Conference on Regional Cooperation and Integration
Experiences in Asia and the Pacific

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Papers and Presentations

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Session 5: Key Messages and Looking Forward
### Session 1: Regional Cooperation Initiatives in Asia and the Importance of Regionalism

#### Key Messages

1. Center of gravity is shifting towards Asia, a resurgent and dynamic region; it can benefit from, as well as contribute, to global rebalancing.

2. Innovative solutions required to mobilize resources for RCI interventions.

3. Significant concerns on negative externalities (e.g., crisis/contagion, climate change, disaster risks, security/illicit trade, etc)

4. Cooperation is essential; integration is a long-term goal. Take a balanced approach, by weighing benefits as well as costs (including opportunity costs) and challenges of integration.

#### Looking Forward

1. Take RCI on a new plane. Promote cooperation between sub-regions and south-south cooperation; Continue removing all remaining obstacles for free flow of goods and services as a means of naturally promoting integration; Support private sector efforts related to production networks.

2. Promote collaboration. Between governments and businesses, including PPPs. Between countries and institutions to support knowledge sharing & innovation.

3. Invest in regional public goods. Promote closer cooperation to avoid contagion and share risks, along with preventive domestic policies to avoid contagion, as regional risk-sharing cannot be a substitute for good domestic policy and regulatory frameworks.

4. Ensure RCI leads to inclusiveness. Prepare supportive policies so that integration will not produce unequal net benefits, especially for weaker or smaller countries.
Session 2: Regional Cooperation in Transport and Roles of Economic Corridors

Key Messages

1. Multimodal transport connectivity - key to regional cooperation
2. Good progress achieved on the hard or physical aspects
3. Limited progress on soft or policy/regulatory aspects
4. Transforming transport corridors into economic ones is a priority by all subregions

Looking Forward

1. Connectivity will remain important for all subregions
2. Concerted effort and political will are needed for soft side, incl institutional strengthening
3. Economic corridor devt needs to be customized
4. Potential exists to link the subregions together
Session 3: Regional Cooperation in Energy and Climate Change

Key Messages

1. The impetus for energy cooperation lies in the diversity and abundance of energy resources that are unevenly distributed across Asia
2. While there are significant benefits from energy trade, it has been taken up largely on a bilateral basis
3. Shortages in energy supply due to limited public sector fiscal capacity indicates clear need for greater private sector engagement
4. Increased coordination is needed to enhance environmental sustainability and climate resilience

Looking Forward

1. Greater investments and cooperation in energy generation and transmission
2. Development of regional energy markets and interconnectivity of grids
3. Innovative ways to increase private sectors' participation and energy financing
4. Increased investments in adaptation, mitigation, and disaster risk management
### Key Messages

1. Regional integration in trade and finance is a long-term undertaking, and requires deeper efforts at various levels and considerable national-level readiness

2. Trade facilitation is multi-sectoral and multi-dimensional. Some progress made on this front, but a lot more efforts needed to improve trade through border and behind-the-border measures, to keep pace with physical investments.

3. Trade facilitation and trade & investment liberalization measures should be pursued in parallel in a well-coordinated manner within sub-regional groupings and across the region

### Looking Forward

1. Begin with RC and sequence policy and regulatory reforms for RI. (i) adopt measures that help mobility of goods and services in a mutually beneficial manner; (ii) innovative financing solutions to help private sector (e.g. leasing; logistics); (iii) integration of capital markets can begin with national reforms, followed by harmonization

2. Continuously promote trade cooperation. (i) Address incentive issues affecting different stakeholders, and enhance their commitment; (ii) adopt integrated trade facilitation measures, and set realistic and sequenced TF deliverables, with clear performance indicators and accountability; (iii) coordinate with private sector, and adopt new technology solutions that reduce human interface

3. Promote trade facilitation in an integrated manner with investment liberalization and promotion. (i) FTA negotiations and sub-regional and WTO efforts could be platforms for promoting trade and FDI; (ii) address supply chain constraints through coordinated investments along with trade promotion; (iii) promote regional hubs or economic clusters.