

**Statement**

by

**H.E. General Surasak Karnjanarat**

Minister of Natural Resources and Environment  
Chairperson of Thai National Mekong Committee

Excellency Mr. Lim Kean Hor

Minister of Water Resources and Meteorology, the Kingdom  
of Cambodia

Excellency Mr. Sommad Pholsena

Minister of Natural Resources and Environment, Lao PDR

Excellency Dr. Tran Hong Ha

Minister of Natural Resources and Environment, Viet Nam,

***Representative of Dialogue Partners, China and Myanmar  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,***

1. It is my great pleasure to participate in the Ministerial Meeting for the 3<sup>rd</sup> MRC Summit. First of all, I would like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to the Government of the Kingdom of Cambodia for a very warm welcome and the excellent arrangement for hosting this Meeting.
2. Eight years ago, MRC countries organized the first Summit in Hua Hin, Thailand. Our leaders came together to share their good wills and affirmed their strong commitments to cooperate and promote sustainable development of the Mekong River and countries' ownership through riparianization and decentralization.

3. Those determinations were reaffirmed by our country leaders in the second Summit in Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam, where attention also focused on challenges and opportunities to balance the use of resources for energy, food and water sectors, taking the emerging impacts of climate change into account.
4. Today, we are here again for not only to appreciate those of our accomplishments, but also to revive our political commitment and provide more strategic visions for driving MRC on the emerging challenges ahead as well as to re-affirm a sense of unity for the better management of the Mekong River and well-beings of people in our Sub-region.

*Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

5. Please allow me to share Thailand's views as following;

**Firstly**, it is important that we continue to enhance our collaboration and put more joint efforts to find ways forward to improve the implementation of 1995 Agreement. This will facilitate our works toward achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the coherent context of NEXUS while recognizing the emerging challenge of climate change,

6. Therefore, the development of transboundary projects on climate change adaptation among member countries are encouraged and set as a high priority. These development projects will increase adaptive capacities and hence, reduce vulnerabilities of local communities to the negative impact of climate change.

7. **Secondly**, we have to work toward strengthening our MRC to be a regional knowledge hub for transboundary basin management, especially during flood and drought.
8. We may recall the major flooding in 2011 and the severe drought in 2015 causing significant economic losses and even loss of many lives. There is a clear need for the effective warning and forecast system to be developed, to enhance people's readiness and hence, reduce the loss and damage from such catastrophic events.
9. **Thirdly**, we must work together to set clear directions and identify new opportunities and challenges.
10. Keeping in mind the rapid economic growth in the Mekong region, has resulted in the development of a number of large-scale infrastructure projects along the river which go across the border. Therefore, cooperation and consultation on transboundary context is needed.
11. In this regard, the Comprehensive Study on the Sustainable Management and Development of the Mekong River, including Impacts of Mainstream Hydropower Projects is a good example of our spirit of cooperation.
12. **Lastly**, I would like to reiterate that water knows no boundaries. Therefore, the strong cooperation with the development partners and other regional frameworks is very important.

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Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

13. Beyond firmly maintaining cooperation among Member Countries, we need to strengthen our works with our Development Partners and other frameworks such as GMS, ASEAN and other institutions with a view to strengthen capacities and share best practices with the MRC countries.
14. MRC countries, need to work together to emphasize the interconnection between water management and sustainable development. This will ensure a joint benefit in the use of transboundary water.
15. I am very confident that with the strong countries cooperation and a strong engagement from MRC, we can strive toward better livelihoods of our people, sustainable economic growth of our region and the equilibrium of our ecosystem.
16. Thank you.

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