

SPEAKER PROFILES



**MEKONG
FORUM** 2018

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

DR. NARONGCHAI AKRASANEE

Former Minister of Energy
and Minister of Commerce of Thailand

Dr. Narongchai, a Thai economist/technocrat, is known for his continuous involvement in the economic development of Thailand in many capacities, and in ASEAN and APEC affairs. He had a number of appointments in the Thai Government, including as Advisor to several Thai Prime Ministers, as a former Minister of Energy and Minister of Commerce, a Senator, and a member of the National Legislative Assembly.

He has worked on ASEAN and APEC affairs all along, being an initiator of AFTA and the APEC Leaders Meeting. He has also served as the Chairman of Steering Committee and Vice Chairman of the Council of Mekong Institute.

In the private sector, Dr. Narongchai is on the Board of several publicly listed companies including MFC Asset Management Plc., Ananda Property Development Plc. and the Brooker Group. In January 2016, he was reappointed to be an Independent Non-executive Director of AIA Group Limited, Hong Kong.

Dr. Narongchai served as a member of the Board of many Thai public institutions including the National Economic and Social Development Board, Board of Investment, Bank of Thailand, Securities and Exchange Commission of Thailand and the Insurance Commission. He was also a Chairman of the Export-Import Bank of Thailand.

Having graduated with a Ph.D. in economics from the Johns Hopkins University, Dr. Narongchai has a keen interest in education and research. He is the founding member of the Thailand Development Research Institute, Chairman of the Khon Kaen University Council, and Chairman of Mekong Institute Steering Committee.





KEYNOTE SPEAKER

H.E. MR. ZHANG GUOHUA

Vice Governor

The People's Government of Yunnan Province,
P.R. China

H. E. Mr. ZHANG Guohua, Vice Governor of Yunnan Province, P.R.China and Council Member of Mekong Institute representing China, was born in November in 1964 with a BA of Biology from Nanjing Normal University. From August 1987 to January 2018, Mr. ZHANG Guohua was working in Jiangsu Province as Deputy Party Secretary of Suzhou Municipality, Mayor and later the Party Secretary of Kunshan City, Mayor of Nantong Municipality and Party Secretary of Xuzhou Municipality. He was elected as Vice Governor of Yunnan Province in January 2018. Mr. ZHANG Guohua has been taking leadership role for a long time, during which he has accumulated abundant experience in the areas of foreign affairs, commerce, economic zone management, enterprises development and youth affairs.

SPECIAL ADDRESS

MR. KENSUKE TANAKA

Head of Asia Desk

OECD Development Centre

Kensuke Tanaka is the Head of the Asia Desk of the OECD Development Centre (in France). He initiated and is in charge of several publications including the biannual OECD flagship publication “Economic Outlook for Southeast Asia, China and India”, which comprises assessment of the macroeconomic situation and the regional integration process as well as an analysis of key structural policy challenges in Emerging Asia. This publication started from 2010 and is now regularly presented at the occasion of the ASEAN/East Asia Summit. He also constructed the Medium-term Projection Framework (MPF) in 2009 based on a DSGE model approach to serve the forecasts for the Outlook.

Then in 2012, jointly with Asian Development Bank, he started the “Revenue statistics for Asian countries”, which provides comparable statistics of Asian countries on fiscal revenues and discusses fiscal policy changes in Asia. More recently, he published “Road and Rail Infrastructure in Asia: Investing in Quality” in 2018, focusing on externalities of infrastructure investment in selected Southeast Asian countries.

Between 2010 and 2013, he constructed the leading and composite economic indicators called Asian Business Cycle Indicators (ABCIs) and released the quarterly bulletin “This Quarter in Asia”. He also led a project to create Narrowing Development Gaps Indicators (NDGIs) with the ASEAN Secretariat in 2012.

In addition to analytical work, he initiated the policy dialogue network called “OECD-AMRO-ADB/ADBI-ERIA Asian Regional Roundtable on Macroeconomic and Structural Policies”, which is held annually to provide an opportunity for five different international organizations to discuss hot issues in the region.

