

# SEAMEO RIHED Bulletin



ISSN 0859-9084/ May 2008



## *Message from Centre Director Prof. Dr. Supachai Yavaprabhas*

In the second volume of 2008 Bulletin, the highlight was on our success to get the endorsement of the proposal on '*A Structured Framework for Regional Integration in Higher Education in Southeast Asia: The Road towards a Common Space*' from the Council of Ministers of Education during the 43rd SEAMEO Council Conference this past March 2008. Since the mid-2007, SEAMEO RIHED has embarked on the project to raise the awareness among key players in higher education sector within the region on the significance of the promotion of a common space in higher education in Southeast Asia.

Despite the invaluable efforts of both ASEAN and SEAMEO in addressing the importance of 'ASEAN identity/awareness' at the levels of basic and higher education, SEAMEO RIHED is convinced that it is also a time for the region to start discussing about the creation of a regional higher education area/space to facilitate and enhance better cooperation among individuals and HEIs in Southeast Asia. In the years to come, Southeast Asia will have to face 'together' the challenges of globalisation and the transformation into a knowledge-based society and economy. For this reason, a harmonisation process of different higher education systems in the region is the fundamental assurance that different cultures and academic traditions will be well respected and balanced. At the same time, the recognition of other systems in terms of quality, qualification, degrees as well as closer cooperation and greater degree of mobility will also be enhanced.

To reach these aims, SEAMEO RIHED organised an open seminar on *The Bologna Process and the Future Direction of (Regional) Higher Education* outlining basic information about the harmonisation process of higher education in Europe. The event, held on 15 February 2008 at the Commission on Higher Education (Thailand) was attended by 150 participants from governmental, private and academic sector. In the seminar, SEAMEO RIHED also distributed its recent publication on *Harmonisation of Higher Education: Lessons Learned from the Bologna Process* to the participants and their affiliated organisations. Following the first event to start rolling out the campaign to raise the awareness on the harmonisation process, SEAMEO RIHED has later successfully secured the funding from the Japan Foundation to organise a *Conference series on Raising Awareness: Exploring the Ideas of Creating Higher Education Common Space in Southeast Asia*. The project will last for about 6 months from May-December 2008. The details of the Conference Series will appear in our next volume in a few months time.

Also in this volume, another highlight was the summary of SEAMEO RIHED-AGB Educational Trip to the US, which received a warm response from higher education institutions in Thailand. More than 30 distinguished senior and middle ranking university administrators participated in the 9-day intensive programme. Please enjoy reading what the participants had a chance to learn about the US higher education system right in this volume and I will be seeing you again in the next volume.

# Visit and Linkages

## The 43rd SEAMEO Council Conference Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

The Ministry of Education, Malaysia, hosted the 43<sup>rd</sup> SEAMEO Council Conference in Kuala Lumpur. The gathering of the education ministers and high officials from 11 SEAMEO member states in the annual meeting was aimed to take up issues on access, equity and quality of education, among others, education policies and initiatives. In coordination with the SEAMEO Secretariat, the 43<sup>rd</sup> SEAMEC was held on 13-14 March 2008 at the Oriental Hotel, Kuala Lumpur. It was preceded by the ICT Conference and Exhibition on 10-12 March 2008 at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre. The highlights of this year's council conference are the signing of the renewed Agreement between SEAMEO and UNESCO, the Policy Forum led by MOE Malaysia that discussed *"Bridging the Education Gap: Improving Access, Equity and Quality – Southeast Asia and Beyond,"* and a discussion forum on the progress of Education for All in Southeast Asia.



SEAMEO RIHED was also invited to submit the proposal on 'A Structured Framework for Regional Integration in Higher Education in Southeast Asia: The Road towards a Common Space' to the Council of Ministers of Education during the 43<sup>rd</sup> SEAMEO Council Conference. The proposal emphasizes that the future common space or higher education area is not intended as a unitary Southeast Asian system of higher education. It is rather an area in which key common features (such as degree cycles, quality assurance system, credit systems and so on) are being shared among higher education systems. It is also an area in which student and staff mobility and research collaboration is greater enhanced and facilitated because both the qualifications and quality of HEIs in the region are mutually recognised. The proposal was fully endorsed by the Ministers and has gained additional support from the Australian government. The 43<sup>rd</sup> SEAMEO Council Conference also encouraged SEAMEO RIHED to take the initiative to raise awareness among key stakeholders in the region regarding the ideas about the promotion of regional space for higher education.

SEAMEO RIHED will follow up on recommendations from the 43<sup>rd</sup> SEAMEO Council Conference by proposing to the 43<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of Director-General/ Secretary-General/ Commissioner of Higher Education in Southeast Asian Region during 28-29 November 2008 about the possibility in establishing a concrete mechanism to promote the future establishment of a common space in higher education in Southeast Asia.







