

**SUMMARY REPORT  
OF  
THE 9<sup>th</sup> MEETING OF ASEAN PLUS THREE EMERGENCY RICE RESERVE (APTERR) COUNCIL**

**28 May 2021, Philippines**

**Video Conference**

**INTRODUCTION**

1. The 9<sup>th</sup> Meeting of ASEAN Plus Three Emergency Rice Reserve (APTERR) Council was held on 28 May 2021 via video conference under the extraordinary circumstances due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Meeting was organised by the APTERR Secretariat and hosted by the National Food Authority (NFA), Department of Agriculture (DA) of the Philippines.

2. The Meeting was attended by the members of the APTERR Council and the delegates from ASEAN Plus Three countries. Representatives from the ASEAN Secretariat, the ASEAN Food Security Reserve Board (AFSRB) Secretariat, the ASEAN Food Security Information System (AFSIS) Secretariat and the APTERR Secretariat were also present at the Meeting. The list of delegates appears in **ANNEX 1**.

3. The Meeting was co-chaired by Atty. Judy Carol L. Dansal, Administrator of the NFA, and Ms. Liu Xiangzhou, Deputy Director of Asian and African Affairs Division, Department of International Cooperation, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs (MARA) of the People's Republic of China (PRC) acting on behalf of Mr. Wei Zhenglin, Deputy Director General of Department of International Cooperation, MARA, PRC.

**OPENING SESSION**

4. Atty. Dansal expressed her warmest welcome to all respective delegates to the 9<sup>th</sup> Meeting of APTERR Council. Despite conducting through the videoconferencing platform due to the global emergency of COVID-19, she was still strongly confident that the Meeting would be productive and achieve its objectives. To conclude, she extended her earnest appreciation to the APTERR Secretariat for assistance and praised the NFA's organising committee for their strong support, commitment and fundamental contribution to ensure the success of this momentous Meeting. Her Welcome Remarks appears in **ANNEX 2**.

5. H.E. Dr. William D. Dar, Cabinet Secretary of DA, underscored the cooperation among the APTERR Parties under the APTERR mechanism in providing timely humanitarian assistance to the needy APTERR Parties and expressed his delight that the NFA acted as the APTERR Council member as well as the facilitator of the cooperation. He reaffirmed that the APTERR mechanism was fully realised and effectively implemented in the Philippines in the purview of the APTERR's goals and objectives. Recalling the Special ASEAN Summit on COVID-19 on 14 April 2020, the utilisation of the APTERR mechanism was highlighted for strengthening the resiliency and sustainability of regional food supply chains. He concluded his message by encouraging all member countries to actively participate in the APTERR mechanism for achieving long-term food security and wishing a successful meeting. His Opening Message appears in **ANNEX 3**.

6. H.E. Atty. Salvador C. Medialdea, Executive Secretary of Office of the President, expressed his gratefulness to the APTERR Council for giving him the honour to deliver a special message in the 9<sup>th</sup> Meeting of APTERR Council. The advent of COVID-19 has significantly increased risks in food security and affected all stages of food supply chains. Thus,

the active existence of the APTERR has been greatly effective in today's global health and challenges in food security. For the Philippines, the country has received a numerous rice contribution through the APTERR mechanism to assist people affected by disasters with a greatest donation in 2014 for typhoon Yolanda. Further, under the strong leadership of Administrator Dansal, the NFA, for the first time since the establishment of APTERR, received rice donations for six times in 2020 with a total volume of 2,775 MT. In this regard, he thanked all of the contributions under the APTERR mechanism for strengthening the regional economic resilience and solidity among ASEAN Plus Three countries. His Special Message appears in **ANNEX 4.**

## **CLOSED SESSION**

### **Agenda Item 1:            OPENING STATEMENT BY THE OUTGOING CO-CHAIRS OF APTERR COUNCIL**

7.       Mr. Han-Byung Lee, Deputy Director of Food Grain Policy Division, Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (MAFRA) of the Republic of Korea (ROK), firstly delivered his deep appreciation to General Manager (GM) of the APTERR Secretariat, Mr.Chanpithya Shimphelee, and staff as well as the NFA for hosting the Meeting. Then, he emphasised the significance of ensuring food security amid the COVID-19 pandemic and recognised that the APTERR mechanism had played an important role and would be more vital in the future. The ROK has actively participated in the APTERR programmes and already provided a total of 17,000 MT of rice assistance to member countries in times of hardship. To further advance social values, the ROK last year started the upcycling project to turn packaging materials for rice used in donation into multipurpose bags. Those bags later were donated to a recipient country. He reaffirmed the ROK's commitment to enthusiastically engage more in the APTERR programmes. Concerning the challenges posed by COVID-19 to food security in East Asia, he wished the meeting of meaningful and in-depth discussion and again appreciated all respective delegates as well as the APTERR Secretariat staff for preparing this significant Meeting. He finally hoped that the pandemic would be soon stabilised so everyone can meet face-to-face. His Remarks appears in **ANNEX 5.**