Before joining the OECD Development Centre, Mr. Tanaka was a Programme Manager at the OECD, Centre for Co-operation with Non-members, mainly in charge of Southeast Asian economic issues. He published “Shaping policy reform and peer review in Southeast Asia” in 2008. Previously, he worked at a public research institute and taught Monetary and Financial Economics in France (Sciences Po) as well as in Japan (Yokohama College of Commerce) and held lectures at various universities in Southeast Asia. He wrote articles in the fields of macroeconomic, public policy, regional integration and development in Asia.



EXAMINING THE GROWTH MOMENTUM CHALLENGES



SESSION I

DR. STHABANDITH INSISIENMAY

Director General

Center for Macroeconomic Policy and Economic Restructuring,
National Institute of Economic Research, Lao PDR

Dr. Sthabandith Insisienmay obtained his Ph.D. in economics from the Kyoto University in Japan in 2008 and a Master's degree in Economics of Development from Australian National University in 2001. He started working with the National Economic Research Institute (NERI), Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI) since 2012. Since 2016, the institute has been separated from the MPI and has become an independent government think tank named National Institute of Economic Research (NIER). He currently holds the position of Director General of the Center for Macroeconomic Policy and Economic Restructuring of NIER.

He has engaged in several research projects covering various economic issues including those related to economic integration, quantitative analysis, financial development and the impact of the natural resource sector. He was also the team leader of Lao PDR's Macroeconomic Model Development Working Group and has supervised the development and use of the model for macroeconomic monitoring and forecasting. His previous works also contributed to the formulation of Lao Vision 2030 and 10-year national socio-economic development strategy (2016-2025). His on-going research works are on the issues of poverty dynamic and inequality, internal population migration, illicit financial flow and regional connectivity through highways and trains.





DR. TRAN TOAN THANG

Director

Department of World Economy and Integration, National Center for Socio-Economic Information and Forecast, Ministry of Planning and Investment, Vietnam

Dr. Tran Toan Thang obtained his master's degree in development economics in NLH University, Norway in 2003 and a Ph.D. in economics in Essex University in the UK in 2013. He has 20 years of working for the Central Institute for Economic Management (CIEM), a think tank in Vietnam. He moved to work for the National Center for Socio-Economic Information and Forecast (NCIF) in early 2017 as the Director of the World Economy Department.

His research interests focus on macroeconomic issues such as economic growth, foreign direct investment, international trade and preferential trade agreements.

DR. PISIT PUAPAN

Senior Expert on Macroeconomic Policy
Fiscal Policy Office, Thailand

Dr. Pisit Puapan is currently Senior Expert for Macroeconomic Policy under the Fiscal Policy Office, Ministry of Finance, Thailand. In his current position, he is responsible for economic review, monitoring, forecast and macroeconomic and fiscal policy analysis under the Ministry of Finance. He regularly meets with IMF, credit rating agencies and international investors to hold policy discussions and dialogues on behalf of the Ministry.

Since joining the government in 1998, he has been delegated to work on various assignments within the Ministry. His first assignment was with the Public Debt Management Office responsible for bilateral loan negotiation. In 2001, he performed analyses on financial sector and trade liberalization under the ASEAN and APEC frameworks. He was the primary official responsible for the implementation of ASEAN+3 Bilateral Swap Arrangement (BSA) under the Chiang Mai Initiative. During 2003-2005, Dr. Pisit was assigned to Government Expenditures Policy Section, Bureau of Fiscal Policy, and handled the preparatory process of the Thai government's annual budget.





DR. HTEIN LYNN

Director

Trade Development Division, Myanmar Trade Promotion Organization, Ministry of Commerce, Myanmar

Dr. Htein Lynn holds bachelor's and master's degrees from the Yangon Institute of Economics, where he also obtained his Ph.D. in economics in 2005 in partnership with Gottingen University. After an academic career at the Yangon Institute Economics and Yangon University of Economics, Dr. Htein Lynn joined the Ministry of Commerce in 2006 and more specifically the Directorate of Trade where he worked as deputy director of the Market Information and Research Teams.

