

ACD/CG/2009/03



**CHAIR'S SUMMARY REPORT  
OF THE COORDINATING GROUP CONSULTATIONS  
12<sup>th</sup> October 2009, Colombo, Sri Lanka**

Sri Lanka, as the Chair of the 8<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Meeting convened the Coordinating Group Consultations of the Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD), in Colombo to discuss matters pertaining to the 8<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Meeting of ACD on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2009.

The Coordinating Group Consultations comprising delegates from the Kingdom of Thailand (ACD Coordinator), Republic of Kazakhstan (past Chair), The Islamic Republic of Iran (ACD future Chair) and The Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka (current Chair) was held on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2009 at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Sri Lanka. The list of participants is attached as **Annex I**.

### **Opening Remarks**

The Consultations was chaired by Mrs. Pamela J. Deen, Additional Secretary Political Affairs (East Asia and the Pacific) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Sri Lanka. Mrs. Deen while thanking the members of the Coordinating Group for their presence in Colombo, elaborated on the preparations for the ACD Ministerial Meeting.

Following the opening remarks, the Indicative Topics were adopted with an amendment to the Agenda Item 4. Amended Indicative Topics are at Doc No. **ACD/CG/2009/02**.

### **Progress Report of the 20 ACD cooperation areas.**

Thailand, as the Coordinator, presented the Progress Report, which is at Doc. No. **ACD/P/CPM/2009/02**. However, the Coordinating Group observed that only six cooperation areas had been actively progressing since Kazakhstan Meeting and thus much effort need to be taken by the Member States in order to revitalize the balance cooperation areas.

### **Progress Report for the period September 2008 – July 2009**

Kazakhstan, as the past Chair, informed the Group with regret that there was no significant progress to report in the relevant sectors.

In this context, it was recognized that the designated Prime and Co-Prime Mover countries of the respective sectors need to monitor more closely and ensure implementation of agreed projects.

Further, it was highlighted that when announcing projects to the ACD Calendar of Events, to take all aspects of the project proposal in to consideration, including financial viability and implementability.

### **Introduction of the theme “Spirit of Asia: Global Economic Recovery and Development Prospects by Chair, Sri Lanka”**

Chair brought to the notice of the Members of the Group that a Concept Paper, indicating the relevance of the theme, was circulated among the Member States during the ACD Breakfast Meeting on the sidelines of the 64<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN General Assembly held in New York in September 2009.

Having recalled the Concept Paper, Chair noted that although the global financial crisis has affected most countries the economic recovery of Asia has been better than expected and faster than predicted. It was also acknowledged that the world is becoming increasingly Asia centric and the focus of economic activity is shifting in favour of Asia. Further, it was noted that ACD membership comprising of 2/3 of all humanity is probably the only major Pan-Asian Grouping which spreads across the entire geographical spectrum of Asia. In this backdrop, the importance of interdependence and the need for integration among Asian countries was highlighted.

### **Strengthening the Cooperation framework to facilitate trade, tourism and transport**

The historical context illuminates the fact that Asia has a common thread that runs through it and the idea of Asia economic integration is not a novel one. Asia is a region which has a shared heritage dating back to the times of the Silk Route linking East Asia with Central, South and West Asia. Ever since then, there has been a vibrant flow of goods and services as well as labour and capital amongst Asian countries sustained over several centuries.

The Group recognized the importance of infrastructure development, air and sea linkages, peace and harmony in the region for economic development as well as for promoting peace in the region.

In this backdrop, The Group recommended that special emphasis needs to be given for cooperation in the clusters of transport, tourism and trade, as these clusters have the potential to create enhanced people-to-people contact in the region.

In this background, Sri Lanka agreed to be the coordinator for tourism cluster, and similarly, Iran for trade and Kazakhstan for transport. The Concept Papers provided by the Member States of the Group in this regard are at Doc. Nos. **ACD/AMM/2009/06**, **ACD/AMM/2009/07** and **ACD/AMM/2009/08**.

