

**International Conference  
The Inter- University Cooperation Program**

**“Regional Stability through Economic, Social and Environmental Development  
in the Greater Mekong Sub-region and Asia-Pacific”**

7 - 12 August, 2011

**Venue: Cinnamon Grand Hotel, Colombo, Sri Lanka**



**Organizer:** Chiangrai Rajabhat University, Thailand  
University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka

**In Association with:**

- SEAMEO Regional Centre for Higher Education and Development
- Yuxi Normal University
- Ho Chi Minh City Open University
- Waseda University
- Keio University
- Huntington University

**Language:** English

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<b>Deadline for Airlines and Hotel reservation:</b>	<b>30 May 2011</b>
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<b>Study Tour:</b>	<b>10 -12 August 2011</b>

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## The 7<sup>th</sup> International Conference

### “Regional Stability through Economic, Social and Environmental Development in the Greater Mekong Sub-region and Asia-Pacific”

to be held in Cinnamon Grand Hotel, Colombo, Sri Lanka

7 – 12 August 2011, in cooperation with University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka

#### **Rationale:**

The Inter-University Cooperation Program aims to promote international understanding and to develop academic and cultural ties among universities in Asia-Pacific and the GMS countries. Its major activity is to bring the awareness of the global economic, social, environmental and political issues that have significant impacts on global warming, trade, financial stability, and human security.

Development is more than economic growth: it also includes the social changes that are caused by or accompany economic growth. The increase in the production of goods and services that came with industrialization had, and still has, frightening costs. Poverty was basically wiped out in a number of countries by industrialization – obviously an impressive benefit of the new economic activity. But that activity harmed both people and the environment.

What is development? a provocative question whether one is willing or unwilling to answer. The still undefined reality of development, vaguely defined by this concept, is both an unchanged postulate and a central problem. There is a difficulty in making a direct approach to development, for its field is indefinable in socio-cultural range and in quality of human life. The definitional problems notwithstanding, the problems have attracted perhaps far more attention in the recent past than any other set of problems.

*Firstly, the concept underlying development has been changing, denoting tentative and ad hoc nature of its meaning and purpose and perhaps indicating that it is only through practice that the real meaning of development can be sought.*

*Secondly, development both in theory and practice has fallen in the domain of economics – a field, despite its lengthening tentacles, unable to comprehend “the vast area, which relate to technology”, “psychology, sociology or environmental ecology” and which “tend to have a synergetic effect on all factors contributing to the development of human and natural potential”.*

*Thirdly, development is often ‘equated with the choice of ideology of change’ irrespective of its human consequences and a political means to strengthen the nation-state.*

*Fourthly, development usually means a departure from the past; as an alternative to traditional society; and as a process of modernization. And finally, “development is seen more as a means - end nexus, and not as human enterprise”.*



The ultimate objectives of development must be to bring about sustained improvement in the well-being of the individual and bestow benefits on all. If undue privileges, extreme of wealth and social injustices persist, then strategy based on joint and concentrated action by developing and developed countries in all spheres of economic and social life: in industry and agriculture, in trade and finance, in employment and education, in health and welfare, in science and technology, in environment and ecosystem to adapt naturally to climate change, and in food production and human security.

It is anticipated that the presentations of the participants' conceptual ideas resulted from their studies of the respective subjects/topics will be the useful inputs in formulating the policies. Through exchange of ideas and sharing of knowledge among the participants will facilitate in formulating the global policies in respect of the global and regional issues. Furthermore, it is expected that the initiatives taken by the participants in their respective papers and reflecting their conceptual ideas of mitigation measures to be considered about the regional issues, however, should be a jump start to formulate policies pertaining to the regional stability.