From 2009 to 2012, he was Deputy Director of the Minister's Office and in 2012 of the Trade Training Institute. In 2013, he was appointed Director of the ASEAN and Regional Organizations Division, and in 2015 Director of the Strategic Trade Promotion Organization. He is currently heading the Trade Development Division of Myanmar Trade Promotion Organization. Dr. Htein Lynn has published several papers on entrepreneurship as well as the links between small and large scale business in Myanmar and economic partnership in East Asia.

MODERATOR

MR. MADHURJYA KUMAR DUTTA

Director, Trade & Investment Facilitation Department,
Mekong Institute

Mr. Madhurjya Kumar Dutta is currently the Director of Trade & Investment Facilitation Department at Mekong Institute (MI). Prior to joining MI, he served as Research Director of the Economic Institute of Cambodia and Adviser of Cambodia India Entrepreneurship Development Institute (a bilateral project of Governments of India and Cambodia). He was conferred as Honorary Advisor to the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training, Cambodia through a royal decree by the Prime Minister and the King of the Kingdom of Cambodia.

Mr. Dutta has over 20 years of experience in private sector development in South Asian and South East Asian countries. His key areas of interest are entrepreneurship, SME development and trade facilitation. He has designed and implemented several multilateral capacity development projects on SME and Trade Facilitation in the GMS including the Private Sector Development in the East West Economic Corridor (EWEC) and SME Competitiveness in Southern Economic Corridor (SEC) funded by Japan; Trade Facilitation Project in the North South Economic Corridor (NSEC) funded by China; Integration of CLMV Economies into AEC funded by New Zealand; and Certified Logistic Master Program funded by the Republic of Korea, among others.

He has also served as consultant to various agencies such as UNESCAP, ADB, World Bank, GIZ, UNDP, IFC, ILO, USAID, IFAD, OXFAM, World Vision, Chemonics International etc., on SME policy development, value chain, tourism, investment feasibility, green business, and private sector innovations.

Mr. Dutta earned his master's degree from the Delhi School of Economics, University of Delhi and a Master of Science in Regional Development Planning and Management from Technical University of Dortmund, Germany. He also holds an advanced diploma in regional development planning.



SCALING UP COMPETITIVENESS WITH INNOVATION



SESSION II

DR. RACHDA CHIASAKUL

Partner and Managing Director
Bolliger & Company (Thailand) Ltd.

Dr. Rachda Chiasakul is a Partner and Managing Director of Bolliger & Company (Thailand). During the past 16 years, she has been advising various government organizations and multinational corporations mostly in ASEAN on various regulatory, strategic, and trade issues. From September 2014 to November 2017 she served as advisor to the Minister of Commerce, and as a specialist attached to a member of the National Legislative Assembly. Dr. Rachda has worked closely with many ministries related to economic policy making in Thailand (e.g., Ministry of Commerce, Ministry of Industry, and Ministry of Digital Economy and Society). Notably, Dr. Rachda has led numerous projects on FTA feasibility studies, policy and regulatory impact analysis, strategic planning toward ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) and strategic planning toward digital economy. Prior to joining Bolliger & Company, she was Director of Advisory Group of Bryan Cave (Thailand). She had also represented the Boston Consulting Group (BCG), serving clients in many leading multinational organizations including international and national oil companies and leading Thai banks. She is specialized in strategic advisory, operational, and organizational management. She has a Ph.D. and master's degree in development planning from Hiroshima University, Japan, and a bachelor's degree in economics from Chulalongkorn University, Thailand.





MS. MARTA PÉREZ CUSÓ

Economic Affairs Officer

Technology and Innovation Section, Trade, Investment and Innovation Division, UNESCAP

Ms. Marta Pérez Cusó is Economic Affairs Officer at UNESCAP. She has over 15 years' experience with the United Nations in science, technology and innovation (STI) policies and in information and communication technology policies.

