

**JTTRI International Seminar on
"Railway and Area Development in Thailand"
Mr. Okanishi's speech**

I am Okanishi, Director-General for International Affairs, MLIT-Japan. We are pleased that the JTTRI International Seminar on Railway and Area Development in Thailand, sponsored by the JTTRI, will be held today with Mr. Sorapong Paitoonphong, Director-General of Department of Rail Transport, MOT Thailand and Arkhom Termpittayapaisith, Former Minister of Transport, Thailand, and Mr. Pailin Chuchottaworn, Former Deputy Minister of Transport Thailand and many attendees attending this seminar.

Bangkok is one of the largest metropolitan in the world, and is considered to be the leading city in the ASEAN region, which has been actively promoting the urban railways to reduce traffic congestion and address environmental issues.

I also had the opportunity to visit Bangkok this time, and just realized the development of Bangkok with the vibrant city of high-rise buildings and traditional streets and tourists from many cities around the world.

Japan has been supporting Thailand's efforts in urban railway development since the 1990s. Currently, we are cooperating on many projects such as formulating a new urban railway master plan (M-MAP2), developing a new Red Line, and developing the area around Bang Sue Station. The Japanese government and MLIT will continue to make efforts so that the high quality infrastructure of Japan can contribute to the further development of Thailand.

In addition, focusing on the future vision of urban development, which Mr. Sorapong mentioned earlier, securing an environment-friendly future in the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is an important factor.

In addition, Mr. Sorapong stated that the urban planning should consider the current innovation such as autonomous car and MaaS for a better mobility and other living conditions.

Japan is undergoing such a revolutionary period as well and is reviewing urban railways and urban development.

Even in Bangkok, where urban railway development is progressing, railway is expected to further develop smooth connections with other transportation modes considering accessibility and area development along railway stations is also expected to be promoted. I think that those will be necessary conditions for a city to be sustainable based on public transportation.

In this sense, with the participation of Prof. Morichi of GRIPS and Mr. Sorapong, Director-General of Department of Rail Transport, MOT Thailand and other experts, today's seminar will focus on the development of railways and area development in Bangkok. I believe that this will be a great opportunity for Japanese and Thai stakeholders to think and discuss their future policy issues of their cities together.

I truly hope that exchanges of opinion and discussion today will lead to a stronger cooperation between Japan and Thailand in the field of railways.

Thank you very much.