

**Ministerial Meeting for the 3rd Mekong River Commission (MRC)
Summit – Joint Session with Dialogue Partners, Development
Partners & Other Partners
4 April 2018, Siem Reap, Cambodia**

**REMARKS by H.E. DR. HOANG ANH TUAN,
Deputy Secretary-General of ASEAN for ASEAN Political & Security
Cooperation**

Good morning,

*H.E. Mr. Lim Kean Hor
Minister of Water Resources and Meteorology of Cambodia
Chair of MRC Ministerial Meeting*

Excellencies Ministers

Distinguished delegates from dialogue and development partners,

I'm very pleased to participate in this meeting. On behalf of the ASEAN Secretariat, I would like to thank the Governments of Lower Mekong Countries for this opportunity, and in particular, to the Government of Cambodia for the warm hospitality extended to me and my delegation.

The Mekong River Commission's initiatives in managing shared resources have contributed to the socio-economic development of the communities that are dependent on the river for their basic needs and livelihood. Such initiatives play an important role in promoting inclusive and sustainable development in the sub-region. They are also aimed at narrowing the gap of development at three levels, individual Lower Mekong countries, among the countries themselves and between the Lower Mekong Basin countries and the rest of ASEAN Member States.

ASEAN recognises the importance of the management and development of water resources for the region, including issues related to increasing water demands, degradation of water quality, biodiversity loss, and impacts of climate change on natural resources. We also recognize the importance of coordination and cooperation in these areas. For example, the ASEAN Strategic Plan of Action on Water Resources Management seeks to ensure sufficient water quantity of acceptable quality to meet the needs of the peoples of ASEAN in terms of health, food security, and economic sustainability.

In this regard, we welcome the interest of MRC to deepen cooperation with ASEAN as reflected in the Integrated Water and Related Resources Management Basin Development Strategy 2016-2020 and Strategic Plan 2016-2020. We share many similar areas of interest and this presents opportunities for both organisations to work together.

This cooperation between MRC and ASEAN can take in the three following forms:

- i) Regular exchange of information between MRC and ASEAN sectoral bodies or Working Groups as well as between the Secretariats, to identify joint activities that complement regional initiatives;
- ii) Coordination among development partners involved in providing support to MRC and ASEAN. Development partners play an important role in the sub-region. Thus, coordination among development partners is important to mobilise resources effectively and minimise duplication of efforts; and

iii) Alignment of sub-regional commitments with regional commitments. As MRC member countries are also ASEAN Member States, the alignment between MRC and regional commitments will help facilitate member countries to put in place the appropriate domestic regulatory framework to implement these commitments.

In conclusion, I wish to reaffirm the ASEAN Secretariat's commitment in supporting efforts to enhance cooperation and coordination between the sub-regional and regional initiatives to further regional integration. I wish the Third MRC Summit a great success.

Thank you for your attention.