Meeting to be hosted by Thailand this year to reaffirm, among other things, ACD member countries' political will to further develop the Asian bond market under the ACD framework
- Encourage ACD member countries to prioritise their portfolio investments by considering Asian bonds, including local currency-denominated bonds
- Encourage ACD member countries to liberalise capital outflows, if applicable, earmarking them for investment in Asian bonds
- Support the development of cross-border local currency-denominated bond issuances, e.g., the Thai-Lao Baht Bonds, as a means of expanding the supply of such bonds for investment and assisting lesser developed countries in financing their infrastructure development
- Call on the Working Group on Financial Cooperation to draw up an Action Plan specifying steps to develop the Asian bond market, including, among other things, exploring the possibility of identifying an Asian country to be the hub for the Asian bond market
- Encourage Asian countries to invest in Asian bonds

Information Technology Cooperation **(Korea)**

Status Update

Korea has hosted two National Informatization Policy Courses between 19-25 May 2004 and 12-18 October 2005, respectively. In addition, Korea has also offered mid to long term IT training and, in November 2005, dispatched IT Policy Advisory Groups (volunteers and specialists) to Cambodia and Laos as well as other ACD member countries. Korea's IT volunteers and specialists have helped to set up information access and IT training centers as well as establish e-government in some ACD member countries.

Korea plans to host the 3rd National Informatization Policy Course between 19-28 September 2006 and will also continue to offer mid to long term IT training as well as send its IT volunteers and specialists to ACD member countries.

Recommendations

- Support Korea's and ACD member countries' efforts to continue conducting results-oriented projects in the area of IT by, among other things,
 - developing mid and long term cooperation projects tailored to each country's specific demands;
 - developing projects for young students based on the idea that educating them is the most effective and essential investment in the effort to overcome the digital divide; and
 - making utmost efforts to ensure that IT-related projects undertaken in various international fora (e.g., ASEAN+3, ASEM, APEC etc.) reinforce/complement each other and help to reduce the digital divide among ACD member countries

Natural Disaster **(Russia)**

Status Update

At the ACD Breakfast Meeting in New York in September 2005, Russia offered to be the Prime Mover for Natural Disaster cooperation.

Russia has drafted a concept paper on “ACD Cooperation in Early Warning and Emergency Relief” in which it is noted that Asia lacks an efficient and advanced system to deal with, and manage natural disasters, and other crises, which pose a major threat to the economic development and prosperity of the region, among other things. Russia proposes that early warning and emergency relief cooperation under the ACD framework aim at, among other things, strengthening coordination and interaction between member countries in order to improve awareness and joint emergency response; sharing advanced technologies as well as best practices; improving the capabilities of national and regional emergency response services; and engaging the academic and business communities as well as related NGOs in emergency response.

Russia is ready to offer its experience in early warning and disaster relief and calls upon interested member countries to become co-prime movers in this area. To this end, Russia proposes that activities (e.g., establishing a focal points network; holding workshops, seminars and conferences; information-sharing; training etc.) in this area of cooperation be held annually, with the first one to take place in 2007.

Recommendations

- Endorse in principle the concept paper on “ACD Cooperation in Early Warning and Emergency Relief” drafted by Russia and encourage all ACD member countries to join efforts in its realisation

Poverty Alleviation
(Bangladesh, Cambodia, Vietnam)

Status Update

Two activities have been held in this area, i.e., 1) the ACD Seminar on “Rehabilitation of Working Children in Asia” between 12-13 March 2003; and 2) the ACD Seminar on “Poverty Reduction: Experience of Vietnam and Other Countries” between 10-11 June 2004.

Cambodia submitted a Concept Paper on “Poverty Alleviation: Cambodia’s Experience” to the 4th ACD Ministerial Meeting in Islamabad, Pakistan between 5-6 April 2005.

Recommendations

- Encourage ACD member countries to establish a tripartite cooperation model (two ACD developing countries and one international organization/ACD developed country) to be applied in different areas of cooperation relevant to poverty reduction/alleviation, such as agriculture, rural development and the provision of basic social services (health care, education, clean water etc.)
- Encourage ACD member countries to pay particular attention to vulnerable groups, including women and children, in developing their own and joint poverty reduction/alleviation and social safety net programmes
- Support the establishment of networking among ACD member countries for information-sharing and collection of best practices
- Encourage interested ACD member countries to work together in mobilizing funding for poverty reduction/alleviation projects from such parties as the developed ACD countries, international organisations and other donors

Tourism
(Cambodia, Myanmar, Pakistan, Thailand)

Status Update

The ACD Tourism Forum has met three times, i.e., in Phuket, Thailand between 22-24 May 2003; in Chiang Mai, Thailand between 18-20 July 2004; and, most recently, in Siem Reap, Cambodia between 24-25 April 2006.

Twenty-one ACD member country governments and private sectors were represented at the 3rd ACD Tourism Business Forum in Siem Reap. They agreed to step up tourism cooperation. They considered the Road Map for ACD Tourism Cooperation drafted by Thailand. The Road Map covers such areas as tourism for poverty alleviation, human resource development and sustainable tourism. Member countries agreed to focus on priority areas where integrated or joint efforts would not only be desirable, but also possible and can produce concrete results within the agreed timeframes.

India reiterated its offer to host the 4th ACD Tourism Business Forum in 2007. Brunei offered to host the 5th ACD Tourism Business Forum in 2008.

Recommendations

- Note the outcomes of the 3rd ACD Tourism Business Forum held in Siem Reap, Cambodia between 24-25 April 2006
- Endorse the Road Map for ACD Tourism Cooperation as the basis for member countries to further advance cooperation in this area

