



**NEW VENTURES IN REGIONAL COOPERATION:
Learning Program for CAREC Senior Officials
29 – 30 March 2007**

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) Program is a robust development partnership; a concrete example of countries and institutions cooperating to achieve a common purpose. The Program's overarching goal is development through cooperation, leading to accelerated economic growth and poverty reduction.
2. By promoting and facilitating regional cooperation in transport, trade, energy and other key areas of mutual interest, the CAREC program helps Central Asian and neighboring countries realize their immense potential in an increasingly integrated Eurasia.
3. CAREC is an alliance of eight participating countries—Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, People's Republic of China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Mongolia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan—and six multilateral institutions active in promoting economic cooperation in the subregion—ADB, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, International Monetary Fund, Islamic Development Bank, United Nations Development Program, and World Bank.
4. The CAREC program rests on four action pillars. The knowledge and capacity development pillar recognizes the vital role of human resources in promoting regional cooperation. In this respect, the CAREC capacity development program will design and implement mutually beneficial regional initiatives and strengthen knowledge and capacity-development efforts to support country ownership and strategic direction of the Program. The first of these initiatives is a learning program to coincide with the Senior Officials' Meeting on 26-27 March 2007 at ADB Headquarters in Manila.

II. PROGRAM DESIGN AND DESCRIPTION

5. The learning program is the inaugural activity of the CAREC capacity development program. As the theme and title suggest, this event aims to:
 - (i) provide senior CAREC officials with knowledge and perspectives on new initiatives in regional cooperation and integration, and
 - (ii) provide knowledge on the specific mechanisms and instruments that will transform new ideas into practice for better regional cooperation results.
6. The program content is closely linked to the key issues facing the CAREC Program as it seeks to implement its ambitious agenda described in the *CAREC Comprehensive Action Plan* endorsed by Ministers in 2006. The learning program is designed to complement discussions at

the March Senior Officials' Meeting and to expose participants to a range of initiatives for more effective regional cooperation.

7. The learning program is composed of two broad topic segments:

(i) Macro perspectives:

- A global view of regional cooperation and integration and opportunities for Central Asia.
- Comparative cases on ASEAN/GMS and EU will also be provided, from which participants can derive applications and lessons

(ii) Special Topics in Regional Integration:

- Global Value Chains: Application of Business Principles and Practice for CAREC
- Public-Private Partnership: Concepts, Principles, Case Studies
- Multilateral Development Banks, the Private Sector and Regional Integration

III. PROGRAM METHODOLOGY

8. The training program will provide senior officials from CAREC participating countries a combination of sessions that are classroom-based and a short study visit component which exposes participants directly to a concrete development issue. This combination provides participants with an opportunity to discuss and share common as well as contrasting concerns and experiences, identify present and future challenges, derive immediate lessons, and craft possible approaches to solutions and proposals.

9. Learning methods consist of lectures, presentations, case studies, open discussions, and an on-site visit to the Philippine Electricity Spot Market as an illustration of a regional concern among CAREC countries to address issues and challenges in the power sector.

IV. FACULTY AND RESOURCE PERSON

10. The program will be delivered and implemented by a multidisciplinary team of experts who have extensive knowledge and experience in regional cooperation. They have substantial teaching experience complemented by a strong practitioner background in consulting in the Asian region. ADB experts on specific subject areas provide a strong resource for specific topics.