### Inter-University Cooperation Program Aims

The Inter- University Cooperation Program on “**Regional Stability through Economic, Social and Environmental Development in the Greater Mekong Sub-region and Asia-Pacific**” aims to serve the following six objectives:

**First**, to bring together researchers, scholars, experts and practitioners, NGOs, members of the academic community, government and intergovernmental organizations for an exchange of ideas and views and to develop a mutual understanding with regard to issues on development facing the countries of the Asia-Pacific as well as the Greater Mekong Sub-region;

**Second**, to clearly outline and address obstacles in sharing knowledge network through social, economic, science, technology, environment development and health that we face in this millennium, based on ten main areas of focus; (1) Poverty Alleviation and Welfare Policy (2) Education in the Information Age (3) Culture and Heritage, Ethnic Diversity (4) Migrant Workers and the Economies of Developing and Developed Countries: Labor Rights and Human Rights (5) Food Security and the Green Revolution (6) Tourism Development in the Greater Mekong Sub-region and Asia- Pacific (7) Environment, Bio-Diversity and Shared Natural Resource Management (8) Techno – Scientific Progress, Climate Change and the Energy Transition for Development (9) Institutional Strengthening, Social – Economics and Politics Challenges within the Greater Mekong Sub region and Asia – Pacific (10) Human Development and Health Policy (11) Resolutions and Agenda for Future Action

**Third**, to present viable models and strategies, as solutions to address the areas of concern that represents barriers to policy formulation and implementation.

**Fourth**, to create plans of action that can be submitted to local, national and regional leaders for consideration and implementation;



**Fifth**, to create an international network of scholars, educators, politicians, and development leaders dedicated to implementing these strategies at local, regional, and international levels;

**Sixth**, to address learning and adaptation for international understanding, living in harmony among different cultures, and having respect for values of human dignity, equality and furthering of democracy.

### The Program Theme and Sub-Themes

**THEME:** “Regional Stability through Economic, Social and Environmental Development in the Greater Mekong Sub-region and Asia-Pacific”

#### Sub – themes

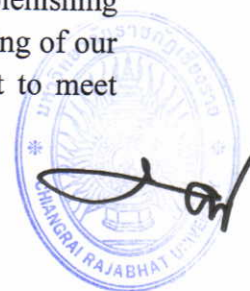
##### (1) Poverty Alleviation and Welfare Policy

Absolute poverty lines are now widely used to report the global incidence of poverty using this approach, the world Bank (2001) estimates that about 1.2 billion people or 24 percent of the world’s population of about 6 billion people had incomes of less than one dollars per day or (\$365 per person per annum) in 1998. In recent years, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) have been adopted as a global measure of poverty reduction and, hence, represent a coherent set of poverty indicators that may be used to indicate progress toward agreed targets. However, these represent only a subset of all useful poverty indicators. The MDGs are: to achieve universal primary education; to promote gender equality and empower women; to reduce child mortality; to improve natural health; to combat HIVs/AIDs, malaria, and other diseases; to ensure environmental sustainability; and to develop a global partnership for development.

##### (2) Education in the Information Age

The theme of ‘Education and Human Resource Development’ is directed to improve the efficiency and effectiveness as well as to strengthen the managerial and leadership capacity of middle and senior officials within Asia-Pacific and GMS. The need for educational reform in this millennium is a worldwide primary concern of educators, scholars, government officials, and families. The rise of new technologies and the rapid dissemination of information have created opportunities for education that are beyond our imagination. However, for example, we are still living in an environment conducive to increases in violent crime; in births outside marriage; rising divorce rates; proliferation of single-parent homes; increased use of drugs among teenagers, and an extraordinary rise in sexual crimes and in child abuse.

The reality is that over recent decades we have not been teaching and replenishing those attitudes of character that are necessary for the continuation and strengthening of our civil society and peaceful democracy. How can our educational systems adjust to meet these challenges and the needs of our youth for the future?



### **(3) Culture and Heritage, Ethnic Diversity**

There is a necessity for understanding and cooperation among peoples of diverse cultures within and among nations. ‘Globalization’ is a term often used to describe world economic trends. However, in our steady advance to link the economies of various nations, we often overlook the human links; the bridges of understanding that tend to create the basis of true partnership and mutual cooperation. How can we effectively build appreciation for and tolerance of cultural diversity within and among nations? The cultural aspects will include examining traditional ways of life, local wisdom, arts and languages.

### **(4) Migrant Workers and the Economies of Developing and Developed Countries: Labor Rights and Human Rights**

The Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS) and neighbouring countries comprise one of the world’s most dynamic migration hubs. There are well over two million migrants in both Thailand and Malaysia, and the number of migrants from Cambodia, Lao PDR and Viet Nam continues to rise. The structure of the economies and demographic evolution is driving the need for low-skilled workers in labour-intensive jobs; and established chain migration links match this demand with a steady supply of migrants attracted by the wage differential.

