



JOINT DECLARATION OF THE COORDINATED MEKONG MINISTERIAL INITIATIVE AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING (COMMIT DECLARATION)

1. **WE**, the Ministers and representatives of the Governments of the Kingdom of Cambodia, the People's Republic of China, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the Union of Myanmar, the Kingdom of Thailand, and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, the founding members of the Coordinated Mekong Ministerial Initiative against Human Trafficking, hereinafter referred to as the COMMIT Process, meeting in Beijing on the third anniversary of the signing of the COMMIT MOU, join together in,
2. **REAFFIRMING** our commitment to the COMMIT Memorandum of Understanding, signed in Yangon, Myanmar on the 29th Day of October 2004, and the COMMIT Sub-regional Plan of Action adopted in principle in Hanoi on the 30th Day of March 2005, which, among other resolutions/decisions, demonstrate our strong political will to cooperate among the Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS) countries to combating trafficking in persons especially children and women,
3. **REAFFIRMING** our solemn dedication to continue advancing the goal of eradicating any situation where human beings are traded, bought, sold, abducted, placed and maintained in exploitative situations depriving them of their most fundamental and inalienable human rights,
4. **REITERATING** the importance of placing trafficked persons at the centre of all anti-trafficking interventions including the recognition of their potential to contribute, on a strictly voluntary basis, to the development, implementation and evaluation of anti-trafficking interventions, and respecting the human rights of trafficked persons in all anti-trafficking interventions,
5. **RECOGNIZING** the complexity of trafficking in persons as a criminal phenomenon and the need for strong national and regional criminal justice responses that seek to end the current high levels of impunity enjoyed by traffickers and secure justice for victims of trafficking,
6. **REITERATING** the critical importance of an inter-sectoral response to human trafficking, and highly appreciating the efforts of the senior officials of the National COMMIT Task Forces who have carried forward the work of the COMMIT Process,
7. **RECOGNIZING** that while the response to the human trafficking problem in the GMS since the signing of the COMMIT MOU and its implementation through the first Sub-regional Plan of Action (2005 – 2007) has progressed, obstacles to the eradication of trafficking in persons remain,



8. **DEDICATING** ourselves to addressing the constraints and challenges that undermine an effective response to trafficking in persons and the associated abuse and exploitation, including further enhancement and empowerment of those vulnerable, and agreeing that this requires continued urgent action in the spirit of solidarity and cooperation between and among countries in the region, and
9. **ACKNOWLEDGING** the contribution of all other international and regional instruments, initiatives and commitments to combat trafficking in persons,
10. **HEREBY JOINTLY DECLARE**, our firm commitment to further enhance the spirit of COMMIT in unity and solidarity and the continued operation of this vital regional mechanism of cooperation to successfully bring to an end the abuse and exploitation of the vulnerable and marginalized through reaffirmation of the following:
 11. Firm commitment to the fight against slavery in all its forms including sexual exploitation of both children and adults, forced labour, child labour and forced marriage, contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international instruments; and recognising the importance of international instruments relevant to trafficking in persons as listed in the COMMIT MOU;
 12. Reaffirming the importance of the UN Recommended Principles and Guidelines on Human Rights and Human Trafficking;
 13. Commitment to further consolidate the significant advances made in the implementation of the COMMIT MOU through the first Sub-regional Plan of Action (2005 – 2007) and the second phase of the Sub-regional Plan of Action (2008-2010);
 14. Commitment to preventing trafficking in persons and associated harms through actions aimed at identifying and protecting trafficked persons at every point in the trafficking cycle; and to ensure that all official actions with respect to trafficked persons protect their safety, dignity and rights.
 15. Firm intention to continue bilateral and multilateral consultations and collaborations between and among countries in the sub-region (both sector specific and general) as well as with regional bodies such as the ASEAN;
 16. Firm determination to further strengthen the capacity of National COMMIT Taskforces and relevant stakeholders to implement coordinated actions entrusted under the COMMIT framework and to ensure they and their work continue to enjoy strong support from the highest levels of government;
 17. Pledge to implement a genuine consultative and collaborative approach that regularly and actively seeks and sustains the involvement of civil society groups, children and youth from areas where trafficking is an ongoing concern; victim support agencies, international organisations, and trafficked persons in the



implementation of anti-trafficking programmes including the design, development, monitoring and evaluation of such programmes;

18. Firm belief in the practical and symbolic value of an approach which places the individual and his or her rights at the centre of any trafficking law, policy or intervention.
19. Resolve to a policy of zero tolerance for any public sector complicity or involvement in the crime of trafficking in persons.
20. We, the Ministers and representatives of the governments of the countries in the Greater Mekong Sub-region, hereby reaffirm our commitment to the pledges made in the COMMIT MOU and solemnly pledge to take steps individually as well as in solidarity and through international assistance and cooperation, to the maximum of available resources, with the view to achieving progressively, the full realisation of the commitments recognised in the COMMIT MOU by all appropriate means. With this in mind, we commend the continuation of the COMMIT Process through the completion of the initial Sub-regional Plan of Action and the development of a second phase of the Sub-regional Plan of Action from 2008 – 2010. We urge the United Nations system, development partners, the private sector, all women and men, girls and boys as well as non-governmental organizations, with full respect for their autonomy, and all sectors of civil society, to cooperate with Governments, to fully commit themselves and contribute to the COMMIT Process.

Beijing, 14 December 2007



Done at Beijing, on this 14th day of December 2007

FOR THE GOVERNMENT
OF THE KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA

(Ing Kantha Phavi)
Minister of Women's Affairs

FOR THE GOVERNMENT
OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

(Zhang Xinfeng)
Vice Minister of Public Security

FOR THE GOVERNMENT
OF THE LAO PEOPLE'S
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(Toula Inthathilath)
Vice Minister of Public Security

FOR THE GOVERNMENT
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(Major General Maung Oo)
Minister of Home Affairs

FOR THE GOVERNMENT
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(Poldej Pinprateep)
Vice Minister of Social Development and
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FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF THE
SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM

(Le The Tiem)
Senior Lieutenant-General
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