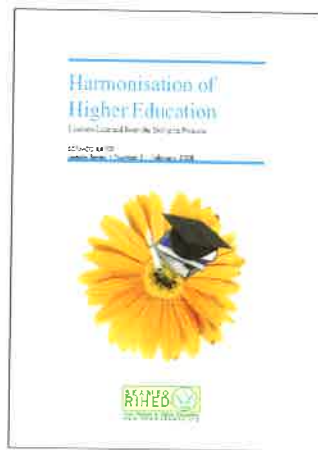
**SEAMEO RIHED Director paid a courtesy call on H.E. Dr. Chan Nyein, Minister of Education, Ministry of Education, Myanmar 28 April 2008, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar**



On 28 April 2008, Prof. Dr. Supachai Yavaprabhas travelled to Myanmar to pay a courtesy call on H.E. Dr. Chan Nyein, Minister of Education and also to discuss in details about the upcoming Regional Workshop on Institutional Restructuring of Higher Education in Asia. The event will be co-organised by SEAMEO RIHED, the International Institution for Educational Planning (IIEP, UNESCO-Paris), and the Ministry of Education (Myanmar).

H.E. Dr. Chan Nyein welcomed Prof. Supachai and expressed his willingness to co-host the 4th Regional Workshop on Institutional Restructuring of Higher Education in Asia, which will be held in Nay Pyi Taw during 21-25 July 2008 with 25 participants from Myanmar and the rest of Southeast Asian countries.

## News Publications



### **HARMONISATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION: LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE BOLOGNA PROCESS**

The book combines papers and conference materials prepared by SEAMEO RIHED, which were previously presented in several international conferences and workshops into a single book. The book was published to present the Centre's position and emphasis on the impact of globalisation and the importance of the inter-governmental process leading to higher education integration and harmonisation in Southeast Asia.

### **THE REPORT OF THE FIRST SEAMEO RIHED-AGB EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME TO USA**

The Report of the 1st SEAMEO RIHED-AGB Educational Programme to the USA was a combination of lecture notes taken during each institutional visit about higher education system in the US, photos of the participants and also the reflections from some of the participants about the programme. The report is beneficial to those educators and HEI administrators as well as those who are interested in the overall higher education system and higher education management and governance in the US.



# The First SEAMEO RIHED-AGB Educational Programme to United States of America

**13 -21 April 2008, in Boston, Maryland and Washington DC, USA**



With the cooperation from the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges (AGB), SEAMEO RIHED had the opportunity to bring senior university administrators and executives from Thailand to visit higher education institutions in the US and also to attend the 2008 AGB's National Conference on Trusteeship in Boston this past April. The key objective of the programme is to provide the opportunity for senior university administrators to participate in professional development activities to improve their insights and knowledge about recent and current development of US higher education.



During 13-21 April 2008, thirty-four (34) participants attended the 'National Conference on Trusteeship: the Nick of TIME – American Higher Education in a Global Context'. Higher education's best thinkers and leaders convened for the Conference to share their expertise and insights on governance. This was AGB's largest-attended National Conference on Trusteeship with 1,003 attendees at 35+ sessions and 25 roundtables. Participants came from around the world as *Australia, Canada, China, Japan, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Thailand, and the U.S. Virgin Islands*. Interested topics in Plenary Session and Concurrent Session for instance were Leadership Strategies for Board Chairs of Public Institutions, Strategic Finance for Presidents and Trustees, Ensuring Academic Quality, Bridging Two Worlds: From CEO to University System Chancellor, The Media Looks at Higher Education and Sees, Access, Price, Quality, and Productivity: The Dynamics and Dilemma of Higher Education and National Interests and Engagement in International Education.



The participants also visited 7 higher education institutions in Boston, Washington DC, Maryland and Virginia. The list of institutional visits was: 1) the Center for International Higher Education, Boston College; 2) George Mason University; 3) American University; 4) Georgetown University; 5) University of Maryland; 6) Northern Virginia Community College; and 7) AGB Headquarters



At Boston College, Rev. Joseph M. O'Keefe, SJ, Dean, Lynch School of Education; and Prof. Philip G. Altbach, Monan Professor of Higher Education, Director, Center for International Higher Education welcomed our group and gave lecture and discussion topic on *American Higher Education From A Critical Perspective*, and Prof. Philip also took the group to study tour around the Boston College.

The second visit was George Mason University. The discussion topics and distinguished speakers in this university are *Strategic Planning and Governance*, by Dr. J. Thomas Hennessey, Jr.; University Chief of Staff, Office of the President; *The Role of Faculty Senate* by Suzanne Slayden, Chair, Faculty Senate;



***The Role of Media Relations*** by Christine LaPaille, Vice President for University Relations; ***University As A Think Tank And Relationships With Local Industries*** by Matthew J. Kluger, Vice President, Research; and ***Leadership In Administration*** by Dr. Peter N. Stearns, University Provost.