Marta supports governments in Asia-Pacific to achieve sustainable development goals through technology and innovation. She advises governments on technology and innovation policies. Marta leads UNESCAP's programme on inclusive technology and innovation policies.

Previously, Marta worked for UNCTAD (the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development) where she coordinated several national Science, Technology and Innovation Policy Reviews, including those of Thailand, Peru and El Salvador. Her work was also closely linked to the development of science, technology and innovation capabilities, particularly policy-making capacities, in developing countries. Earlier, she was a major author in UNCTAD's Information Economy Report.

DR. JEONG HYOP LEE

Senior Advisor

Science Technology and Innovation Policy Institute, King
Mongkut's University of Technology, Thonburi, Thailand

LEE, Jeong Hyop received his Ph.D. in economic geography from the Seoul National University. He is now a senior advisor of the Science Technology and Innovation Policy Institute (STIPI), Thailand. Before he joined STIPI, he worked for the Science & Technology Policy Institute (STEPI) and the Korea Information Society Development Institute (KISDI) in Korea. He has actively engaged in various planning and evaluation committees in Korea. A few of the major programs he was part of were the Enterprise City Program of the Ministry of Construction & Transportation, the Techno-park Program of the Ministry of Knowledge Economy, the Research Hospital and the Medi-Cluster Program of the Ministry of Health and Welfare, the S&T and ICT Globalization Committee of the Ministry of Science, ICT and Future Planning and the University Reform Committee of the Ministry of Education. He has also served as a full time advisor for the Korean Presidential Committee.

Dr. Lee also has various consulting experiences for developing countries. He helped the Vietnam Ministry of Science and Technology prepare a five-year S&T plan, and provided a master plan of industrial technology centers for Egypt's Ministry of Industry and Technology. Dr. Lee has experience working with various international organizations such as OECD, the World Bank, APEC, and UN agencies. He has initiated a three-year consulting project on innovation system diagnosis and STI strategy development for least developed countries from 2012 in partnership with the Asian and Pacific Center for Transfer of Technology (APCTT), UNESCAP. He has also worked with ASEAN countries to develop strategic STI roadmaps to address global challenges such as water (Indonesia), food (the Philippines), green energy (Vietnam) and other issues. Lastly, he has cooperated with the African Network of Drugs and Diagnostics Innovation (ANDI) to develop STI strategies to overcome neglected diseases in Africa.





DR. CHUTHATIP MANEEPONG

Strategic Advisor, Thailand
Open Development Initiative, an East West
Management Institute project

Dr. Maneepong has extensive skills in policy advocacy, service delivery, legal tactics and frameworks including participatory organizational analysis and needs diagnostics in Thailand, the Greater Mekong Sub-region and across Southeast Asia. In 2016, she represented Member & Focus Point, The Access Initiative (TAI) and the World Resource Institute (WRI).

Between 2013 and 2014, Dr. Maneepong was Thailand representative in the NGO Major Group of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) and of the NGO Major Group of United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). She has worked on several assignments of the European Union on civil society organizations (CSOs) engagements in the implementation and/or monitoring of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) including the Strategic Engagement plan of CSOs in Achieving Thailand's SDGs supported by EU Delegation. More recently, she has led an initiative to strengthen the capacity of CSOs in engaging in SDG implementation and monitoring. At present, she is a team leader on Data to support SDG 16 in Thailand to research and provide case evidence of data development on special economic zone projects, an initiative that seeks to provide detailed data and information related to SDG progress in Thailand for the East West Management Institute.

MS. NGUYEN PHI VAN

Chairwoman

Saigon Innovation Hub, Vietnam

Ms. Nguyen Phi Van holds a MBA from Australia with a major in marketing communication. Her experience spans over 20 years as a senior executive in ecosystem development, brand, retail, and franchise development across global emerging markets in Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and Eastern Europe. She is also board advisor at the Asia Pacific Chief Marketing Officer Council (CMO), SME development advisor to various governments, and chairwoman of Saigon Innovation Hub. Ms. Phi Van is 2015 award winner of Retail Leadership presented by Asia Retail Congress, and 2017 award winner of 100 Top Great Retail Minds presented by World Retail Congress. She is also the author of four books, “Franchising – The Short Route to Global Markets”, “Cross The Rice Field, Reach The World”, “Global Citizen Handbook - Version 4.0”, and “Go Global: An MSME’s Guide to Global Franchising.”





MODERATOR

MS. MARIA THERESA S. MEDIALDIA

**Director, Agricultural Development & Commercialization
Department, Mekong Institute**

Ms. Maria Theresa S. Medialdia is the Director of the Agricultural Development and Commercialization (ADC) Department. She joined the Institute with more than 20 years of experience in development work, research, project management, training, and teaching in various disciplines including supply chains and marketing, industrial organization, farming systems/sustainable agriculture, community development, impact assessment, project monitoring and evaluation, and socio-economics.

Prior to joining MI, she worked as University Researcher and Affiliate Assistant Professor at the University of the Philippines Los Baños and was on secondment to the International Rice Research Institute and the Philippines' Department of Agriculture for several years. She has worked in the US, Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, Bangladesh, Indonesia and the Philippines as researcher, trainer, facilitator, technical adviser, and consultant with various international organizations such as the Asian Development Bank, Japan International Cooperation Agency, Food and Agriculture Organization, German Agency for International Cooperation, the European Commission, International Development Research Center, and the World Bank.

She obtained her BS degree in Agribusiness from University of the Philippines Los Baños, MS degree in Agricultural Economics from University of Kentucky, USA, and post-graduate diploma in Executive Program in Management from Maastricht School of Management, The Netherlands.

HARNESSING DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION --- FOR STRONGER --- CONNECTIVITY



SESSION III



MR. HIDEAKI IWASAKI

Country Director

Asian Development Bank-Thailand Resident Mission

Mr. Hideaki Iwasaki is ADB's Country Director for Thailand, overseeing its country operations in Thailand and selected sectoral initiatives of the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) program, covering Cambodia, People's Republic of China, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam. He joined ADB in 2002.

Until his transfer to the current position in June 2017, Mr. Iwasaki was director of ADB's Southeast Asia Transport and Communications Division and oversaw ADB's transport sector operations in Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam, and GMS's transport programs.

Prior to this he had a short stint in Myanmar in 2012-2013 as a member of the ADB team to reestablish its operations in Myanmar. Earlier Mr. Iwasaki was involved in transport sector operations in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka.

Before joining ADB, he worked for the Government of Japan for 12 years, initially with the Ministry of Construction and later with the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism and was involved in policy development and program administration in transport and urban/regional development.

Mr. Iwasaki has master's and bachelor's degrees in urban planning from the University of Tokyo, Japan, and a master's degree in transportation engineering from the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, USA.

DR. SARANYU VIRIYAVEJAKUL

Vice President, Neighbouring Countries Economic
Development Cooperation Agency

Dr. Saranyu Viriyavejakul graduated from the US Military Academy (Honors), with Masters of Science from Stanford University and UCLA, and with Doctor of Science from Mahidol University. A recipient of the Royal Thai Government Distinguished Officers Award, he was distinguished alumnus of Chulachomkiao Royal Military Academy and distinguished graduate of Faculty of Environment and Resource Studies, Mahidol University. Dr. Saranyu was Guest of Honor for several national television and radio programs. As Defense and Military Attaché to the US and Canada, he was Co-founder and Dean of Washington ASEAN Defense Attaché Association. He serves as Speaker, Adjunct Professor and Visiting Professor for several universities, such as Georgetown University, US National Defense University, US Center for Strategic and International Studies, US Service Academies Global Summit, and Chinese Academy of Social Science. Dr. Saranyu held key positions at the Thai Senate, House of Representatives, National Legislative Assembly, National Reform Council, National Reform Steering Assembly, National Economic and Social Advisory Council, Provincial Electricity Authority, and Federation of Thai Industries.

