

Third Annual Mekong Flood Forum
Don Chan Palace Hotel
Vientiane, Lao PDR
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CLOSING SPEECH

By

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*Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen*

On behalf of the Mekong River Commission I firstly have to apologise that our CEO Dr. Cogels was unable to joint us at the end of this Forum. He is about to embark on a fund raising tour of Europe and had to leave the country tonight.

However I am confident I speak for him when I say that we are all delighted that 3rd Annual Flood Forum has been such a success.

I would like to take this opportunity to once again thank our generous sponsors the Royal Government of the Netherlands, the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany and the Government of the United States of America for their support for this forum. I am sure they will agree it has been a very productive exercise.

I also thank all the delegates and presenters from our member countries of Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand and Vietnam and our dialogue partner, Myanmar and all those participants and delegates both the region and further afield who gave up their time to be with us for this forum.

During the two days of this forum we have had the chance to talk and discuss a broad range of topics about the MRC's new Flood Management and Mitigation Programme in depth for the first time. Drought is now becoming a severe disaster after its occurrence during the last 2 years and was discussed by the forum as well. And I am sure everyone will agree that these discussions have been very productive.

We have learned a lot from each other's regional experiences and we have been fortunate enough to share in the expertise of highly skilled technical experts from around the region.

This shared knowledge, particularly the practical information gathered from real life situations, will prove invaluable with our future planning.

One aspect of the group discussions that has been of particular value to the MRC has been your feedback on the programme and its components and your recommendations on how we can improve and refine certain elements.

We will certainly be taking these recommendations on board during the implementation of the Flood Management and Mitigation Programme and look forward to sharing future exchange with all our partners.

***Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen***

If we are to achieve our goals with the FMMP, good clear communication between all parties concerned – the MRCS, NMCs and the line agencies – is essential and we fully intend to improve our lines communication in the implementation of the FMMP.

The FMMP exemplifies the spirit shared by the MRC member countries and the willingness they show to work together for the benefit of all who live in the basin

and their preparedness to handle sensitive trans-boundary issues in a constructive way.

Now the FMMP is funded we look forward to getting down to the business of flood management and mitigation in earnest and to making life safer and easier for the people of the Mekong.

Thank you for your attention and I look forward to seeing all of you next year at the 4th Annual Mekong Flood Forum.