8.       Mr. Thura Soe, Deputy Director General of Department of Agriculture (DOA), Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation of Myanmar, expressed his sincere appreciation to all delegates for attending the Meeting. As the assurance of food security in the ASEAN Plus Three countries is a common goal of all APTERR member countries, the establishment of APTERR mechanism contributes to the strengthening of economic resilience in both national and regional levels. He added that accessibility to food security was also one of the Sustainable Development Goals in alleviating extreme hunger and poverty. Nowadays, the effects of climate change slow down the capability of food production causing an impact to global food security. He underlined an efficiency and effectiveness of the APTERR mechanism in helping people affected by disastrous calamities in Myanmar since 2017. The country received a number of rice assistance contributed by Japan and the ROK through the Tier 3 programme. He thanked not only the donor countries but also all the Council members as well as the APTERR Secretariat for the generous contributions. Besides, he revealed his deep gratitude to the NFA as the host country and the APTERR Secretariat for organising the meeting smoothly even amid the difficulties caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Finally, he believed that the 9<sup>th</sup> Meeting of APTERR Council would be very fruitful and successful. His Remarks appears in **ANNEX 6.**

**Agenda Item 2: REMARKS BY THE CO-CHAIRS OF THE APTERR COUNCIL**

9. The Co-chair from the Philippines conveyed her heartfelt appreciation to all respective delegates for being sympathised and patience with the rescheduling of the 9<sup>th</sup> Meeting of APTERR Council due to the dramatic increase of COVID-19 infections. She then proceeded to deliver her special thanks to the APTERR Secretariat and the APTERR Council members, especially, the Governments of Japan and the ROK for their continued assistance of emergency rice under the APTERR mechanism to the Philippines in 2020. In this regard, she emphasised the significant role of the APTERR as a main emergency food provision mechanism that successfully supported countless victims who faced adverse impacts induced by several calamities during 2020. Before closing her remarks, she wished all the agenda of the Meeting would be vigorously discussed and encouraged all delegates to actively engage in the Meeting to ensure the concrete and practical solutions as well as plans of actions were successfully made. Her Remarks appears in **ANNEX 7.**

10. The Co-chair from China expressed her great pleasure to attend the 9<sup>th</sup> Meeting of APTERR Council and thanked the Philippines and the APTERR Secretariat for a kind invitation. She highlighted that the APTERR mechanism was important for agricultural cooperation to ensure food security among the ASEAN Plus Three countries. Since 2013, the APTERR mechanism has played an active role in safeguarding regional food security and addressing food shortages caused by natural disasters in time of emergencies. After the unexpected crisis of COVID-19, the APTERR members closely collaborated to utilise the APTERR mechanism in mitigating the severe impacts of the outbreak. She also highlighted that this year would mark the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signing of the APTERR Agreement. As the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic had still caused a concern on food security, she reiterated that China stood ready to cooperate with other members to review past experience and explore approaches to further leverage the APTERR mechanism for safeguarding food security in the region. In her conclusion, she wished the Meeting a complete success. Her Remarks appears in **ANNEX 8.**

**Agenda Item 3: ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

11. The Meeting adopted the agenda of the Meeting, which appears in **ANNEX 9.**

**Agenda Item 4: BUSINESS ARRANGEMENT**

12. The Meeting was held in plenary. The delegates were given a brief summary on the virtual meeting programme and other arrangements for the Meeting.

**Agenda Item 5: UPDATE ON THE RATIFICATION OF THE PROTOCOL TO AMEND THE ATTACHMENT 2 OF THE APTERR AGREEMENT**

13. The APTERR Secretariat updated on the progress of the ratification of the Protocol to Amend the Attachment 2 of the APTERR Agreement. The document and the presentation appear in **ANNEX 10** to **ANNEX 11.**

14. The Meeting noted that 11 countries namely Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Viet Nam, Japan, and the ROK, completely deposited their Instrument of Ratification (IoR) to the ASEAN Secretariat. In connection to this, the Meeting encouraged the remaining APTERR Parties to expedite their internal clearance for submission of the IoR by mid-November 2021 to support a smooth operation and continuity of APTERR programmes.

15. Representatives from Cambodia and China assured the Meeting that their internal processes were close to completion and they would do their utmost to deposit the IoR to the ASEAN Secretariat before the due date.

**Agenda Item 6: UPDATE ON THE STATUS OF THE ENDOWMENT FUND AND THE CONTRIBUTION FOR THE OPERATIONAL COST**

16. The APTERR Secretariat reported on the contribution for the Endowment Fund (EF) and the annual contribution to the Operational Cost (OC). The document and presentation appear in **ANNEX 12** to **ANNEX 13**.

