

Congratulatory Remarks on the Launch of the SEAMEO College

**Mr. Andrew Head, Deputy Country Director, Viet Nam Resident Mission,
Asian Development Bank**

20 March 2013, SEAMEO Council Meeting, Daewoo Hotel, Hanoi, Viet Nam

Your Excellency, Pehin Abu Bakar Apong, Minister of Education, Brunei Darussalam and SEAMEO Council President

Your Excellency, Prof. Dr. Pham Vu Luan, Minister of Education and Training, Viet Nam

Other Ministers and Heads of Delegations of SEAMEO Member Countries, Associate Member Countries and Affiliate Members

Mr. Shigeharu Kato, Director General for International Affairs, Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports and Technology, Japan

Prof. Dr. Yonyuth Yuthavong, Former Minister of Science and Technology, Thailand

Dr. Wiyata Jeradechakul, Director, SEAMEO Secretariat

Members of the Diplomatic Corps, SEAMEO Centre Directors, representatives of various international organizations, members of the media

Excellencies, Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure and honor to represent the Asian Development Bank at today's launch ceremony of the SEAMEO College.

Let me first applaud Your. Pehin Abu Bakar Apong, Minister of Education, Brunei Darussalam and SEAMEO Council President, Your Prof. Dr. Pham Vu Luan, Minister of Education and Training, Viet Nam, Dr. Wiyata Jeradechakul, Director, and his staff of SEAMEO Secretariat, and SEAMEO Centre Directors, on today's ceremony as an epoch making event for the establishment of the SEAMEO College.

I recognize that the SEAMEO College is the sum effort of all education stakeholders who share similar vision and commitments for better future of the young people in Southeast Asia. I would like to emphasize that the SEAMEO College will be an important regional platform in Southeast Asia to strengthen capacity of education leaders and practitioners in addressing ASEAN-wide

and cross-border education and human resource development (HRD) issues. I trust that the SEAMEO College will identify innovation solutions to these issues through policy and strategic dialogues among key education stakeholders in Southeast Asia.

The SEAMEO College will contribute to the objective of ADB's *Regional Cooperation and Integration Strategy* by supporting promotion of regional dialogue and cooperation in Southeast Asia, and strengthen "people to people" connectivity as part of the *ASEAN Master Plan on Connectivity*. In particular, ADB's *Education Operations Plan* has priority high for increasing ADB support to regional cooperation and cross-border collaboration in education, to help harmonized education and skills systems and qualifications for facilitating mobility of students, faculty, and labor, and to strengthen regional integration. ADB's Country Partnership Strategy for Viet Nam 2012-2015 also emphasizes ADB's continued commitment to inclusive economic growth through strategic human resource development by enhancing of quality and competitiveness of secondary education, vocational training, and higher education and linking those sector goals with the goal of an integrated ASEAN Community.

The SEAMEO College will respond to a changing context of regional cooperation in education and HRD in Southeast Asia, namely the urgent need to help accelerate the process of building an integrated ASEAN Community by 2015 and beyond. Therefore, I am most pleased that, ADB was able to support SEAMEO in preparing the detailed design and operation plan of the SEAMEO College, and is expected to support the implementation of key activities of the SEAMEO College under a proposed regional technical assistance, entitled Support for a Regional Platform on Innovations in Education and HRD towards an Integrated ASEAN Community.

Once again, I would like to congratulate the launch of the SEAMEO College, and look forward to collaborating with SEAMEO and development partners to advance this important regional initiative.

Thank you very much.