As the number of women and men migrants within and from the GMS grows, so do the opportunities for unscrupulous job brokers and employers to take advantage of them. Studies into the living and working conditions of low-skilled migrants in the region reveal indicators of abuse commonly associated with labour exploitation are widespread. These indicators include high recruitment costs; deception about wages, type of work and legal status; withheld wages; retained passports or identity documents; physical confinement; substandard working conditions, and threats of denunciation to the authorities.

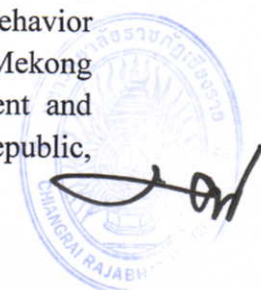
### **(5) Food Security and the Green Revolution**

One of the most fundamental problems many less developed nations face is how to end hunger in their lands. The rapid growth of their populations and the past neglect of an agricultural development have resulted in increased suffering in rural areas. Advances in technology have helped to keep the overall production of food in many poor countries a head of their increased needs, but widespread poverty in the rural districts as well as in some urban areas has meant that many people available in the market.

The Bringing of high agricultural technology to the developing world has been called the Green Revolution. The Green Revolution has two basic components: the use of new seeds, especially for wheat rice and corn and the use of various “inputs”, such as fertilizer, irrigation, and pesticides.

### **(6) Tourism Development in the Greater Mekong Sub-region and Asia- Pacific**

Tourism is the international business to increase the economic growth of the country. In the mean time, tourism can cause destruction of natural resources and bring harmful to the country’s social problems in particular created by the undesirable behavior of the tourists. The construction of highways and establishment of the Greater Mekong Economic Corridor has expanded the economic cooperation of trade, investment and tourism enterprise among People’s Republic of China, Lao People’s Democratic Republic,



Socialist Republic of Vietnam, Myanmar, Thailand and Kingdom of Cambodia. It is then, the important issues of tourism in this region.

#### **(7) Environment, Bio-Diversity and Shared Natural Resource Management**

This theme is to address, on a continuing basic, the pressing issues of poverty incidence and reduction, environmental conservation and protection, and the effective enforcement of regulations to prevent trafficking in drugs, women and wildlife. It recognizes that all States must take appropriate conservation measure, including the protection and management of biological resources that are important for the conservation of biological diversity and the rehabilitation and restoration of degraded ecosystems. Within Asia-Pacific and GMS countries, the main aim is to assist the member countries to protect the environment and maintain the ecological balance of the basin, and to ensure environmental and social sustainability of economic development within the region. The livelihood and prosperity of a growing population living in the Mekong River Basin and Asia Pacific region depends on having a healthy environment.

#### **(8) Techno – Scientific Progress, Climate Change and the Energy Transition for Development**

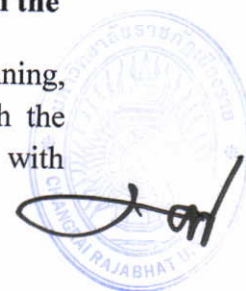
To many people, technology and development are synonymous. Technology is what makes economic growth and social change happen. The limited use of high technology by the less developed nations is sometimes given as one of the reasons why they are less developed and less prosperous than the industrialized nations. Technology can cause a society to change in some very undesirable ways. The immediate technology movement is not against the use of such technology where simple technology would be appropriate.

The energy transition is the relationship between energy use and development. It is a new ability to produce economic growth with less energy. The role of conservation during the present period of energy transition is explored in terms of nonrenewable energy sources and renewable energy sources. The change in the earth's climate, it has to reconsider the renewable energy source to replace for instance the oil crisis.

The effects of climate change on natural and human systems depending on the consideration of adaptation, one can distinguish between potential impacts which meant all impacts that occur in a given projected change without considering adaptation and the residual impacts which meant the impacts of climate change that would occur after adaptation. The ability of a system to adjust to climate change or to cope with the consequences; understanding climate related risk and livelihood linkages, economic condition, social situation, technology, institutional capacity and environmental sustainability.

