

**Thailand's Statement at
International Conference
“Europe-Asia Transboundary Water Cooperation”**

Geneva, 15-16 December 2011

Good Morning Chair, Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen;

It is our pleasure to have an opportunity to participate and share our country;
Thailand's view, challenges and vision on transboundary water cooperation with
colleagues from Europe and Asia.

Thailand is one of the five Asian countries which sharing one of the Great
transboundary river of the World; the Mekong. We, together with Mekong River
countries including Lao PDR, Cambodia, Vietnam, Myanmar and China, share a
Mekong water use. The lower Mekong countries; including Lao PDR, Cambodia,
Thailand and Vietnam, are equally desirous of continuing to cooperate in a
constructive and mutually beneficial manner for sustainable development, utilization,
conservation and management of the Mekong water resources with **a commitment of
1995 Mekong Agreement**. We also have promoted a corporation with dialogue
countries of upper Mekong; Myanmar and China.

Both poverty reduction and economic growth require **the development of Mekong
water resources for multiple purposes**, including power generation, agricultural and
fishery production and river-borne trade. They also require the management of the
river and its ecosystems to ensure long-term sustainability and made more challenging
by climate change.

At **the first MRC Summit** in April 2010, Prime Ministers of lower Mekong countries reaffirmed their continued commitment to cooperate in promoting the sustainable development. The Summit highlighted **the need for further cooperation to tackle critical emerging challenges in the Mekong Basin** including; managing the risks of floods and droughts, integrating sustainability considerations into development of the Basin's hydropower potential; minimizing deterioration of water quality and loss of wetlands and biodiversity; managing unique natural fisheries; and addressing the threat to livelihoods posed by climate change.

Chair, Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen;

Thailand together with others have made a **significant progress through our transboundary water cooperation under 1995 Mekong Agreement**. One of key milestones we have made recently by 2010 is a preparation and adoption of **the Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM)-based Basin Development Strategy** at the right time when the Basin and the Mekong River itself are encountering significant changes. This includes demographic, economic, climate and hydrological changes, influenced by national, regional and global drivers. The Basin Strategy provides initial directions for cooperative and sustainable water development and management. It, therefore, defines a dynamic basin development planning process that will be reviewed and updated every five years to ensure that decision-making on water and related resources is based on up-to-date knowledge and feedback. Thailand and Mekong member countries are attempting **to implement the Basin Strategy and**

development of the Basin Action Plan which will be the core priority under the MRC Strategic Plan during the period of 2011-2015.

Transboundary water cooperation under 1995 Mekong Agreement is moving towards **an ownership of basin development and implementation by Mekong countries.** It is targeted to increase a decentralization of Mekong cooperation activities by strengthening institutional framework namely river basin organizations, line agencies and stakeholder involvement.

Thailand is keen to strengthen institutional framework for transboundary water management in particular to promote and support a role and responsibility of sub-basin/local river basin organizations established. We consider a critical role of river basin organizations being key stakeholder for a successful basin development and planning. In Thailand, a decentralization of Mekong cooperation activities is realized by the River Basin Organization framework engaging the stakeholders at different levels; local, community, district, provincial, and sub-basin level. **The River Basin Organizations themselves implement transboundary water cooperation actions with a view to balance and share mutual benefit, and also to avoid conflicts on transboundary water uses.**

Lastly, Thailand looks forward to **learning and exchanging experiences and knowledge of transboundary water cooperation with others;** not only in Mekong region, but also in other parts of the world. Our vision is to avoid conflict, to synergize our efforts for sustainable development and mutual benefits among neighboring countries. **Thailand strongly believes that transboundary water**

cooperation among neighboring countries is one among the best approach for sustainable development of shared water.

We, again, express our gratitude to the organizer on behalf of Thailand for providing an opportunity to share with you all at this Conference.