

ASEAN-US
Technical Assistance & Training Facility



SUMMARY AND PARTICIPANT EVALUATION

Scheduling Commitments in Telecommunications Workshop
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia (February 5, 2007)



NATHAN
ASSOCIATES INC.

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COMPILED FOR
USAID/RDM/Asia

UNDER CONTRACT
PCE-I-28-98-00016-00, TO 28

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February 2007

Scheduling commitments in services sectors is challenging. Scheduling commitments in the telecommunications sector is even more challenging as it involves complex classification and regulatory issues that do not arise in other services sectors. This makes it difficult for foreign ministry and trade officials to understand and negotiate the sector. They can be quickly overwhelmed by the technology “jargon” used by the sector ministries.

To build ASEAN Member Country capacity to negotiate liberalization of the telecommunications sector, the ASEAN-US Facility held a workshop on scheduling under the ASEAN Framework Agreement in Services (AFAS) on February 5 in Kuala Lumpur. The 21 workshop attendees from 6 ASEAN Member Countries included representatives of sector ministries, telecommunications regulatory agencies or ministries with oversight over trade negotiations. Participants displayed a range of knowledge on the issue and many were familiar with the Telecommunications Reference Paper.

Mr. Steve Magiera, a principal associate at Nathan Associates Inc., delivered the highly interactive course. Mr. Magiera has spent 12 years in Indonesia, much of the time working with the Ministry of Industry and Trade and helped the government adopt best practices for telecommunications regulation. Mr. Magiera has also worked on telecommunications reform in the Philippines and regional trade in services for the ASEAN Secretariat. He presented on topics such as market access, national treatment, modes of supply; techniques for reviewing schedules; and issues in classification and implementation.

Representatives from the ASEAN Member Countries presented case studies about their countries’ challenges in the telecommunications sector. Mr. Rodolfo Noel S. Quimbo, a senator chief of staff and lawyer in the Philippines, outlined the challenges his country encountered in the case of voice-over internet protocol (VOIP) systems. He noted that in the Philippines, VOIP is treated as a value added service. Mr. Noor Iza of the Directorate General of Posts and Telecommunications Indonesia presented a snapshot of Indonesia’s telecommunications sector, including the market, policy guidance, regulators and licensing procedures. Through these case studies, participants were able to compare and contrast challenges encountered in their own countries.

The afternoon consisted of a number of interactive activities. The participants evaluated existing AFAS schedules, tracked the changes in the January 2007 release of the 5th Package of Services Liberalization Commitments and compared commitments across countries.

Participants rated the session favorably with an average rating of 5 out of a possible 6 for most sessions. Participants from two countries (Thailand and Vietnam) requested additional bilateral assistance in scheduling telecommunications. Some participants as well as the lead presenter recommended developing a telecommunications glossary, a short document which defines terms and methods used in telecommunications scheduling. Related, ASEAN may consider reviewing WTO telecommunications classifications, which are over 15 years old, and perhaps adopt a harmonized classification system among them. Some services are no longer used and 15 years ago the Internet was nascent. Most ASEAN countries have extremely low penetration rates for basic telephone and Internet services (called the digital divide). A converged system could be just as beneficial to investment and network rollout as improvements in market access and national treatment.

The final question from participants concerned advice on how to further liberalize telecommunications. Unfortunately, there was no time for a session on unilateral liberalization. Indeed, there was reluctance by some to open up the sector. The reason given by one country was national security. The speakers recommended developing a short paper on the benefits of unilateral liberalization of telecommunications. To take one example, there is now evidence that the opening of markets for international services has benefits not only in terms of lower telephone rates, but also in terms of increased build-out of the broadband networks needed for Internet services.

Agenda

Scheduling Commitments in Telecommunications

ASEAN-US Technical Assistance & Training Facility Workshop

February 5, 2007

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

8:15 – 8:45	Arrival/Registration/Coffee
8:45 – 9:00	Welcome, Introduction, Course Overview
Session 1	Overview of Telecommunications Scheduling
9:00 – 10:00	<i>Steve Magiera, Nathan Associates Inc.</i> Goods vs. Services: Why Scheduling Can be Such a Useful Exercise The WTO Basic Telecommunications Agreement <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Overview of BTA, ITA– Telecom and Competition Policy in the WTO– Implications of the Reference Paper– Telecom Disputes in the WTO
10:00 – 10:15	Coffee Break
Session 2	Market Access, National Treatment and Modes of Supply: What They Mean for Telecommunications
10:15 – 11:30	<i>Steve Magiera, Nathan Associates Inc.</i>
Session 3	Techniques for Reviewing Schedules
11:30 – 12:00	<i>Steve Magiera, Nathan Associates Inc.</i>
12:00 – 1:00	Lunch
Session 4	Implementation and Classification Issues
1:00 – 2:15	<i>Steve Magiera, Nathan Associates Inc.</i> Case Studies: Challenges, Opportunities and Benefits of Convergence Introduction, <i>Stephen Magiera</i> ASEAN Case Study 1: VOIP, <i>Mr. Rodolfo Noel S. Quimbo, Chief of Staff, Office of the Senate, the Philippines</i> ASEAN Case Study 2: Implementing the Reference Paper <i>Mr. Noor Iza, Head of Multimedia Section of the ICT Department, Directorate General of Posts and Telecommunications, Indonesia</i>
2:45 – 3:00	Coffee Break
Session 5	Scheduling Issues for ASEAN Member States (breakout session)
3:00 – 4:00	Scheduling Commitments Exercise for Conference Participants
Session 6	Challenges and Opportunities for ASEAN Telecom (interactive session)
4:00 – 5:00	Scheduling Issues for ASEAN Bringing Convergence to AFAS Classifications for Telecommunications Open Discussion
5:00 – 5:15	Wrap-up/Evaluations

