

2ND ASIA COOPERATION DIALOGUE (ACD) SUMMIT

“One Asia, Diverse Strength”

9-10 October 2016, Bangkok, Kingdom of Thailand



The Government of the Kingdom of Thailand hosted the 2nd Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) Summit, with the theme “One Asia, Diverse Strength”, on 9 - 10 October 2016 in Bangkok. The Meeting was attended by Ministers of Foreign Affairs and other Heads of Delegation of the Member States of the ACD, namely, the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, the Kingdom of Bahrain, the People’s Republic of Bangladesh, the Kingdom of Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, the Kingdom of Cambodia, the People’s Republic of China, the Republic of India, the Republic of Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Japan, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Republic of Korea, the State of Kuwait, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Mongolia, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, Nepal, the Sultanate of Oman, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the Republic of the Philippines, the State of Qatar, the Russian Federation, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Republic of Singapore, the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, the Republic of Tajikistan, the Kingdom of Thailand, the Republic of Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, the Republic of Uzbekistan, and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam.

The Meeting was opened by His Excellency General Prayut Chan-o-cha (Ret.), Prime Minister of Thailand, who chaired the summit and delivered an opening speech reiterating Thailand’s commitment to the role of the ACD Chair and Coordinator as part of the country’s aspirations to be a constructive player and a bridge builder in regional and global affairs such as 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Established in 2002, the ACD is the only official dialogue and cooperation mechanism towards the entire Asia at present. It focuses on promoting exchanges and cooperation in agriculture, energy, poverty alleviation and other fields among all member states and aims to carry out Asia dialogue, push forward Asia cooperation as well as boost Asia’s development. Under the theme of “One Asia, Diverse Strengths” this year, attending representatives conducted discussions on advancing cooperation, moving forward the development of Asia and accelerating its integration progress.

The highlighted issues are as follows:

First

The leaders, for the first time, agreed to develop Asia in the next 14 years through the endorsement of ACD Vision for Asia Cooperation 2030. The objectives of the document include sustainable development and the building of Asian community, emphasizing six pillars of cooperation i.e. (1) Connectivity (2) Science, Technology and Innovation (3) Education and Human Resources Development (4) Interrelation of Food, Water, and Energy Security (5) Culture and Tourism (6) Promoting Approaches to Inclusiveness and Sustainable Development

Malaysia is designated as co-Prime Mover in Education and Human Resource Development to train the future generation of ACD peoples, ensure inclusive and equitable quality education at all levels for them and to equip them with key capacities, particularly, financial literacy, digital literacy, language skills, and a better perspective of their role and responsibility as good global citizens.

The ACD member states appreciate the role of the Asia e University as an instrument for capacity building and increasing higher education accessibility for the benefit of ACD Member States.

“As a co-prime mover of the education and human resources development pillar, Malaysia reaffirms our commitment to developing the Asia e University (AeU) into a major educational platform which will enhance people-to-people connectivity among the ACD member states,” says the Prime Minister of Malaysia Dato' Sri Mohd Najib Razak at the Plenary Session of the Summit.

He said that since its beginning in 2008, AeU has enrolled around 2,350 international students from 60 countries, and has established partnerships in 25 countries.

Dato' Sri Najib reiterated that through the AeU platform, institutions of higher learning in Asia will be able to leverage on each others' resources and facilities. And via AeU Open and Distance Learning programmes, students from across the ACD Member States will be able to enjoy high quality, affordable, accessible and relevant courses.”

Second

The leaders agreed to transform the Vision into action. In this connection, the Summit endorsed the Bangkok Declaration and the ACD Blue Print 2017-2021. The ACD Blue Print is a recommendation for our member countries to adopt as guidelines for implementation and concretization of the ACD six pillars of cooperation.

Third

The meeting affirmed the partnership between the States and the private sectors of ACD to reflect the roles and opportunities of Asia at present, especially during a crucial time when the global economy is gradually recovering while still facing numerous challenges and fluctuations. The Summit trusts that Asia remains a regional full of potential and fortitude. This is also “the Century of Asia” where the region will proof its role as a catalyst for global economic growth and dynamism. ACD is, indeed, a cooperation framework which potential and strength of all member countries can be utilized for mutual benefits. The leaders of ACD member states have thus endorsed the ACD Statement on Reigniting Growth through Partnerships for Connectivity which demonstrates the States and the private sectors' resolution to promote opportunities and cooperation at the ACD Connect 2016 Business Forum.

Fourth

The meeting concurred to establish the ACD Secretariat in Kuwait to serve as a mechanism promoting ACD operations, particularly coordination between member countries, and hosting meetings and various events annually. The meeting thanked Kuwait as the host country of the ACD Secretariat and requested Kuwait to continue its financial support for the ACD Secretariat operations.

The 2nd ACD Summit is the first time where leaders of member countries have the opportunities to hear recommendations from representatives of the private sectors from ACD Connect 2016 Business Forum. The private sectors have proposed multi-dimensional guidelines in developing Asia to the public sectors, including the enhancement of financial connectivity in Asia through modern financial technology and innovation (FinTech). The recommendations include the capital mobilization for regional infrastructure development from main sources of funds, which should lead to inclusiveness and sustainable development.

The promotion of the Public-Private-People Partnership (4Ps) was highlighted and supported by the leaders. The partnership should be strengthened further. All stakeholders should be considered within the equation, especially the people which is the main force of the Asia continent. The leaders have agreed that no one will be left behind and we altogether must march forward steadily.

Lastly, the meeting expressed thanks and appreciation to Thailand for initiating ACD and for hosting the 2nd ACD Summit in Bangkok. This has substantially boosted the framework's momentum. The ACD leaders additionally thanked UAE as the new ACD chair, and for hosting the 15th Ministerial Meeting in Abu Dhabi in January 2017 to expand and materialize the outcome of this Summit which concentrates on cooperation of ACD member states on alternative energy. The meeting also congratulated Iran as host country for the 3rd ACD Summit scheduled in 2018. That will be an opportunity for ACD leaders to review the progress of the 2nd ACD Summit where all have laid a strong foundation to guide member countries towards inclusive and sustainable Asia.