17. The Meeting acknowledged the update on the status of EF and OC contributions and expressed appreciation to Myanmar and Lao PDR for completing their second five-year OC contributions. The Meeting also encouraged the remaining APTERR Parties to make their contributions as soon as possible.

18. The Meeting noted that the APTERR Secretariat would only record and acknowledge receipt of the actual contribution amount received and the APTERR Party who transfers a full amount of contribution with a “guarantee our” transaction was not required to fulfill shortfalls caused by a deduction of bank’s transfer fees and charges.

**Agenda Item 7: REPORT ON REALISATION OF WORK PLAN AND BUDGET PLAN FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020**

19. The APTERR Secretariat reported on the realisation of work plan and budget plan for fiscal year 2020 (1 January - 31 December 2020). The document, presentation and audited annual financial report appear in **ANNEX 14** to **ANNEX 16**.

20. The Meeting endorsed the realisation of work plan and budget plan for fiscal year 2020.

21. The Meeting acknowledged the proactive implementation of the APTERR activities and the effective financial management carried out by the APTERR Secretariat in an effort to safeguard food security, especially in the time of hardship posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

22. The Meeting noted with appreciation the constant contribution of Thailand to the APTERR Secretariat by allocating a new office space and continually engaging the APTERR Secretariat to several of the Office of Agricultural Economics (OAE)’s social events in order to promote the public recognition.

23. In addition, the Meeting advocated recommendations made by Thailand and Japan on further promoting APTERR’s recognition to public. The representative from Japan shared the view that the APTERR Secretariat should frequently publish the APTERR activities while the APTERR members were encouraged to promote the information of successful APTERR activities through various channels. Besides, the representative from Thailand advised the APTERR Secretariat to create linkages with other international organisations, such as Food and Agriculture Organization, World Food Programme and Asian Development Bank, and leverage this opportunity to present its activities to the world community.

24. The Meeting took note of China’s intention to seek advices and suggestions and to exchange in-depth experiences with the APTERR Secretariat to support the establishment of the United Nations Humanitarian Response Depot (UNHRD) in China.

25. The Meeting noted Indonesia's intention to participate in the Tier 1 programme as a supplying country. The experiences from the implementation of Tier 1 between the Philippines and Japan will be lessons learned for other APTERR members to participate in the programme.

**Agenda Item 8: WORK PLAN AND ANNUAL OPERATIONAL BUDGET PROPOSAL FOR FISCAL YEAR 2021**

26. The APTERR Secretariat presented the proposed work plan and annual operational budget proposal for fiscal year 2021. The document and presentation appear in **ANNEX 17** to **ANNEX 18**.

27. The Meeting endorsed the work plan and annual operational budget proposal for fiscal year 2021.

28. The Meeting took note of Thailand's recommendation on the importance of creating the agricultural information network to support regional food security. In connection to this, the representative from the AFSIS Secretariat shared the view with the Meeting that the AFSIS's food security-related publications including the Early Warning Information Report and the Rice Growing Outlook Report would be considerably helpful in supporting the food emergency monitoring and information of APTERR.

29. The Meeting took note of the Philippines and Japan's intentions to extend their Tier 1 programme set to be expired in October 2021. The preparation of work plan and timeframe for the extension process was also recommended.

30. The Meeting noted that China reiterated to continuously collaborate with the APTERR Parties as well as the APTERR Secretariat for further participation in the APTERR programmes.

**Agenda Item 9: FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT PLAN OF THE APTERR SECRETARIAT FOR THE 3<sup>RD</sup> PHASE (2023-2027)**

31. The APTERR Secretariat presented the proposal on the financial management plan of the APTERR Secretariat for the 3<sup>rd</sup> phase (2023-2027). The document and presentation appear in **ANNEX 19** to **ANNEX 20**.

32. Considering the smooth continuity of APTERR's operation, the Meeting noted the proposal and recommendations made by the APTERR Secretariat under the appropriate and efficient financial management. Representative of Singapore commented that APTERR Parties might need to consult their legal teams on APTERR Secretariat's recommendation. The Meeting reiterated the importance of submission of the IoR by all APTERR Parties. In relation to this, the remaining APTERR Parties were requested to hasten their internal process for depositing the IoR to the ASEAN Secretariat as early as possible. This will allow the Protocol to come into force and be effectively implemented.

**Agenda Item 10: REPORT ON APTERR TIER 3 PROGRAMMES**

33. The representatives from Myanmar and the Philippines presented their reports on APTERR Tier 3 programmes implemented in their countries under Japan and the ROK's contributions. The presentations appear in **ANNEX 21** to **ANNEX 27**.