Evaluation Summary

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February 5, 2007

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Your answers to this questionnaire will help us to improve our training programs. Thank you for taking the time to fill it out.

Personal Data

Years of experience in telecommunications 10 years on average

Country of representation Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia,
Philippines, Vietnam,
Thailand, ASEAN Secretariat

Please select the appropriate box 11 Male 11 Female

Presentations

On a scale of 1 to 6, please rate how informative each session was for you. A rating of 6 indicates that you found the session highly informative; a rating of 1 that you did not find it informative.

Session	Presentation and Presenter	Average
1	Overview of Telecommunications Scheduling <i>Steve Magiera</i>	5
2	Market Access, National Treatment and Modes of Supply: What they Mean for Telecommunications <i>Steve Magiera</i>	5
3	Techniques for Reviewing Schedules <i>Steve Magiera</i>	4
4	Case Studies <i>Various speakers</i>	4
5	Scheduling Issues for ASEAN Member Countries (breakout session)	5
6	Challenges and Opportunities for ASEAN Telecom (interactive session)	5

Subject Matter

Please indicate whether you would like to see more, the same, or less time devoted to the following negotiation topics:

Session	Topic	More	Same	Less
1	Overview	6	11	3
2	Market Access, National Treatment, Modes of Supply	10	8	3
3	Techniques for Reviewing Schedules	16	2	3
4	Case Studies	15	6	1
5	Issues for ASEAN Member Countries (interactive)	13	8	1
6	Challenges and Opportunities for ASEAN (breakout)	15	7	0

General

1. What part of this course did you like the most?

- Session 4. Case Studies (x4)
- Session 2. Market Access, National Treatment & Modes of Supply (x3)
- Session 3. Techniques for reviewing schedules (x3)
- Session 6. Challenges and Opportunities for ASEAN (x3)
- Session 1. Overview
- Session 5. Scheduling Issues for ASEAN Member Countries. (breakout)
- Sessions 4-6
- Good arrangement
- Review and discussion
- Evaluation of ASEAN scheduling
- All

2. What part of this course did you like the least?

- Session 4. Case Studies (x3)
- Session 1. Overview (x2)
- Session 5. Scheduling Issues for AMCs
- Sessions 1-3
- Session 2 & 3
- Session 2. Market Access, National Treatment & Modes of Supply, however this part is also important for the foundation of a deeper understanding on issues
- The time was limited. We need more time for learning and doing exercises
- None (or blank, multiple)

3. What other topics would you like to see included?

- The effect of liberalizing for developing countries
- Liberalization of telecommunications services in most advanced countries: 1) how giants in their countries expand their coverage globally? 2) are there any players from less developed countries in advanced countries?
- Commitment issues comparison between developed countries and developing countries

- How to solve the problem of developing countries that can not meet the commitment free flow.
- Telecomm Terms (Glossary)
- E-ASEAN
- More on other sectors such as infrastructure, security etc.
- The specific example of advanced ASEAN countries
- Case studies from developed countries
- Stimulation
- Comparison of commitments among other regional services agreements (eg. NAFTA LAETA – services)
- More info on WTO negotiations/status maybe
- None

4. Did this course use a good mix of lecture and interactive discussion?

- Yes (x15)
- Fairly good
- Not bad at all after all
- It is good. And the lecture is very interactive. Thanks to Steve
- This course was very useful

5. What sorts of follow-up activities for this course would you find useful?

- To have a course like this every year with more information and details being discussed
- To apply learnt techniques/experiences/lessons in constructing schedules of Vietnam in trade negotiations
- To contribute to policies on telecom services of the government
- Investment on telecomm
- Telecomm regulations
- Seminars or study tours to deeply investigate the issues of ASEAN member countries
- Case studies such as the Philippines and Indonesia are very useful for this course
- We should invite all the ASEAN countries to attend this course
- MA, NT, Mode, Introduction
- Market access, NT, Modes of Supply
- From the course we get useful experience which could be brought for internal discussion in the member countries.
- How to regulate telecom competition in the future.
- Challenges and opportunities for ASEAN.
- Charting out possible answers/modalities for integration of telecom SVCS.
- Regulating implementation in each country.
- Issues for ASEAN Member Countries and Techniques for Reviewing Schedules
- All

Thank you for filling out this questionnaire. Additional comments on any aspect of this course are welcome.