

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Pratap Singhasivanon
Secretary general/Coordinator
SEAMEO TROP MED Network

Welcome Remarks

48th SEAMEO TROP MED Network Governing Board Meeting
13-14 August 2009
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Your Excellency, YB Datuk Seri Liow Tiong Hai, Minister Of Health, Malaysia

Dr. Tran Thi Giang Huong, Director General, Department of International Cooperation,
Ministry of Health Vietnam

H.E. Tan Sri Dato Seri Dr. Hj. Mohd Ismail bin Merican, Director General of Health,
Ministry of Health, Malaysia

Distinguished Governing Board Members

Regional Centre Directors and Network officials

Distinguished Representatives of International and Development Agencies

Friends, ladies and gentlemen

On behalf of SEAMEO TROP MED Network, it is my honor and privilege to welcome all of you to the 48th SEAMEO TROP MED Governing Board Meeting in this prosperous city of Kuala Lumpur.

I would like to express the Network's heartfelt gratitude to the Government of Malaysia, particularly the Ministry of Health for hosting this 48th GBM. Our special thanks to H.E YB Datuk Seri Liow Tiong Hai, Minister Of Health, Malaysia for presiding over our Opening Ceremony.

Your Excellencies, Ladies and gentlemen, allow me to maximize this occasion to express and put on record the Network's acknowledgement and recognition of the invaluable support accorded to the Network by the Board Members, SEAMEO Secretariat, the SEAMEO Council Members, Member Countries, and last but not least by all of the national, regional and international partners. Your continuous partnership with the Network contributed to a great extent to everything that the SEAMEO TROP MED Network has accomplished during this reporting period. The detailed reports of the

Centres and the Network Office will validate this statement. I chose not to pre-empt the reports of the Centres. In addition, a short video will be shown in a little while to summarize these accomplishments.

Ladies and gentlemen, 2008-2009, has been a busy year for the SEAMEO TROPED Network. Although the number of scholarships to regular degree programs remained the same for several years, the Regional Centres augmented this by increasing the number and types of short training courses for this reporting period. New sources of funding were identified and more innovative ways of tapping and mobilizing resources were utilized to increase the number of participants to the training courses offered by the entire Network. And because of these, SEAMEO TROPED Network gained more recognition and more mileage in terms of credibility as a regional organization.

Your Excellencies, let me also report to you, as recommended during the previous GBM, the capacity building of the SEAMEO TROPED Network staff has been placed high in the agenda of the Network. Activities have been undertaken both at the Centre and Network Office levels to maximize opportunities for internal capacity building. Efforts are also being exerted to strengthen inter-Centre activities. We may not have reached an ideal state but we are moving towards this direction.

Ladies and gentlemen, as you all know we always have a thematic symposium during the GBM. This year, the focus is on H1N1. This topic was unanimously selected by the Four Regional Centres and Network Office officials during the management meeting of the Network. It the pressing issue of today. SEAMEO TROPED Network as a regional organization should be able to discuss with its partners how to better respond to the challenges posed by this pandemic. Together with our partners present here today the whole group will map out strategies on how to work best collectively and collaboratively in responding to this pandemic.

This 48th GBM is an auspicious occasion for the Network. This year we are formalizing the membership to the Governing Board of representatives of some Member Countries. Not that they have not been with us. They were with us for a long time, providing meaningful relationship to the Network as representatives of Member Countries.

Your Excellencies, Distinguished Board Members, Partners, let me assure you on behalf of SEAMEO TROPED Network that the Network will continue to work towards our vision of quality life for our people. As Secretary General/Coordinator of the Network, it has been an honour and a privilege for me to have worked with all of you and look forward to more fruitful working relationships with all of you.

Again, our gratitude for the excellent organizing and support provided by the Ministry of Health, Government of Malaysia for the conduct of this GBM.