American University was the third visit. The group had a good opportunity to meet Dr. Cornelius “Neil” M. Kerwin, President of American University and Mr. Gary M. Abramson, Chairman of the Board of Trustees and other senior administrators. The discussion topics in the university were ***The Role of The Board of Trustees in University Governance, Strategic Planning, and The University’s Presidential Search.***

At Georgetown University, Dr. Victor Cha, Director and Professor, Asian Studies Department welcomed our group and gave a short brief on Georgetown University and The Mortara Center for International Studies, after that Ms. Aliz Agoston, Program Coordinator of The Mortara Center for International Studies gave a lecture and discussion on ***University-Based Research Centers: Mortara Center for International Studies, School of Foreign Service***

Dr. Nina Harris, Faculty Director, Burns Academy of Leadership and Dr. Brian Darmody, Assistant Vice President for Research and Economic Development from University of Maryland presented their lectures on ***University Governance and Leadership and The University’s Relationship with Local Industries.***

NOVA (The Northern Virginia Community College) is the largest community college, accommodating about 65,000 students. Dr. Paul McVeigh, Associate Vice President, Global Studies and Programs and Mr. Milan Hayward, Special Assistant for Technical and Career Education welcomed our group and had a discussion topic on ***The Community College Model for Higher Education***

At the AGB Headquarter, the discussion topic was ***Governance of Postsecondary Institutions in The United States*** led by Dr. Richard Skinner, Senior Vice President, Programs & Research; and Dr. Merrill Schwartz, Director, Special Project. Through series of lectures and interactions with senior executives and staff in US HEIs, the participants have gained information and understanding about university governance, leadership and management, marketing techniques, the role the presidential search and the board of trustees in the process of institutional development. The lectures comprised of the topics relating to university governance and leadership, university relationship with local community and industries, strategic planning and marketing tools, and university and the role of think-tank. The group also had a study tour at United Nations Headquarter in New York welcomed by Mr. Yoshinobu Yonekawa, Programme Coordinator, UNDP.

The Report of the 1<sup>st</sup> SEAMEO RIHED-AGB Educational Programme to the USA can be accessed via [www.rihed.seameo.org](http://www.rihed.seameo.org). SEAMEO RIHED will conduct the ***Seminar on US Higher Education: Experienced from the 1st SEAMEO RIHED-AGB Educational Programme to USA*** with the support of Commission on Higher Education, Ministry of Education, Thailand to disseminate the results and impact of the educational programme from the distinguished participants to all Thai scholars, educators and administrators on 4 July 2008 at Commission on Higher Education Building, Thailand.



# The 15th Founding Anniversary of SEAMEO RIHED establishment and the Open Seminar on the Bologna Process and the Future Direction of (Regional) Higher Education

**15 February 2008, Commission on Higher Education Building, Bangkok, Thailand**



On 15 February 2008, SEAMEO RIHED held an open seminar to celebrate its 15th founding anniversary under the topic of regional higher education harmonisation and the lessons learned from Europe's Bologna Process.

In this seminar, the key issues discussed during the seminar included 1) the current trends of global and regional higher education development, 2) the impacts of globalisation on higher education, 3) the experiences of European's harmonisation and higher education reforms through the Bologna Process, 4) the importance of developing a common space in higher education in Southeast Asia, 5) the implications of regional cooperation and policy integration in higher education 6) the extent to which the regional harmonisation process affect higher education institutions in the region and finally 7) the future regional move towards the establishment of a 'Southeast Asian (SEA) of Knowledge'



The seminar speakers and discussants were

- 1) Prof. Dr. Supachai Yavaprabhas, SEAMEO RIHED Director
- 2) Professor Dr. Adul Wiriyawechakul, former President of Mahasarakham University
- 3) Assoc. Prof. Paitoon Sinlarat, Professor Emeritus and Vice President for Research Affairs, Dhurakij Pundit University
- 4) Dr. Pornchai Mongkhonvanit, President of Siam University
- 5) Dr. Pichet Durongkaveroj, Director of Knowledge Network Institute of Thailand
- 6) Dr. Nopraenué Dhirathiti, Senior Specialist (Higher Education Research), SEAMEO RIHED



The seminar was attended by 150 participants from government officials from the Commission on Higher Education and other agencies, representatives from higher education institutions in Thailand and also from business and employment sector.



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During the seminar, Dr. Nopraenu Dhirathiti introduced to the audience the background and the process of European harmonisation under the Bologna Process since its inception in 1999. The Bologna Process is a regional attempt, committed voluntarily by Ministers responsible for Higher Education in Europe, aiming to establish the 'European Higher Education Area' by 2010. In Europe, this initiative could be seen as the move to harmonise higher education across the region. The principal change is to have throughout the whole of Europe the same degree structure of bachelor, Masters and PhD, the same European credit transfer system and the same guideline for QA and so on. The whole idea is to make it easier for European students and staffs to move across Europe and to promote life-long learning as well as the close connection of higher education and research area.

