

Remarks by Mr. Shigeharu KATO

Director-General for International Affairs

**Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, Japan
at the Launching Ceremony of SEAMEO College,
47th SEAMEO Council Conference**

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, Vietnam,

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

Dr. Witaya Jeradechakul,
Director, SEAMEO Secretariat

Mr. Andrew Head,
Deputy Country Director, Vietnam Resident Mission, Asian
Development Bank,

Mr. Yasushi Hirosato,
Human and Social Development Division, Southeast Asia
Department, Asian Development Bank,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentleman,

In representing the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports,
Science and Technology of Japan, MEXT, I would like to extend
my warmest congratulations to the launch of SEAMEO College
here today.

In the transition to knowledge based society, work of education Ministers, their officials and education practioners are getting even more challenging everywhere in the world. Turning eyes on the Southeast Asian region, it holds a great potential of future growth, to which countries and people elsewhere pay close attention, and ASEAN integration is expected in 2015. In this historical juncture, regional cooperation in education, science and culture is crucial for sustainable development and peace of the region, as well as for the realization of sharing and caring community.

MEXT highly appreciate the SEAMEO College in that it will provide a dynamic platform to address cross-cutting issues in regional cooperation in education, science and culture. It is expected that effective operation of SEAMEO College will accelerate and enrich various regional collaborative programs under the auspices of SEAMEO, as well as ASEAN and ASEAN+3 Education Ministers Meeting. That is why MEXT has been seriously working to support the SEAMEO College project.

Today, I am glad to inform you that, synchronizing with the launch of SEAMEO College, National Institute of Science and Technology Policy, NISTEP, of MEXT just last week held a short course for science, technology and innovation policy specially designed for experts of SEAMEO Research Centers, in cooperation with National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies, (GRIPS). MEXT has been happy to welcome twelve active participants from SEAMEO Research Centers. The course' main focus was Foresight, which is one of the unique expertises of NISTEP.

Foresight covers activities such as thinking, debating and shaping the future. It is a framework of future-oriented thinking to identify issues to be tackled in the future through the discussion by a variety of stakeholders. It is regarded as one of the useful tools to develop long-term policies and actions in the rapid changes of science, technology and society. Participants to the course are expected to be resources of the College.

In addition, MEXT will support SEAMEO College by sending relevant Japanese experts to the College, using the Expert Dispatch Program. Moreover, I would like to continue discussion with Dr. Witaya to explore further possibility of MEXT's support, carefully following progress of actual implementation of SEAMEO College project.

On this occasion, let me update you with recent initiative MEXT has been taking in its cooperative ties with SEAMEO. In FY 2011, MEXT began dispatch of Japanese experts to SEAMEO Research Centers to support capacity development of their staff. During the two years, (quantity) ¹⁴ experts have been dispatched. Also in fiscal year 2011, MEXT and the SEAMEO Secretariat established the SEAMEO Japan ESD Award. Its aim is to promote ESD – Education for Sustainable Development – in SEAMEO member countries, and to facilitate networking of UNESCO's Associate School Project Network schools in the region. The four prizes for the winners of the first round competition were awarded by H.E. Mr. Phongthep Thepkanjana, Thai Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Education, on the occasion of the SEAMEO HOM last November.

Moreover, this year, Japan is planning to join the ASEAN International Mobility for Students program (AIMS), which is being promoted by SEAMEO-RIHED, as part of its strategic effort of forging collaborative network among higher education institutions in the region and those in Japan.

【機密性○（取扱制限）】

Through these programs, MEXT would like to contribute to the development of the Southeast Asian region in cooperation with SEAMEO. With the opportunity provided by the establishment of SEAMEO College, Japan wishes to further strengthen the relationship between SEAMEO and Japan.

Lastly, I would like to express my highest regards and deepest appreciation to His Excellency Pehin Abu Bakar Apong, Minister of Education, Brunei Darussalam and SEAMEO Council President, Dr. Witaya Jeradechakul, Director of the SEAMEO Secretariat, and all the officials for their dedicated efforts for the establishment of SEAMEO College, and to Asian Development bank for its generous support to SEAMEO College. Japan has the highest hopes for the successful and fruitful development of SEAMEO College into the future.

Thank you for your attention.

4/4