



**Welcoming Remarks for  
“ Thailand Travel Mart Plus Amazing Gateway to  
the Greater Mekong Subregion 2008 ”  
by H.E. Mr. Weerasak Kowsurat, Minister of Tourism and Sports  
at the Welcome Reception on  
Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup>, June 2008, at 18.30 hrs.  
at Royal Jubilee Room, Challenger, Muang Thong Thani**

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**Governor of the Tourism Authority of Thailand,  
Distinguished Guests,  
Members of the Media,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It is my honour and privilege to welcome heads of travel trade associations and organizations, along with all delegates, visitors from Thailand, the Asian region and elsewhere in the world who have flown the oceans and traversed the sky to be here with us for Thailand Travel Mart Plus Amazing Gateway to the Greater Mekong Subregion 2008.

This event comes at a right time when the Government has declared 2008 – 2009 the Year of Investment and Tourism. Every effort is being made to create the image of Thailand being a “ Quality Destination”, with a commitment to sustainable development.

/Ladies and.....

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today tourism and its allied industries have become the world's most important service industry with an ever expanding employment capacity. Last year, Thailand received 14.5 million international visitors with the receipt of 13.6 billion US dollars. This has been achieved not only through our diverse natural environment and our rich cultural heritage in the Kingdom, but also through our continued efforts to develop tourism products, improve our infrastructure, and human resources as well as developing attractive marketing and promotional campaigns.

With this objective in mind, the Thai Government has been preparing to invest in new tourism projects under its four-year strategic plan. Plan on infrastructure development will cover the four key regions across the country, including the Mekong Corridor River and the Royal Coast which connects the Gulf of Thailand with Andaman Sea. In addition to that, tourist attractions across the country have been classified into 14 clusters based on different tourism products, for instance, local culture, ancient and historical sites, world heritage routes, eco-tourism, hot spring and wellness, Mekong corridor river, dinosaur attractions and active beaches etc.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure to learn that TAT has invited private sector from Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS) and also the Indonesia-Malaysia-Thailand Growth Triangle (IMT-GT) to join this event as it will help boost the higher potential of the tourism industry in this region as a "combined destination" and promote it to the world market as the same brand. For the reasons I have just stated, I am confident that with the combined efforts, resources and connectivity of all countries in the region, it can produce far greater result than our individual country and that we can create more value and appeal to our customers.

/Ladies and.....

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In the increasingly competitive global market, we need to undertake the right marketing activities and deliver the right products to the right customer segments. We have to work hard to ensure that our products are up to international standard, that we deliver value for money, and deliver what we promise to tourists. I strongly believe that the Thailand Travel Mart 2008 Plus Amazing Gateway to the Greater Mekong Sub-region will be beneficial for both public and private sector to discuss and share their updated information on the tourism products and services as well as new destinations.

In conclusion, I would like to express my appreciation and thank the organizers for their efforts and competent management of the event and all concerned people who have supported this event.

I take this opportunity to wish you every success in promoting tourism, and industry that yield unending happiness to us all. I also wish all delegates and visitors good health and happiest stay in Thailand. I believe that the Thai people will spare no effort to be a good host and making your visit memorable, joyful and successful.

Thank you for your attention.

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