

## Closing Statement

By

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Minister of Natural Resources and Environment  
Chairperson of Thai National Mekong Committee  
Member of the MRC Council for Thailand  
Chairperson of the MRC Council for 2017

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*Excellency Mr. Bun Hean* (ฯพณฯ นายบุน เฮียน)

*Secretary of State of Ministry of Water Resources and Meteorology, Cambodia*

*Excellency Madame Bounkham Vorachit* (ฯพณฯ มาดามบูนค าวรจิต)

*Deputy Minister of Natural Resources and Environment, Lao PDR*

*Mr. Suphot Tovichackchaikul* (นายสุพจน์ โตวิจักษณ์ชัยกุล)

*Deputy Permanent Secretary*

*Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment*

*Head of the Thai Delegation*

*Excellency Dr. Nguyen Linh Ngoc* (ฯพณฯ ดร.เหงียน ลิน ึ่งอก)

*Deputy Minister of Natural Resources and Environment, Viet Nam*

*Distinguished Delegates,*

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

As we have now come to the end of this Twenty-Fourth Meeting of the MRC Council and the Joint Meeting with the Twenty-Second Development

/ Partner Consultative...

Partner Consultative Group, I would like to express my sincere thanks and appreciation to all the Delegates for your productive discussions, insightful comments and effective guidance on a number of critical and pending issues over the last two days.

Through opened, friendly and productive deliberation, a number of useful guidance are provided to the MRC and its Secretariat on the ways forward on various strategic issues as well as the challenges to be addressed and faced in the coming years and beyond.

Importantly, we have provided the Secretariat with our thoughtful and strategic guidance and necessary approval for MRC's 2018 Work Plan and two MRC strategies on climate change and fisheries. We have also shared our helpful guidance on the final TOR for the current and subsequent CEOs.

Finally, we have provided our strategic guidance and needed momentum in the form of a new modus operandi (โมดัส ออปเปอแรนดี) to push forward the cooperation strategy with the Dialogue Partners and Development Partners to a whole new level.

I am very pleased and optimistic that the road ahead, though a bit bumpy, will be a rewarding journey given the increased sense of cooperation amongst the Member Countries, Dialogue Partners, Development Partners and other stakeholders.

I am pleased to say that during our meeting yesterday we also witnessed the continued support from our Development Partners for the MRC and its Basket Fund. I sincerely hope that this high spirit of Mekong cooperation will continue to gather momentum as we make our journey into the future.

/ Before we...

Before we end the Twenty-Fourth Meeting of the MRC Council, allow me to once again thank the MRC Member Countries and the MRC Secretariat for their effective guidance and hard work over the past year.

*Excellencies,*

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

Now that a consensus has been reached on the Chairmanship transfer time of the MRC Council Chair, whereas the Chairmanship transfer from the outgoing MRC Council Chair to the incoming Council Chair will take place in January instead of mid-year. Therefore, from this meeting onward the MRC Council Chairmanship transfer will be handed over at the preceding Council Meeting in October or November each year, so that the incoming Council Chair can start working at the new calendar year.

Let me introduce you to this new and practical method of the Council Chairmanship transfer. Unlike the case of Thailand as Council Chair for 2017, instead of waiting for the whole year after assuming functional Chairmanship of the Council to be handed over. The subsequent incoming MRC Council Chair for 2018 which will be Viet Nam Council Chair, will now be able to receive his Chairmanship transfer from me right at this preceding MRC Council Meeting. Therefore, I would like to invite you all to join me to congratulate His Excellency Dr. Tran Hong Ha (จรัณ ฮอง ฮา), Minister of Natural Resources and Environment of Viet Nam, for having assumed the Chairmanship of the MRC Council for 2018. He may rest assured of our full support and constant cooperation during his entire term of Chairmanship in the year to come.

/ With this, ...

With this, I would like to declare the Twenty-Fourth Meeting of the MRC Council closed and wish you all a safe and pleasant trip back to your home countries.

Thank you. ขอขอบคุณ

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