#### **(9) Institutional Strengthening, Social – Economics and Politics Challenges within the Greater Mekong Sub region and Asia – Pacific**

The objective of this theme is to explore ways to enhance the quality of planning, decision-making, and implementation of the complex development agenda at both the national and sub-regional levels. Governance is a high priority with stakeholders, with



disclosure and transparency of information, and in measures to strengthen Asia-Pacific and GMS mechanisms and processes.

Various contemporary social, economic and political problems are global in nature and are shared by many countries; their solution requires the coordinated efforts of national governments, civil society and the international community at large. This theme is meant to address health and other social, economic, and capacity-building issues associated with sub-regional linkages. The benefits of enhanced connectivity and improved competitiveness, in terms of higher incomes and improved quality of life, must be shared widely to contribute to a greater sense of community and to community well-being.

The Asia-Pacific and GMS is currently undergoing multiple transitions within a growth environment. The roles of markets and governments are being redefined, and their economies are becoming more diversified and open. Because they are in transition from centrally planned to market economies, there are common problems that these countries face. The future of the Sub-region may well depend on how successfully its members manage a number of critical transitions. The Sub-region is becoming more 'open' economically.

#### **(10) Human Development and Health Policy**

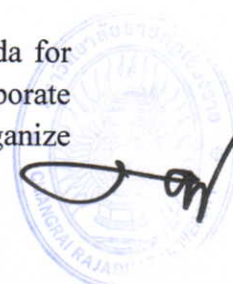
Human development gaps within countries are as stark as the gaps between countries. These gaps reflect unequal opportunity – people held back because of their gender, group identity, wealth or location. Such inequalities are unjust. They are also economically wasteful and socially destabilizing. Overcoming the structural forces that create and perpetuate extreme inequality is one of the most efficient routes for welfare of society and accelerating progress towards the development goals.

Cross-border migration and increasing labor mobility pose challenges in terms of communicable diseases, human and drug trafficking, and the exploitation of child labor. Many of these social issues disproportionately affect vulnerable groups such as women, children and ethnic minorities. An important focus of the regional cooperation strategy is building up national capacities and strengthening regional and sub-regional institutions.

New and old threats continue to plague the international community. Terrorism has become a major threat. Corruption, criminality, cross-border crime and the drug trade led by organized crime, present increasing dangers to human populations. The escalation of violent conflicts, genocide and abuse of human rights have become factors of renewed concern to the international community. How can national governments effectively cooperate and pool their resources, creating bridges of communication and plans of action that will provide for the mutual benefit and peaceful prosperity of the world community of nations?

#### **(11) Resolutions and Agenda for Future Action**

The theme and the sub-themes provide the context for developing an agenda for action to encourage and ensure a creation of knowledge networks which incorporate professional bodies, academic research groups and scientific communities that organize



around a special subject matter or issue. Individual or institutional inclusion in such networks is based upon professional or official recognition of expertise as well as more subtle and informal processes of validating scholarly and scientific credibility. The primary motivation of such networks is to create and advance knowledge as well as to share, spread and, in some cases, use that knowledge to inform policy and apply it to practice.

It is not simply sufficient to explore issues without setting out clearly how to achieve the objectives we have and the issue we identify and discuss. The focus must also be on recommending feasible suggestions for change based on deeper analyses of the problems besetting the Asia-Pacific and GMS and the strategies and steps that need to be undertaken remedial action for sustainable development and regional stability.

### Guidelines for Submission of Abstracts:

Abstracts should not exceed 300 words in Time New Roman 12 point and must include a separate title page. In submitting abstracts, please follow the Guidelines as outlined below:

- 1) Title for paper
- 2) Theme of submission
- 3) Two or three key words that describe the submission
- 4) Name of the author
- 5) Mailing address
- 6) Phone number
- 7) Fax number
- 8) Email

Abstracts will be reviewed according to the subject matter, as well as their relevance to the conference theme and sub-themes. Notification of acceptance will be provided by **25 May 2011**. If your abstract is accepted, electronic copies of full papers should be submitted by **15 June 2011**.

**Abstract and full papers should be sent electronically to:**

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