

**Welcome Remark**  
**by Dr. Tarisa Watanagase**  
**Governor, the Bank of Thailand**  
**Celebration of 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of SEACEN Centre**  
**Bangkok, 29 July 2007**

Honorable Governors,  
Distinguished Guests,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure to welcome fellow Governors and distinguished guests to join the SEACEN Centre in celebrating its 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of establishment. I would also like to extend an especially warm welcome to our honoured guests who have made great contributions to the SEACEN Centre, including former SEACEN Board of Governors' members and Executive Directors.

The Silver anniversary of the SEACEN Centre is the time not only for celebration, but also recognition of yet another important milestone attesting to the realization of the vision of SEACEN founding fathers. SEACEN – whose history dates back more than 40 years since its first meeting in 1966 initiated by Dr. Puey Ungphakorn and Tun Ismail Bin Mohamed Ali – is one of the region's oldest central bank cooperation. Governors

have been meeting for more than 40 times in various cities of SEACEN countries to foster the close ties and strong cooperation among our central banks and monetary authorities.

But, time is not the only measure of success for our cooperation under the SEACEN umbrella. SEACEN membership has grown from eight member central banks from its inception to 16 members at the present and spread over the Asia-Pacific region. The increasing number of members with different level of economic developments and needs, along with the changing regional and global environment, has posed challenges to the SEACEN Centre in meeting its mandate. Notwithstanding difficult challenges, the Centre has succeeded in training thousands of our central bank staffs and producing hundreds of research papers.

Even for many of us here tonight, our lives have been touched by SEACEN – whether as trainer or trainee; speaker or organizer – and many friendship forged over the years. For many of us, SEACEN has been, in fact, family.

Undeniably and most importantly, SEACEN has been the integral part of our efforts to develop the best central bankers for our region. Looking ahead, I am very hopeful that the strategic direction as agreed by the Board of Governors will set the

SEACEN Centre on its course to fulfill its vision and mission. There will of course be new challenges but, judging from the history of our cooperation, they will not be insurmountable.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

After two days of fruitful discussions and exchange of views, I hope that you will enjoy tonight's program of concert and dance performances, together with sumptuous Thai cuisine. We have put together this evening program for you with the hope of bringing back the good memories of the SEACEN Centre's 25 years of progress and raising higher expectations for our future regional cooperation.

Let me also say that choosing our new main building as the venue for this important occasion is not co-incidental. This is because our former main building also served as the venue where the Agreement to establish the SEACEN Centre was signed a quarter of a century ago. Having said this, I would not want to promise that we will have another new building when we meet again in the next twenty five years.

Before we begin tonight's program, allow me to personally introduce "Dr. Sax Chamber Orchestra," a group of talented youth musicians, who won the first place in the International

Youth Chamber Music Competition in Switzerland in 2005. Their performance is a perfect blend of Thai and Western musical instruments, not unlike our SEACEN training courses that aspire to blend Asian experiences into Western themes. I hope you will enjoy their performance as I always have.

Without further ado, please join me in starting our 26<sup>th</sup> year of even greater progress with an enjoyable evening among close friends.