In Southeast Asia, Prof. Supachai Yavaprabhas summed up the initiatives set forth by both ASEAN and SEAMEO regarding the framework for higher education cooperation. Most of which are functional cooperation which focuses only on short-term mobility and collaborative research. Southeast Asia still lacks the initiative to develop a long-term framework for cooperation, which creates a higher education environment where different systems can be comparable, degrees and qualifications can be readable and student/staff mobility can be easily facilitated. To address the lack of a harmonisation initiative, Prof. Supachai further elaborated on SEAMEO RIHED's attempt to raise the awareness and draw the attention of policy makers and higher ranking officials in SEAMEO Member Countries on the significance of a structured framework for higher education integration. This has been constantly pursued by SEAMEO RIHED, for example, through SEAMEO RIHED's Governing Board Members Meetings (August 2007), the Director-General/Secretary General/Commission responsible for higher education meetings (November 2007) and through occasional programmes and activities with SEAMEO RIHED counterparts. To also draw the attention of policy makers, SEAMEO RIHED's proposal on '*A Structured Framework for Regional Integration in Higher Education in Southeast Asia: The Road towards a Common Space*' was submitted to the 30<sup>th</sup> High Official Meeting in November 2007 and to the 30<sup>th</sup> SEAMEO Council Meeting in March 2008. The SEAMEO Ministers of Education did endorse the proposal during the 30<sup>th</sup> SEAMEO Council Meeting and has encouraged SEAMEO RIHED to pursue the initiative.

Prof. Dr. Adul Wiriyawechakul and Prof. Dr. Paitoon Sinlarat also gave comments on the impacts of globalisation on higher education development. Prof. Paitoon especially stressed that higher education institutions in Thailand should pay more attention to these harmonisation initiatives as the force of globalisation would definitely force higher education systems around the world to change. ASEAN should learn from the experiences of Europe as well as other regions and develop its own process of harmonisation. It is very important to develop the process that recognises the 'essence of ASEAN' and the diversity of this region. The message is also echoed by Dr. Pornchai Mongkhonvanit and Dr. Pichet Durongkaveroj. Dr. Pornchai emphasised the importance of 'Asian Wisdom' and also the role of Southeast Asia in taking more responsibility in contributing to the world knowledge system. Thailand should take this opportunity in playing the leading role in promoting the harmonisation process to support the promotion of ASEAN Community, which will be established in 2015. Dr. Pichet further stressed that the importance of additional research in the area of harmonisation, especially with regards to the role of ASEAN youth, ASEAN diversity, the link between ASEAN economy and higher education and so on will help us understand more about the direction towards the establishment of 'SEA of Knowledge' and the Southeast Higher Education Area.



# Upcoming Activities

## The 'ASEAN Quality Assurance Agencies Roundtable Meeting'

Co-organised with The Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA)

6-8 July 2008, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia



Agensi Kelayakan Malaysia  
Malaysian Qualifications Agency

Dahulu dikenali sebagai  
Lembaga Akreditasi Negara (LAN)



International Institute  
for Educational Planning  
a learning organization

## Regional Workshop on Institutional Restructuring of Higher Education in Asia

Co-organised with International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP)

21-25 July 2008, Myanmar

## The 16th SEAMEO RIHED Governing Board Meeting

29-30 August 2008, Laung Prabang, Lao PDR



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## Back to Back Seminar on University Governance in Southeast Asia

30 August 2008, Laung Prabang, Lao PDR



## The Third SEAMEO RIHED-InTREC Educational Programme to United Kingdom

Co-organised with International Training, Research and Education  
Consortium (InTREC)

October 2008, United Kingdom

**For more information, please contact:**



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**Prof. Dr. Supachal Yavaprabhas, SEAMEO RIHED Director**

If you wish to contribute any comments or information, please contact:

Bulletin Supervisor: Dr. Nopraenue S. Dhirathiti, Senior Specialist (HER)

Staff Bulletin: Mrs. Wachareporn Nilratt, Programme Officer,

Mr. Nopporn Kongtharat, Mrs. Pichaya Pansawat, and Mr. Preecha Anghong.

**SEAMEO Regional Centre for Higher Education and Development (RIHED)**

5th floor, Commission on Higher Education Building, 328 Sri Ayutthaya Road, Rajthwee, Bangkok 10400 THAILAND

Tel: (66) 0-2644 9856-63, 0-2644 5591, Fax: (66) 0-2644 5421, E-mail: [rihed@rihed.seameo.org](mailto:rihed@rihed.seameo.org)