34. The Meeting noted with satisfaction the successful APTERR Tier 3 programmes of Japan's 300 MT and 750 MT of rice and the ROK's 600 MT of rice implemented in Myanmar. Likewise, the Meeting took notes of an achievement of APTERR Tier 3 programmes implemented in the Philippines under Japan's 425 MT of rice contribution and the ROK's 600

MT, 350 MT, 1,000 MT, and 400 MT of rice. Further, the Meeting thanked the DOA of Myanmar and the NFA of the Philippines for their outstanding works and generous support for effectively implementing the Tier 3 programmes.

35. Representatives from Myanmar and the Philippines expressed their profound gratitude and appreciation to the APTERR Council and the APTERR Secretariat for their cooperation as well as the generousities from the Government of Japan and the ROK for strengthening food security in their countries.

**Agenda Item 11: UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF APTERR PROGRAMMES**

36. The representatives from the APTERR Secretariat, Cambodia, Myanmar and the Philippines updated the ongoing implementation of APTERR programmes. The documents and presentations appear in **ANNEX 28** to **ANNEX 33**.

37. The Meeting encouraged the APTERR members to continuously participate in the APTERR programmes including Tier 1, Tier 2 and Tier 3 for safeguarding food security amid the emergency situation. Also, the Meeting expressed sincere appreciation to the General Directorate of Agriculture, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Cambodia, the DOA of Myanmar and the NFA for the remarkable progress in carrying out the Tier 3 programmes implementation in their countries.

38. Representative from Cambodia and Myanmar thanked the Government of Japan for the generous contributions of 300 MT of rice to Cambodia, 300 MT of rice and 2 MT of precooked rice to Myanmar as well as 2 MT of precooked rice to the Philippines through the pre-positioned stockpiled rice system under Tier 3 programmes.

39. The Meeting noted with pleasure Japan's intention to participate in Tier 3 programme under APTERR fiscal year 2021 as a donor country with the intended contribution amount of USD 600,000. Furthermore, the Meeting welcomed Japan's initiative to seek a new idea to be implemented under Tier 3 programme.

**Agenda Item 12: OTHER MATTERS**

40. The APTERR Secretariat presented the tentative work plan and timeframe for the recruitment of the new APTERR GM. The document and presentation appear in **ANNEX 34** to **ANNEX 35**.

41. The Meeting acknowledged the tentative work plan and timeframe for the recruitment of the new APTERR GM and thanked the current APTERR GM, Mr. Shimphalee for his hard work to achieve a smooth operation of the APTERR Secretariat.

42. The representative from Japan informed the Meeting on a secondment of the new Japanese expert, Mr. Toshiki Tojo, from the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Japan to the APTERR Secretariat. He is a successor of Mr. Kenji Okuhira whose term was terminated at the end of March 2021. In this regard, the Meeting showed an appreciation to Mr. Okuhira for his support in implementing the APTERR activities.

**Agenda Item 13: DATE AND VENUE OF THE 10<sup>th</sup> MEETING OF APTERR COUNCIL**

43. The Meeting noted that the 10<sup>th</sup> Meeting of APTERR Council hosted by the Government of Singapore would be held virtually in January 2022. The APTERR Secretariat in collaboration with Singapore will announce the details of the meeting in due course.

**Agenda Item 14: ADOPTION OF THE REPORT**

44. The Meeting took note that the summary report of the 9<sup>th</sup> Meeting of APTERR Council would be adopted ad-referendum.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

45. The Co-chair from China thanked the APTERR Secretariat and all respective delegates for attending the virtual meeting. China reiterated to continue working closely under the APTERR framework in ensuring food security in the region. To the end, she looked forward to the next Meeting of APTERR Council in 2022. Meanwhile, the Co-chair from the Philippines expressed her satisfaction that the Meeting had been concluded in notably fruitful fashion with thorough data exchanging among the APTERR Council members. She stressed that the assurance of food security became tremendously vital, particularly in the face of global-scale health crisis. With the highly engaged APTERR programmes, it clearly displays the spirit of ASEAN Plus Three unified and institutionalised cooperation in preventing regional food insecurity. The region is moving on the right path. In addition, she expressed her appreciation to the APTERR Secretariat and the NFA staff for their collective and collaborative work that led to the success of the Meeting. Finally, she displayed her confidence that, through the opened and shared efforts to further strengthen the mechanism, the very true essence of the APTERR could be achieved. The Co-chair from the Philippines' remarks appears in **ANNEX 36**.

46. The Meeting expressed a heartfelt gratitude and appreciation to the NFA and the APTERR Secretariat for excellent arrangement of the virtual 9<sup>th</sup> Meeting of APTERR Council amid a hardship posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

47. The Meeting was held in a spirit of the ASEAN Plus Three co-operation and cordiality.

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28 May 2021, Philippines