### **Future direction of High Level Study Group (HLSG)**

The Group unanimously agreed that the mandate of the HLSG should be renewed and mandated with the following:

- (a) To undertake periodic review, in order to assess the progress of the Prime and Co-Prime Movers
- (b) To conduct a feasibility study on the clusters of trade, tourism and transport
- (c) To ensure that projects are listed in the ACD Calendar of Events only when financially viable
- (d) Any other tasks entrusted by the Coordinating Group

### **Technical Support Facility (TSF)**

Group welcomed Sri Lanka's proposal for the setting up of a Technical Support Facility (TSF), comprising of ACD Ambassadors accredited to the country holding the Chair. The TSF will be designated to meet quarterly to follow up on areas of Prime and Co-Prime Mover Cooperation and also provide support to the virtual secretariat. It was also agreed that foreign office representatives from the capitals too could participate. Further, the Group agreed to convene bi-annual meetings of the Coordinating Group without prejudice to the to existing practice of convening of special sessions of Coordinating Group.

### **Finalising the Draft Colombo Declaration, the 8<sup>th</sup> ACD Ministerial Meeting, 15<sup>th</sup> October 2009**

The Chair presented the draft Colombo Declaration which was discussed among the Group. Accordingly, the revised draft Declaration to be submitted to the Prime and Co-Prime Mover Consultations on 14<sup>th</sup> October 2009 is at **ACD/AMM/2009/05 (REV III)**.

### **Conclusion**

The members of the Coordinating Group Consultations thanked the Government of Sri Lanka for the hospitality extended to the members and the arrangements made for the ACD Ministerial Meeting.

The need to reinvigorate the spirit of the ACD and its mechanisms to ensure progress, including strong commitment of the Member States, the renewing of the mandate of the HLSG to review the progress of the identified twenty sectors of cooperation and the financial viability and implimentability were identified by the Group as prime areas of concern at this juncture of ACD.

Accordingly, the members of the Coordinating Group, namely, Thailand, Kazakhstan, Sri Lanka and Iran unanimously agreed to cooperate and to follow up on the decisions taken at this consultations with Prime and Co-prime Movers as well as with all other Member States.

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## ANNEX I

**Coordinating Group Consultations**  
**12<sup>th</sup> October 2009, Colombo, Sri Lanka**  
**List of Delegates**

**Thailand**

**Mr. Bundit Limschoon**, Minister Counsellor, Department of International Economic Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

**Ms. Yaninee Nachom**, Third Secretary, Department of International Economic Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

**Kazakhstan**

**Mr. Marat Kalizhanov**, Head of Division, Department of Asia Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

**Mr. Kerimkulov Bauyrzhan**, Third Secretary, Embassy of Kazakhstan in India

**Iran**

**Dr. Hadi Soleimanpour**, Director General, International Economic Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

**Mr. Hossein Taleshi Salehani**, Deputy Director, Multilateral Economic Cooperation Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

**Sri Lanka**

**Mrs. Pamela J. Deen**, Additional Secretary/East Asia & Pacific, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

**Mr. B.M.U.D. Basnayake**, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Tourism

**Mr. Esala Weerakoon**, Director General/East Asia & Pacific, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

**Mr. A. L. A. Azeez**, Director General/Middle East, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

**Mr. D. Mudadeniya**, Managing Director, Sri Lanka Tourist Board

**Mrs. Shanthi Sudusinghe**, Director/East Asia & Pacific, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

**Ms. Swarna Perera**, Director/East Asia & Pacific, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

**Ms. Hasanthi Dissanayake**, Director/UN & Multilateral Affairs, Ministry of Affairs

**Ms. Aruni Ranaraja**, Director/East Asia & Pacific, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

**Ms. Pradeepa Saram**, Director/ East Asia & Pacific, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

**Ms. Thiloma Abayajeewa**, Assistant Director/East Asia & Pacific, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

**Mr. Leslie Uduwavidane**, Head of Brand, Communication and Market Research/Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau