

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING NO. 2/2022

ITEM 1: WELCOME REMARKS

1. The MI Council Chair (the Chair) opened the hybrid meeting on December 21, 2022 at 8:30 am at MI headquarters. He welcomed and acknowledged the presence of all GMS government representatives, development partners, representatives of MI coordinating agencies, and the MI Executive Director, as well as their respective delegates observing the proceedings remotely.

ITEM 2: ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

2. The Chair asked for comments, concerns, or points of clarification from the members regarding the meeting's agenda. **There being none, the members adopted the agenda of the Council Meeting on July 26, 2022.**

ITEM 3: BUSINESS ARRANGEMENTS

3. Mr. Suriyan Vichitlekarn, MI Executive Director, announced that there would be a group photo followed by a 15-minute break from 10:30 – 10:45 and the meeting would conclude at 12:00 pm.

ITEM 4: ADOPTION OF MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING NO. 1/2022 AND ACTION PROGRESS ON RECOMMENDATIONS FROM GOVERNING BOARD MEETING 1/2022

4. The Chair sought comments, concerns, or points of clarification from members regarding the two documents. There being none, the members adopted the minutes of the Council Meeting of 1/2022 and the action progress on recommendations from the Governing Board meeting.

Comments from Council Members

Dr. Narongchai Akrasanee

Steering Committee

Chairman

5. Dr. Narongchai highlighted the importance of the five recommendations, noting that all are priority issues of which the Council should take note. Some of these recommendations have been implemented, others are ongoing or pending. He pointed to the Global Development Initiative (GDI) from China and what MI could learn from the GDI and incorporate aspects into MI's program, taking account of how it can be linked with the SDGs.
6. He then stressed the importance of having equitable participation of GMS member countries. The main aim is to promote cooperation and coordination among all the countries. It is important to have both Chinese and Thai participation to make the GMS better. Also of primary importance is having funding to finance both Thai and Chinese participants in all activities. MI should think about the modality to create this fund.
7. The third point concerned results-based management and the need to increase the efficiency of MI's work. He highlighted the importance of active cooperation from all, noting that all the designated agencies do not seem to be active enough as yet.
8. There is only so much that MI can do considering its location in Khon Kaen. That is why MI could use the help of collaborating centers to support MI's work in a more effective way. Certain practices were already put into place in the past where some agencies supported MI in its work, and the model that would best work should thus be considered.
9. Lastly, to support the countries in their COVID-19 recovery, the MI council should consider how to move forward on this topic.

Dr. Jean-Pierre A. Verbiest

Associate-Banking and Finance, West Indochina

Senior Consultant, Asian Economies
Bangkok, Thailand

10. Dr. Jean-Pierre seconded Dr. Narongchai's point about striving for more equitable participation. Thailand and China should participate more in the activities.
11. On the COVID-19 recovery, he noted some countries and institutes have recovery plans already. MI should coordinate the existing plans to avoid duplication.

Dr. Marlar Myo Nyunt

Director General

Foreign Economic Relations Department

Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations

Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar

12. Dr. Marlar Myo Nyunt congratulated MI on the successful programs and action plans. She encouraged MI to fulfill human capacity development for regional cooperation and integration.

ITEM 5: HIGHLIGHTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE STEERING COMMITTEE ON MATTERS FOR ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

5.1 Activity Report of 2H, 2022

13. Due to the improved situation of the COVID-19 pandemic, MI has started on-site events in parallel with its online events. During Jan-Nov 2022, MI implemented 34 projects, developed/updated 60 curricula and organized 60 capacity development activities. A total of 2,056 direct participants attended MI's 60 capacity-building events. Most of the participants were from Cambodia (23%) followed by Lao PDR (19%). Around 16% of the total participants were from non-GMS countries.
14. Among the direct participants in the first half of the year, 49.4% were male and 50.6% were female. Besides, 54% of the participants were from the public sector and 46% were from the private sector.

5.1.1 Program Progress

15. Dr. Narongchai provided an overview of the program progress. In 2H/2022, Program Activities have progressed in line with the MI Strategic Plan 2021-2025 and the Annual Work Plan 2022, despite the uncertainty of the COVID-19 situation. There were 98 activities implemented from 34 projects.
16. In terms of Flagship Initiatives, "Towards Post COVID-19 Resilient Economies" has provided a framework project for the COVID-19 recovery and resilience building-related activities. Some of the activities have also already been incorporated into the relevant MI Core Programs.
17. On "GMS Knowledge Network (GMS KN)", MI, in its capacity as the regional coordinator and Co-chair of GMS KN's Steering Committee, convened the first meeting in October. Furthermore, MI was invited to present the GMS KN concept at the GMS Ministerial Conference on December 8, in Luang Prabang, Lao PDR. Currently, MI is waiting to formalize the agreement with ADB/ GMS Secretariat. With regard to the "GMS City Nodes Network", no forum has been organized as yet.
18. In terms of Partnership and Resource Mobilization, MI continued to increase its visibility in international fora, enhance existing partnerships, and promote new partnerships across GMS/ Mekong Cooperation Frameworks, notably with the ASEAN Secretariat, GMS Economic Cooperation Program, Mekong-RoK Cooperation Fund MKCF 6th Call, ACMECS, MRC Secretariat, and the National University of Laos, Lao PDR.
19. On Human Resources, 14 staff were recruited this year (10 regular staff and 4 temporary staff). As of now, there are 45 MI staff of 12 nationalities, 40% of whom are male and 60% female. All the GMS member countries are represented among the staff in 2022.

20. For IT, the IT team supported the program departments in conducting training and workshops effectively both in Thailand and abroad. Following the increased need to organize more online and hybrid events, MI's IT system continued to be upgraded and staff's capacities improved.
21. On Finance, the revenue and expenses as of October 2022 were US\$2,506,248. Total MI expenses amounted to US\$2,321,736, covering expenses from project and program delivery (US\$1,613,343) and operation expenses (US\$639,945). Non-cash operation expenses were US\$68,447. MI recorded net earnings of US\$184,513 as of October 31, 2022, and MI earned US\$282,959 excluding non-cash expenses. All the countries have now transferred their annual contributions in their entirety.
22. The MI Executive Director Mr. Suriyan provided some highlights of the year to the Council.
23. MI is moving towards more onsite activities while some activities remain virtual.
24. MI has been mainstreaming COVID-19 recovery measures in capacity development activities while aligning development synergies within MI programs and with partners.

5.1.2 Institutional Strengthening

25. Mr. Suriyan provided further details of MI's performance, noting that for the past two years of the MI Strategic Plan Implementation, MI has been trying to integrate RBM into its work both at the strategic and operational levels.
26. For programme progress, it is to be noted that there are more incoming projects on the topic of energy transition and environment-related issues.
27. On GMS Cities Nodes Network, so far, no forum has been organized in 2022. MI hopes to organize at least one GMS Forum in 2023 at one of the selected GMS cities.
28. Both traditional and non-traditional funding sources have been increased, particularly non-traditional funding sources, meaning that MI has significantly diversified its funding.
29. On the issue of staffing, currently all GMS nationals are represented in MI. In 2023, there is a plan to recruit 8 more positions. By the end of next year, the number of staff could reach 50 – 60.
30. Mr. Suriyan thanked all the member countries and requested that the countries make their transfers as soon as possible to ensure good cash flow.
31. In the second half of the year, MI has spent some of its budget to improve MI infrastructure such as IT upgrade and building renovations. The aim is to improve MI service delivery.

Comments from Council Members

Dr. Jean-Pierre A. Verbiest

32. Dr. Jean-Pierre inquired how the cities in the GMS Cities Nodes Network were selected. For example, the city of Pakse seems to have good connectivity; however, it is not included on the list.
33. He then commented on the capacity needs assessment which was conducted, noting that its findings might not be so statistically significant.
34. Another question is on how MI is compensated for managing the Mekong Korea Cooperation Fund (MKCF) as the fund coordinator.
35. He expressed the view that it was good to see the number of MI staff had increased and said he would like to know who was recruited in 2022 and what nationalities they were.

Response from Mr. Suriyan Vichitlekarn, Executive Director, MI

36. Mr. Suriyan responded that the selection of GMS City Nodes follows the GMS Governor Forum and carried out in consultation with the country. The organization of the GMS Network-related activities also relies on the co-contribution from the countries. Suggestions are most welcome in term of selecting the cities and how to organize the forum.
37. He explained that the capacity needs assessment was conducted through various national consultations to reach out to a wider group of people in the various GMS cities. The findings revealed that the GMS collectively recognizes there are still gaps and how MI could support in reducing these gaps.
38. MI receives 5% commission from managing the MKCF and receives a quota of one project from each MKCF call. This means MI could also apply to implement some projects. In addition, MI has been commissioned to implement a new project called MKCF Regional Support to provide support on project onboarding, result-based management, communication, among others.
39. On the nationalities of new staff, MI took note to include the nationality breakdown for the report to the Council in the next meeting.

Comments from Council Members

Mr. Asadullah Sumbal

Principal Regional Cooperation Specialist

Southeast Asia Department

Representing Dr. Ramesh Subramaniam, MI Council Member for Asian Development Bank

40. Mr. Asadullah expressed appreciation for MI's good presentation at the GMS Ministerial Meeting in Luang Prabang in early December on the GMS KN Network which garnered a lot of interest. The meeting was pleased to know that the work of the GMS KN Network will be supported by MI. A ministerial participant had expressed the view that the GMS KN Network should start small and be forward-looking but not overly ambitious. For the MoU, the draft partnership is being prepared.
41. In terms of the scoping study, the terms of reference were being prepared and would be sent to MI soon for review.

Comments from Council Members

Mr. Kingphokeo Phommahaxay

Director-General

Department of Economic Affairs

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Vientiane, Lao PDR

42. Mr. Kingphokeo thanked MI for the good work and its ability to mobilize resources to have a surplus. He hoped MI would continue this good work and be guided by the subregional cooperation framework. Now that the COVID-19 situation is improving, he felt that activities should be moved to onsite so that they are more effective and thus have more tangible results. Some, however, could remain online. MI should see which mode would be more effective and suitable.
43. The Council members acknowledged and approved the "Activity Report of 2H, 2022".

5.2 Results of Coordinating Agencies' Meeting 2/2022

44. The Meeting noted the summary and recommendations of the MI Coordinating Agencies (CAs) Meeting No. 2/2022, which was held virtually in November, 2022.
45. The Council members acknowledged and approved the report on the results of "Coordinating Agencies' Meeting 2/2022".

ITEM 5.2, Annual Performance Review 2022:

46. Dr. Narongchai provided key highlights, namely the Development Partners’ Meeting in Bangkok in July, the award ceremony of the ASEAN Prize Recipient in August, the Mekong Forum 2022 held in October, MI’s new role as a network coordinator and co-chair of the GMS Knowledge Network, and MI’s appointment as back-office support to the Interim Secretariat of Ayeyawady-Chao Phraya-Mekong Economic Cooperation Strategy (ACMECS) during its initial establishment and operation from 2023-2025.
47. The Coordinating Agencies (CAs) Meeting No. 2/2022 took place virtually on November 22, 2022 and put forward 2 key recommendations. The first was the representation of GMS countries to the MI Governing Board which should be at different levels: Council Member: Director General or higher level (Policy Decision Making body); Steering Committee Member: Deputy Director General level (Policy and Program scrutiny for submission to the Council); and Coordinating Agent Member: Director level. The second recommendation was to conduct a mid-term review and joint monitoring mechanisms on the implementation of MI Strategic Plan 2021-2025.
48. On October 19, the Mekong Forum 2022 was organized on the theme ‘Accelerating Post COVID-19 Recovery and Building Resilience in the Greater Mekong Subregion’. The Forum was held with the objectives of i) bringing together opinion leaders to discuss tools, instruments, experience and practical solutions which have been implemented to accelerate recovery and resilience of the GMS; ii) demonstrate the linkages between recovery and transition towards building resilience and capacity building, and countries’ development agendas; and iii) serve as a regional platform for building trust and synergies among businesses, government leaders, development experts, and practitioners.

More than 200 representatives attended the Forum both onsite and online. Six thematic workshops were organized, demonstrating the linkages between recovery and transition towards building resilience, on the following themes: i) Inclusive and Resilient Society; ii) Seamless Connectivity; and iii) GMS’ Priority Sectors (Agriculture and Tourism).

49. Mr. Suriyan provided further insights into Dr. Narongchai’s report as follows.
50. A total of 34 projects were implemented in 2022 through three main funding sources, namely P.R. China, Republic of Korea and New Zealand.
51. He presented the 2022 highlights through a video presentation. Link to view https://youtu.be/PM3_jEI87bw

Comments from Council Members

Prof. Dr. Nguyen Quang Linh

President
Hue University
Hue City, Viet Nam

52. Prof. Dr. Nguyen Quang Linh congratulated MI on a successful year. He pointed out that MI should focus more on the project outcomes and not only on the output level. He stressed the importance of public health which is very important in the post COVID-19 world while intergovernmental organizations like MI are relevant to advancing international cooperation.
53. The Council members acknowledged and approved the report on Annual Performance Review 2022, Report on MI Coordinating Agencies’ Meeting 2/2022 and results of “Mekong Forum 2022”.

ITEM 6: HIGHLIGHTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE STEERING COMMITTEE ON MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION

6.1 Endorsement of the MI Annual Work Plan and Budget 2023

54. MI will implement 17 projects in 2023, 10 of them long-term, six short-term, and a one-off activity that will be implemented by three program departments. The project activities/events fall under 24 focus areas of

three Regional Development Themes. There are some overlaps of the thematic areas to be addressed by the program departments.

55. The total program revenue is expected to be US\$2,946,710. If project opportunity funds are realized, the revenue will amount to US\$3,647,537. Based on the expected revenue, the Meeting endorsed the planned expenditure of US\$3,600,221 with a targeted surplus of US\$47,316 at the end of 2023. Mr. Suriyan sought approval on the proposed Annual Budget for 2023.
56. The Council members acknowledged MI's reports on "Revised Activity Plan of 2H, 2022".
57. According to annual budget proposal from various departments, the SMT has submitted the annual budget plan for 2023 for the approval of the Council. Total revenue is US\$3,647,537, Total expenditure is US\$3,600,221 including the non-cash expense, respectively. With these amounts, the estimated revenue over expenses is US\$47,316, which is 1 percent of the total revenue. However, the gross earnings are US\$131,316 excluding the non-cash expense, which is 4 percent of the total revenue.

Comments from Council Members

Dr. Jean-Pierre

58. Dr. Jean-Pierre commented that providing training for staff is very important. As the country's capacity is improving, the quality of MI staff needs to be improved as well.
59. He inquired whether or not the New Zealand budget has already been included in their development cooperation budget.

Response

60. Mr. Suriyan responded that for the ongoing NZAP project which will end in June, the budget has already been included, while for the new NZAP project, the budget is not included as it has not been commissioned yet. MI has put the new NZAP project under opportunity fund.
61. Dr. Narongchai added that some funding has already been secured and some projects are still in the pipeline. For example, MI will receive some funding from ACMECS, New Zealand, GMS KN, among others, which will bring new kinds of work for the GMS.
62. He then asked for an update on the GMS KN funding from the ADB representative.

Response

63. Mr. Asadullah Sumbal responded that ADB has already set aside the in-kind support.

Comments from Council Members

H.E. Mr. Chea Chantum

Secretary-General
General Secretariat for Population and Development
Ministry of Planning
Phnom Penh, Cambodia

64. H.E. Mr. Chea Chantum asked MI to clarify 'other revenues'.

Responses

65. Mr. Rithy Buth, Director of Finance and Operations, Finance and Operations, MI, answered that the other revenues refer to interest on income, the selling of disposal assets, and sales of souvenirs, among others
66. The Council members acknowledged and approved the MI Annual Plan and Budget Plan 2023.

6.2 Implementation of MI Strategic Plan 2021 - 2025

67. As MI is in transition toward Results-Based Management (RBM), the MI Secretariat realizes that unless it works with the focal agencies and experts on monitoring and evaluation of its member countries, the secretariat alone cannot achieve its broader goal of capacity development of GMS countries. Hence, the concept of the Joint Monitoring Mechanism has been incorporated into the MI's Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Strategy and was discussed with the Coordinating Agencies (CAs) members. All CA members have acknowledged the importance of this joint monitoring committee and agreed to work with the MI Secretariat to achieve higher-level results and measure the expected outcomes and impacts from MI's capacity development initiatives for the GMS.
68. MI is midway through the Strategic Plan 2021-2025 and would like to conduct a mid-term review through the joint monitoring mechanisms. The objective is to evaluate the current strategic plan; to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats, and constraints in the implementation of the current strategic plan; and to recommend possible changes for the remaining time.
69. The Council members acknowledged and approved the “the Concept Note of the Mid-Term Review of MI Strategic Plan 2021-2025” which is planned to be conducted in Q3 of 2023. The Meeting also agreed on the tasks to be assigned to the Steering Committee and the CAs as in joint monitoring mechanisms for this Mid-term Review and subsequent monitoring of the Strategic Plan.

6.3 Endorsement of New Steering Committee Member

70. The Government of Lao PDR has appointed Mr. Khamphinh Philakone, Deputy Director-General of the Economic Affairs Department, as a new Steering Committee Member of MI for the Lao PDR. He is the successor to Ms. Dalylack Keobanhthith. In addition, Ms. Phonekeo Sakdavong, Director of Regional Economic Cooperation Division, Economic Affairs Department, will serve as the Coordinating Agency Member of MI for the Lao PDR.

Comments from Council Members

Mr. Kingphokeo Phommahaxay

71. Mr. Kingphokeo agreed that there should be a clear designation of the members of the steering committee or CA. He shared the same view as Dr. Narongchai that at the council meeting, it should be director general level while at the steering committee meeting, it should be deputy director general level.

H.E. Mr. Chea Chantum

72. Mr. Chea also agreed with Dr. Narongchai that there should be a clear demarcation between Council and steering committee meetings. At the moment, Cambodia already meets this criterion. However, Mr. Hang Suvidhya has just received a scholarship to study abroad. So, he suggested keeping him for the time being and once he graduates from his doctorate studies in China, he will discuss with MI again who should be part of the steering committee membership.

Comments from the Chair

73. The Chair understands that council members should be at least DG level while SC members should be at DDG level.
74. The Council members acknowledged and approved the new Steering Committee members.

6.4 Endorsement of the External Auditor for 2023 and 2024

75. Dr. Narongchai presented the agenda item covering the external auditor. The SC proposed PricewaterhouseCoopers (Lao) Sole Co., Ltd. as the External Auditor for 2023 and 2024, despite its slightly higher price. Out of the three companies, PWC has delivered quality results, is credible and has a good reputation in the international community.

Comments

76. H.E. Mr. Chea Chantum said that he supported PWC to be the external auditor.
77. The Council members acknowledged and approved the External Auditor for 2023 and 2024.

6.5 Endorsement of Sub-committee for 2022 Executive Director Performance Evaluation, and End-of-Term Performance Evaluation and Term of Office

71. The Council members endorsed the Sub-committee for 2022 Executive Director Performance Evaluation, and End-of-Term Performance Evaluation and Term of Office. The members of the Sub-committee will comprise Dr. Jean Pierre A. Verbiest - MI Council Member (Honorary Advisor), Mrs. Arunee Hiam – MI Steering Member, Mr. Ke Yousheng – MI Steering Member, and Dr. Narongchai Akrasanee - MI Council Member (as adviser).

ITEM 7: Recommendations and Commitments of Council Members and Key Development Partners

H.E. Mr. Chea Chantum of Cambodia

78. Mr. Chea expressed his appreciation for MI's hard work in 2022 despite the COVID-19 pandemic and congratulated MI on receiving the ASEAN Prize 2021. Cambodia recognized MI's contribution to regional capacity development. Human resource development is the top priority on Cambodia's development agenda. MI, among other institutes, has contributed to developing human resources toward a resilient future. GMS City Nodes Network forum is a good initiative and should be supported. Cambodia is pleased to support the work of MI.

Mr. Kingphokeo Phommahaxay of Lao PDR

79. Mr. Kingphokeo acknowledged and appreciated the comprehensive contribution made by MI in the past six months. Many activities and workshops have been successfully conducted for various stakeholders in the GMS countries. He encouraged MI to continue to implement the Strategic Plan 2021 – 2025 and to consider organizing more onsite projects related to COVID-19 recovery, trade, business sector, and tourism enhancement in GMS countries. On human resource development, Lao PDR has benefited from MI's Young Scholar Program which provides secondment opportunities for government officials to work at MI. He expressed his gratitude and the hope that this program will continue. Lao PDR hopes to strengthen cooperation and support to MI in implementing the Strategic Plan.

Dr. Marlar Myo Nyunt of Myanmar

80. She expressed her appreciation to MI for successfully organizing the meeting and congratulated MI on completing the activities in the second half of the year. She was pleased to learn that MI could get new projects. She took note of the progress made being made in the upgrading of the MI Alumni Database with the new feature becoming applicable in 2023. She also wished to see more participants from Myanmar join the ADC and SEE training courses in 2023. Tourism is also another important topic for Myanmar.

Mrs. Arunee Hiam of Thailand

81. She expressed her thanks to MI for organizing this important meeting and acknowledged MI's Activity Report of 2022 Activities and MI Annual Work Plan 2023. She cautioned MI to carefully craft any new management mechanism if that comes to fruition to ensure clear, concise and effective implementation. She encouraged MI to improve its database system into MI's Institutional Capacity Building Workplan and wished all the Council members a happy new year.

Mr. Nguyen Viet Ha of Viet Nam

82. Mr. Nguyen Viet Ha expressed sincere thanks to MI and all members for joining today's meeting, which she had found very fruitful. The future was bright in 2022 and the picture looks good for 2023. Viet Nam will work with MI to achieve the plans. She wished all participants a Merry Christmas and happy new year and said she hoped to see them all in person soon.

Mr. Asadullah Sumbal of ADB

83. Mr. Asadullah Sumbal expressed his pleasure at representing ADB at this, his first MI council meeting. He went on to say that most of the GMS countries has been impacted by COVID-19 before making a number of short points, namely that the countries need to be resilient; there will be challenges in the post COVID-19 world; cross-cutting themes in the GMS 2030 program; and a knowledge-oriented collaboration platform. He added that it was great to see that MI will be supporting the GMS KN. ADB will continue to support MI both financially and in its delivery of demand-driven work.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nawarat Wara-Aswapati Charoen of Khon Kaen University

84. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nawarat congratulated MI for receiving the ASEAN Prize 2021 and said she believes that MI's work has become much more relevant for GMS countries in the post-COVID-19 scenario. She wishes MI much success and wished participants a happy new year.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nguyen Quang Linh of Hue University

85. Dr. Nguyen expressed his continued support for MI's work and his happiness at meeting with Council members.

Dr. Narongchai Akrasanee, Business Representative, MI Steering Committee Chair

86. Dr. Narongchai responded to the statement by Hue representative on digital access. For example, through e-commerce led by China, commerce is very developed. It is similar to India's Gio, one app which can do many things. India has taken over from Britain in terms of ranking. He added that he had been trying to get that kind of development in Thailand—the democratization of digital development—and congratulated the Vietnamese people on achieving that. Underlying this, he said, is the cost of electricity which should be cheap.

87. Policy advocacy needs to be changed among the GMS countries. Training cannot deliver that but policies can. Many changes require policy change. Besides mobility or labor, there is a need to transition to clean energy. However, the Ukraine war has forced many to go back to fossil fuels. A mechanism is required to drive energy cooperation, which will be crucial for the next years. The flow of oil and gas has been disrupted by the Russia-Ukraine crisis. Now, Germany is importing natural gas from Qatar. Policy advocacy on energy cooperation and food cooperation is needed. How can such a forum be organized?

88. There is a new AI application called 'Chativity', which can do many things including writing a speech. In the age where AI is improving, what can humans do now? MI should look into training methods using AI. To remain relevant, MI needs to be up-to-date about all this new technology.

Dr. Jean-Pierre A. Verbiest

Honorary advisor
Associate-Banking and Finance, West Indochina
Senior Consultant, Asian Economies
Bangkok, Thailand

89. 2022 was a difficult year. Given that, the results are remarkable. The recovery from COVID-19 is a work in progress. It is good to see that MI has revised its activities to support this recovery process. It used to be difficult to change MI's activities in the past. It is good to see that MI has been much more flexible. In the last 6 months, MI has more staff, while in the previous meetings, staffing has been a concern due to the plummeting number. It is a sign that MI's activities are growing.

90. On 6.5, the sub-committee and end of term, Dr Jean-Pierre expressed the view that the three-year term was quite short and said he was raising a question with the GB on revising the Charter to be 4 years instead of 3 years.

91. The reporting of 2022 should be streamlined and more focused There are repetitions here and there. In closing Dr. Jean-Pierre wished all present a happy new year and said he looked forward to seeing them all next year.

**Mr. Yang Shaocheng, MI Council Chairman and representative of P.R. China
(In place of Vice Governor of Yunnan Province)**

92. He thanked MI for the wonderful preparation and the success of this meeting. 2022 has been a successful year. This meeting is important. MI has played an important role in the subregion. I want to suggest to promote the development of all.

ITEM 8: DATE AND VENUE OF THE 1/2023 GOVERNING BOARD MEETING

93. Based on the recommendations of the Steering Committee Chair, the next Governing Board Meeting 1/2023 will be held in the last week July, 2023. The exact date will be confirmed closer to the date.

ITEM 9: OTHER MATTERS

94. The Council Chair invited the Council members to raise any other matters.

95. On behalf of the Senior Management Team of MI, the Executive Director of MI expressed the hope that MI will continue to receive support from the GMS member countries, especially in these difficult times.

96. The Council Chair commended the MI Secretariat for organizing the meeting successfully. The Council Chair wished all present in the meeting a happy new year and stated that all the member countries are ready to support MI in its endeavors. As there were no other matters raised, the Council Chair declared the Council Meeting 2/2022 closed at XXX on December 21, 2022.

Annex I

Council Members and Observers	
Chairman and representative of P.R. China	(In place of Vice Governor of Yunnan Province) Mr. Yang Shaocheng Chief, Regional Cooperation Office of Yunnan Province The People's Republic of China
Royal Government of Cambodia	H.E. Mr. Chea Chantum Secretary-General General Secretariat for Population and Development Ministry of Planning Phnom Penh, Cambodia
Government of Lao PDR	Mr. Kingphokeo Phommahaxay Director-General Department of Economic Affairs Ministry of Foreign Affairs Vientiane, Lao PDR
Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar	Dr. Marlar Myo Nyunt Director General Foreign Economic Relations Department Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar
Royal Thai Government	(In place of Mrs. Ureerat Chareontoh) Mrs. Arunee Hiam Director Development Promotion and Coordination Division Thailand International Cooperation Agency Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Bangkok, Thailand
Government of Viet Nam	(In place of Mrs. Nguyen Yen Hai) Mr. Nguyen Viet Ha Official Foreign Economic Relations Department Ministry of Planning and Investment
Asian Development Bank	(In place of Dr. Ramesh Subramaniam) Mr. Asadullah Sumbal Principal Regional Cooperation Specialist Asian Development Bank
Hue University	Associate Professor Dr. Nguyen Quang Linh President Hue University Hue City, Vietnam
Khon Kaen University	(In place of Assoc. Prof. Charnchai Panthongviriyakul, M.D) Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nawarat Wara-Aswapati Charoen Vice President Khon Kaen University
Business Representative	Dr. Narongchai Akrasanee Chairman MFC Asset Management Plc. Bangkok, Thailand
Honorary Advisor	Dr. Jean-Pierre A. Verbiest Associate-Banking and Finance, West Indochina Senior Consultant, Asian Economies

Mekong Institute (non-voting member)	Mr. Suriyan Vichitlekarn Executive Director Mekong Institute
Steering Committee Member for Cambodia	Mr. Hang Suvidhya Deputy Secretary General General Secretariat for Population and Development Ministry of Planning Phnom Penh, Cambodia
Steering Committee Member for the People's Republic of China	Mr. Ke Yousheng Permanent Representative Permanent Mission of China to UNESCAP Embassy of P. R. China Bangkok, Thailand
Steering Committee Member for Lao PDR	Mr. Khamphinh Philakone Deputy Director General Department of Economic Affairs Ministry of Foreign Affairs Vientiane, Lao PDR
Steering Committee Member for Myanmar	Ms. Moh Moh Naing Director Foreign Economic Relations Department Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar
Mekong Institute	Mr. Rithy Buth Director Finance and Operations Department
	Mr. Madhurjya k. Dutta Director Trade & Investment Facilitation Department Coordinator
Meeting Secretariat	
Mekong Institute	Mr. Halimur Rahman MEL Specialist Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Department
	Ms. Pornwilai Pumira Partnership and Resource Mobilization Manager
	Ms. Anusara Tanpitak Communications and Knowledge Management
	Ms. Jian Wang Sustainable Energy and Environment Department Program Manager
	Ms. Wasana Laochai Executive Secretary
	Mr. Narathip Dahan IT Support Team
	Ms. Thitiporn Rattanatraisri Communications Assistant Communications and Knowledge Management Department
	Ms. Vanthone Syayaphone Program Officer on Secondment