

Chair's Statement
The Sixth Asia Cooperation Dialogue Foreign Ministers' Meeting
June 4-5, 2007 Seoul

The Sixth Asia Cooperation Dialogue Foreign Ministers' Meeting was held in Seoul on June 4-5, 2007. The Meeting, chaired by H.E. Song Min-soon, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade of the Republic of Korea, was attended by the Foreign Ministers and Heads of Delegation of thirty ACD member countries.

Ministers, recalling their previous five meetings, held comprehensive and fruitful discussions on the following issues of common interest:

Seoul IT Declaration: Promoting IT Development and Bridging the Digital Divide

1. Ministers adopted the Seoul IT Declaration, aimed at promoting IT development among member countries and addressing the issue of the digital divide in Asia.
2. Ministers expressed appreciation to Korea for proposing to share, as the Prime Mover on IT cooperation, its IT developmental experience with member countries. Ministers also welcomed Russia as the new Co-prime Mover of the IT cooperation project area.

Progress Reports on Cooperation Projects

3. Ministers reviewed and acknowledged the progress made by the Prime and Co-prime Mover countries during the past year in the 14 cooperation project areas. Ministers also expressed appreciation to Thailand for its lead in compiling the progress reports, and for briefing the Ministers on the main points of the reports during the Foreign Ministers' Meeting. Meanwhile, Ministers expressed their desires that certain areas of cooperation projects need to be further implemented with the strengthened participation of the ACD member countries.
4. Cultural dialogue was proposed to be included as one of the cooperation projects to promote harmonization among different cultures.

High Level Study Group

5. Ministers endorsed the creation of an ACD high-level study group to set the future directions for the ACD and to consolidate cooperation among member countries. Ministers agreed to comprise the study group of senior foreign affairs officials and academic scholars of the following countries: Coordinating Group countries, Kazakhstan (chair of the ACD 7) and the volunteering member countries. Ministers tasked the study group to convene on 2-3 occasions over the next year to discuss the following issues: a. end goals of ACD cooperation, b. funding and other mechanisms to stimulate progress and activity in the different project areas, c. desirability of creating an ACD secretariat, and d. Track II participation in the ACD process. Ministers agreed to recommend the study group to submit a final report on the above matters to the 7th ACD Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Kazakhstan in 2008. Ministers welcomed, with appreciation, Thailand's offer to host a preliminary meeting of the High Level Study Group, and noted the offers by Kazakhstan and Korea to host subsequent meetings.

Guidelines for ACD Membership

6. The Ministers agreed to have a temporary moratorium until the high level study group submits its final report to the 7th ACD Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Kazakhstan next year.

Official ACD Website and Publication

7. Ministers expressed gratitude to Thailand for its lead in the renovation of the ACD official website (www.acddialogue.com) and agreed to provide regular assistance to Thailand in updating the country information displayed on the website. Ministers also welcomed the launching of the ACD "e-News" publication and expressed hope that the quarterly would further engender effective communication among member countries.

Future Meetings

8. Ministers expressed appreciation and support for Kazakhstan's efforts in preparing for the 7th ACD Foreign Ministers' Meeting, and looked forward to meeting again in 2008.
9. Ministers welcomed, with gratitude, the offer by Sri Lanka to host the 8th ACD Foreign Ministers' Meeting in 2009.
10. Ministers expressed their appreciation to the government of the Republic of Korea for the warm hospitality and excellent arrangements accorded to the delegations during the 6th ACD Foreign Ministers' Meeting.

June 5, 2007 Seoul