



- REPORT -

**ACD HIGH-LEVEL MEETING ON ASIA ACADEMIC COLLABORATION
24th - 25th February 2016, SIAM UNIVERSITY, BANGKOK, THAILAND**

PREAMBLE

The ACD High-Level Meeting on Asia Academic Collaboration held at Siam University, Bangkok, Thailand co-hosted by Siam University and Asia e University from 24th to 25th February 2016, has agreed to be the initiation founding members of the Asia University Network with a view to ultimately establishing an **ACD University Network COORDINATION COMMITTEE (ACD-UNCC)** to promote greater education and research collaboration among Asian universities and to use the Asian Credit Transfer System (ACTS) as an instrument to facilitate credit mobility across Asia.

Date 24th February 2016

OPENING CEREMONY

The opening ceremony of the ACD High-Level Meeting On Asia Academic Collaboration was welcomed by President of Siam University, Dr. Pornchai Mongkhonvanit, stating the importance of the international academic collaboration under the ACTS and the development of the ACD university network which will be the real voice of Asia. It is an honour for Siam University to be working for the next generation of Asia. Through ACD University Network will encourage Higher Education to support manpower and the innovative change. Chairman of Board of Directors of Asia e University, Prof. Tan Sri Dr. Syed Jalaludin Syed Salim welcomed the participants and thanked Siam University for organising and support the meeting. He pointed out that working for education is an honourable work. And it is important to allow students to make their own choices to learn.

Followed with remarks by H.E. Ambassador of Malaysia in Bangkok, Honorable Dato' Nazirah Hussain, who reiterated the importance of education to Asia and how Malaysia gave its priority to higher education as well as the successful of the establishment of the Asia e University. Next Prof. Likhit Dhiravegin, Fellow of the Royal Society, Higher Education Commissioner of Thailand stressed the importance of being cultural, political and spiritual beings. Education is a tool to leverage human from ignorance and fear. In collaboration with the network, universities can do more with the education. Without research there is no knowledge. ACD Secretary General Mr. Bundit Limschoon delivered the opening address on

behalf of 33 Member States, reiterating the importance of higher education and human development. He suggested that Asia needs collective collaboration under the ACD framework to be a platform of academia convergence and to finally develop potential students to compete in the world. The opening ceremony was attended by delegations from 23 ACD countries along with the Ambassador of Malaysia, Ambassador of the State of Kuwait and Ambassador of the State of Qatar and Representatives from Embassy of Russia, Cambodia and Bangladesh.

After the opening ceremony, the Assistant Director of Siam University, Ms. Yhing Sawheny conducted the Introduction of ACD Participation Institutions and ASEAN Workshop of Siam University before closing the morning session and moved on the photo shoot of the delegations.

The meeting resumed with the Keynote speech by: Prof. Cheol Je Cho, Ph.D. Vice President of GCS International on the topic “Building an Ecosystem for Innovative Higher Education” and by Prof. Dr. Lawrence Surendra, Chairman of The Sustainability Platform (TSP) on the topic “Education as the foundation for Sustainable Development”.

Lunch Break

The afternoon session began with the Roundtable Discussion on Asia Academic Collaboration. Participants discussed (i) the Objectives of the ACD Academic Collaboration (ii) Instrument of Asia Academic Collaboration with sub topics of Academic (iii) ACD Student Leadership Institutes and (iv) ACD Student Mobility (Credit Transfer) in the context of ACTS-ACTS Task Force. The discussion received fruitful inputs from participants and agreed in the preliminary principle of the establishment of ACD University Network.

After the coffee break, the roundtable continued to discuss on the Coordination Committee of ACD University Network to consider its membership, Terms of Reference and the Agreement of Intent.

Date 25th February 2016

REPORT PRESENTATION

At the outset, Siam University has invited special guest Honorable H.E. Ambassador Chung Rae-kwon, climate change adviser to the United Nations secretary general to gave a short speech on sustainable development. Then, the ACD Secretary General expressed his sincere appreciation on behalf of the meeting and 33 Member States to wisdom and wise words from H.E. Ambassador Chung.

Next, the Chair, Prof. Mak Chai from Asia e University presented the report of the discussions outcomes and the meeting agreed to the **Resolutions of the ACD High-Level Meeting on Asia Academic Collaboration (ANNEX I)** and the establishment of the **ACTS Task Force**.

The meeting requested the ACD Secretary General to propose the said resolutions to the 14th ACD Ministerial Meeting in Bangkok, Thailand

The meeting concluded with the Head of Delegations signed the Agreement of Intent. The ACD Secretary General then gave the closing remarks and finally the Chair declared the closing of the meeting.

ANNEX I

RESOLUTION OF THE ACD HIGH-LEVEL MEETING ON

ASIA ACADEMIC COLLABORATION

The Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) High-Level Meeting on Asia Academic Collaboration held at Siam University, Bangkok and co-hosted by Asia e-University and Siam University from 24th to 25th February 2016, expressing appreciation to the ACD Secretary General, Siam University and Asia e University for co-hosting the ACD High-Level Meeting on Asia Academic Collaboration, has agreed to propose to the 14th ACD Ministerial Meeting the following:

1. To establish the ACD University Network (ACD-UN) as a common collaborative and flexible platform and its Coordination Committee (ACD-UNCC) in order to facilitate the Academic Exchange Collaboration on innovation among proactive and internationally focused universities in ACD countries. The ACD-UNCC may comprise one member of each participating country, elected at the meeting of the participating institutions. The ACD-UNCC may also formulate mechanisms for other academic institutions in the ACD to join the network.
2. To establish the ACD Research Network (ACD-RN) to provide a platform for the ACD-UN participating institutions to work together towards joint research and academic work in the following areas relevant to the new era of Asia namely: Innovative Education; Smart Digital Economy; Sustainable Development, Sufficiency Economy/Responsible Consumption; Asian Challenges/Comparative Studies, and Internationalization of Higher Education. Other areas may be included, as and when necessary, by participating institutions.
3. To consider developing ACD Student Leadership Institutes (ACD-SI) to foster friendship, mutual respect, cultural exchange and cooperation among students of ACD-UN participating institutions to become leaders and good citizens of Asia ensuring goodwill and understanding in the region.
4. To reaffirm the Resolution of the 4th ACD Roundtable on Asian Credit Transfer System (ACTS), which emphasized the importance of the ACTS for the development of higher education among ACD countries and supported, in principle, the concept of an ACTS in facilitating credit mobility across Asia.
5. To acknowledge the role of Malaysia as the Prime Mover of e-education in the ACD and reaffirm support for the establishment of the Asian Centre for e-Learning (ACE) as presented at the 7th ACD Ministerial Meeting and use ACE as the e-platform, along with other platforms, for ACD-UN participating institutions to promote awareness and sharing of information and best practices on educational and research collaboration.
6. To form the ACTS Task Force to come up with modalities for the operationalization of the ACTS.

FORMATION OF COUNTRY REPRESENTATIVES

ACD University Network Coordination Committee (ACD-UNCC)

1. Daffodil University – Bangladesh
2. Build Bright University – Cambodia
3. Punjabi University – India
4. University of Surabaya(Ubaya) – Indonesia
5. University of Birjand – Iran
6. Tokai University – Japan
7. Ewha Womans University – South Korea
8. Asia e-University – Malaysia
9. University of Santo Tomas – Philippines
10. Siam University – Thailand

ACD Research Network

1. **Innovative Education** – University of Santo Thomas, Philippines; Philippine Normal University; Siam University, Thailand; Norton University, Cambodia; MCCi, Myanmar; Our Lady Fatima University, Philippines; Ewha Womans University, South Korea
2. **Smart Digital Economy** – Ewha Womans University, South Korea; Punjabi University, India; Chengdu University of Information and Technology, China; Tokai University, Japan; Daffodil University, Bangladesh; Siam University, Thailand; Asia e University, Malaysia
3. **Sustainable Development/Sufficiency Economy** – University of Birjand, Iran; Build Bright University, Cambodia; Punjabi University, India; Siam University, Thailand; Bozorgmehr University of Qaenat, Iran; University of Surabaya (Ubaya), Indonesia; Our Lady Fatima University, Philippines ; Saint Mary's, Philippines; Ewha Womans University, South Korea
4. **Asian Challenges/Comparative Studies** – Asia e-University, Malaysia; Saint Mary's University, Philippines; Siam University, Thailand; Our Lady Fatima University, Philippines; Allameh Tabataba'i University; Iran; EwhaWomans University, South Korea; Panjabi University, India; University of Birjand, Iran; Build Bright University, Cambodia.
5. **Internationalization of Higher Education** – University of Birjand, Iran; Allameh Tabataba'i University; Iran; Ewha Womans University, South Korea; Asia e University, Malaysia; Norton University, Cambodia; Bozorgmehr University of Qaenat, Iran; Our Lady Fatima University, Philippines; Siam University, Thailand University of Surabaya (Ubaya); Daffodil University, Bangladesh; Tokai University, Japan; Build Bright University, Cambodia

ACTS Task Force

1. Asia e University – Malaysia
2. Payap University – Thailand
3. Philippine Normal University – Philippines
4. University of Birjand – Iran
5. Norton University – Cambodia
6. Allameh Tabataba'i University– Iran
7. Beijing Jiaotong University – China
8. Tokai University – Japan
9. Bahra University Shimla – India
10. Daffodil University – Bangladesh
11. Bozorgmehr University of Qaenat– Iran

Asia MBA

1. Siam University, Thailand
2. Asia e University, Malaysia
3. Punjabi University, India
4. Saint Mary's University, Philippines
5. Allameh Tabataba'i University, Iran
6. Our Lady Fatima University, Philippines
7. Daffodil University, Bangladesh
8. University of Surabaya (Ubaya), Indonesia
9. Build Bright University, Cambodia.



**Statement by Mr. Bundit Limschoon
Secretary General, Asia Cooperation Dialogue
ACD High-Level Meeting On Asia Academic Collaboration
24th- 25th February 2016,
Siam University, Bangkok, Thailand**

**Dr. Pornchai Mongkhonvanit, President of Siam University,
Prof. Dato Dr. Ansary Ahmed, President of Asia e University,
Excellency Laura Rosario, Undersecretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Philippines,
Excellency Honorable Dato' Nazirah Hussain, Ambassador of Malaysia to Thailand,
Prof. Likhit Dhiravegin, Fellow of the Royal Society Chairman of MAPD**

**Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen:**

On behalf of 33 Member States of ACD, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Siam University for the extended hospitality and actively organising this ACD High-Level Meeting on Asia Academic Collaboration, and to Asia e University for the past efforts to host four Roundtable meetings on Asia Credit Transfer System which have led to this meeting today. It is a great pleasure and honour to meet all of you and say a few words on this special occasion.

We are now living in the very interesting moments of human history. Everything in our societies is changing all the time and the nature of change in this current world is completely different from the past because of scale, scope and speed of changes.

Just 15 years ago, human society celebrated the new Millennium with hope of the brighter future. However, it turned out that our world has since been volatile and uncertain, full of complexity and ambiguity. We have learnt with our pains that not power, nor money, nor cheap labours could help the mankind survive, only knowledge will do. Our Sub region of Southeast Asia has proven to be an excellent case study.

30 years ago, developing and less developed countries in Asia, were all crazy about numbers. They, or I should say "we", injected all kind of economic factors into our systems to ensure that the annual growth hit double digit. We applauded higher GDP without concerning the impacts on human beings or environment, which resulted in a big gap in the standard of living and health conditions and the degradation of ecology and forestry. Sadly, uneven and lack of balance between high growth and fragile economic fundamental created huge financial bubble and in the end, as we all know, everything collapsed. I believe that everyone in this room can still recall the pain and agony of economic crisis, but above all, the Thai people like myself and President Pornchai.

When the tsunamic of financial crisis hit Thailand in 1997, then spreading to all ASEAN countries and ended up in South Korea, everyone stopped and started to realise that "the higher numbers the better" appeared to be the dark side of globalisation. During the hard times, we have learnt the important lesson that numbers of sky-high buildings, bullet trains or the number of multi-millionaires and billionaires are superficial and not meant for long-term sustainable economy policy. To sustainably develop and grow, we need to refocus the growth policy to strengthening and developing the human capital, which is the source of new competitive edge in the so-called new digital economy.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Machine cannot create innovation. But human can.

The human capital will be the foundation of intellectual capital and intellectual property, which will generate new source of income and bring wealth to our countries. This is very important for our developing countries, who are now facing and fighting with the problem of middle-income trap. The increase in the value of human capital will be a major solution to poverty eradication and inequality of income. For us, innovation and creativity will equip our citizens and industrial capacity to compete in the global market.

As the main factor revolves around "human" to sustain the growth and prosperity, the greatest investment would be in human capital. Consequently, education has become the central part of growth theory, the so-called qualitative growth. We are now living in the knowledge society, where the source of wisdom significantly comes from universities and academic institutions. Thus, higher education is a strategic sector for human development, and universities play a direct role in creating and shaping the future of a country. However, with the current multiple crises globally, it is beyond one country and one university to cope with such complications. There needs to be a collective cooperation that can deal practically with the diverse challenges and difficulties.

Moreover, Asia is a large continent rich in diversities and local knowledges, without a proper platform to accumulate valuable knowledges and expertise, Asia's education will grow apart at cross purposes. Therefore, I would like to propose ACD to be a platform of academia convergence. ACD has the potential to promote and strengthen international academic cooperation because of its flexible and resilient structure. It is not imperative that all projects and collaborations need a consensus from all Member States. Any potential cooperation could begin the groundwork from two or more countries and when the establishment is successful, it could expand to cover other partnership.

ACD is a forum covered widely from Far East to West Asia and its Members varies in different strong points and weaknesses. Through enhanced and successful cooperation and ones are strong enough, they could cover the weaker and support each other.

The purpose of this gathering is to establish academic network by officiating an agreement for 3 important pillars; student exchange, research and academic exchange and cooperation between universities under the ACD framework.

On a basis of Asia Credit Transfer System, the Asia Academic Collaboration will allow adoption of alternative, multi-faceted approaches to learning. International learning and knowledge will propel students towards acceptance and understanding of different cultural and community perspectives and enhance broader general knowledge.

With this system, Mister Chairman, it will be possible for one engineer student, for example, from Myanmar, who would like to have the first hand experience in petroleum industry, he could do so by taking leave for one semester from home university and spend three and a half months, to learn and to gain direct access in oil and natural gas refinery in any Gulf countries, for example, Kuwait or Saudi Arabia. After three and a half months he would go back home and transfer all credit he earns to his university in Myanmar.

In addition to the credit transfer and knowledge, he would bring back home experiences, know-how, technology transfer, as well as good understanding, good relations and also business connection between the two countries. And after graduates, with international experience, he would seek business opportunities in his own region, without any brain drain to outside.

As far as I am concerned, the ASEAN University Network, in collaboration with Japan, have been exchanging more than three hundred short-term visits from ASEAN countries and four hundred collaborative research projects in the past ten years. Imagine, Colleagues, with the ACD Credit Transfer System in place, it will not only be hundreds, but could be hundreds of thousand of our young generation learning together, working together and understanding each other.

Mister Chairman, in the next 10 years, when both of us retire and look back to our meeting today, we might be surprised to learn that there are the new Bill Gate, the new Mark Zuckerberg, or even the new Steve Job from Asia, and it is all because of our decision today.

So Colleagues, this is my dream. This is my simple aspiration for the people of our region. And now my dream is in your hand. It depends upon your discussion, your negotiation and your decision this afternoon to make my dream come true.

Thank you very much.