Currently, Dr. Saranyu is Vice President, Spokesperson, and CIO of Neighbouring Countries Economic Development Cooperation Agency (Public Organization), responsible for the economic development cooperation with seven Neighboring Countries. He is in charge of the Policy and Planning Bureau, Second Project Operation and Management Bureau (Cambodia, Myanmar, Bhutan, Sri Lanka), Administration Bureau, and Engineering Division.





DR. KYRIACOS M. KOUPPARIS

Regional Science, Technology & Innovation Advisor
United States Agency for International Development-
Regional Development Mission for Asia

Dr. Kyriacos Koupparis focuses on building and strengthening networks that promote the integration of science, technology and innovation into development programs in order to accelerate social impact around the world. He currently serves as USAID's regional innovation expert and provides direct technical support to USAID missions, U.S. embassies and government officials in the Asia region, while liaising with multilateral bodies and foreign government representatives to promote the use of technology for social good. He has worked at USAID and the Department of State for the last six years where he gained experience with open innovation, prizes and challenges, human-centered design, ICT4D, and science partnerships. He worked in 15 countries throughout Latin America, the Middle East, and Asia. Dr. Kyriacos holds a Ph.D. and a Master in Biomedical Sciences from the University of California, San Francisco. He is a graduate of the Management of Technology program at UC Berkeley's Haas School of Business and has a Bachelor of Science (Honors) in Chemistry from Wayne State University.

MR. JEROME PONS

Head of Cooperation Section

Delegation of the European Union to Thailand

Mr. Pons is currently the Head of Cooperation for Thailand, Malaysia, China, Mongolia, India and Bhutan of the European Commission. From 2012 to 2016, he was Section Head for the Economics and Social Affairs for the South Pacific-Fiji. His other positions with the Commission included Head of Political Section – Azerbaijan in 2009-2012, Development Policy Officer – Belgium in 2007- 2009, and Advisor for Economic and Social sectors – Malawi in 2003- 2009.

Prior to joining the European Commission, Mr. Pons worked for 10 years with international and non-governmental organizations in the fields of development, good governance and humanitarian assistance in Europe, Africa, Asia and the Middle East. Mr. Pons has a master's degree in banking and international finance and a post graduate diploma in development economics.





MR. PAUL STEPHENS

Deputy Head of Mission to Thailand
Australian Embassy Bangkok and Permanent
Representative to UNESCAP

Mr. Stephens is a senior career officer with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australia. He commenced as Deputy Head of Mission Bangkok in July 2018. His most recent previous position was Assistant Secretary, South East Asia Regional Branch (2016-2018). He has also served in senior roles in Europe Division, Americas Division, Corporate Management Division and in International Division of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. Mr Stephens' overseas experience includes Ambassador in Stockholm (2009-2013), First Secretary later Counsellor UN New York (2002-2005), and Third Secretary Brasilia (1995-1998).

Mr. Stephens has a Master of International Relations from Deakin University, Graduate Diploma in Communications from the University of Canberra and a Bachelor of Arts from the Australian National University.

MODERATOR

DR. WATCHARAS LEELAWATH

Executive Director
Mekong Institute

Dr. Watcharas Leelawath is currently serving his second term as the Executive Director of Mekong Institute.

Prior to joining MI, he was the Deputy Executive Director of the International Institute for Trade and Development in-charge of planning, supervising and conducting research projects, training programs and various capacity building activities. He was also Assistant Professor of Economics at the University of Minnesota, Morris, USA where he taught International Economics and Mathematics for Economists.

He is a trade economist with a strong interest in trade and development cooperation issues in the Greater Mekong Sub-region and ASEAN frameworks, and has extensive research experience in the fields of International Labor Migration and Regional Economic Integration. Dr. Leelawath has written several papers presented in local and international conferences, has published several articles on trade-related topics and has co-authored a book entitled “Economics and Trade in Goods: An Introduction.” He has also provided his expertise in a number of capacity building activities organized by ITD, ADB, UNESCAP, WTO and Thailand International Cooperation.

Dr. Leelawath earned his bachelor’s degree from Chulalongkorn University, and his MA and Ph.D. in economics from the University of Kansas, USA.



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