

Luncheon Discussion on Future of AIT
on March 11, 2010
at Mayflower Restaurant, Dusit Thani Hotel

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Attendees:

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| 1. HE Anand Panyarachun | Former Chairman of the Board of Trustees |
| 2. HE Dr.Tej Bunnag | Chairman of the Board of Trustees |
| 3. Mr.Jean-Pierre Verbiest | Chairman of the Executive Committee |
| 4. Prof.Said Irandoust | President of AIT |
| 5. Dr.Tongchat Hongladaromp | Senior Alumnus
and Member of the Board of Trustees |
| 6. Dr.Prida Wibulswas | Member of the Executive Committee |
| 7. Dr.Subin Pinkayan | Senior Alumnus |
| 8. Mr.Somprasong Boonyachai | Former President of AITAA Mother
Chapter |
| 9. Mr.Chaovalit Ekabut | President of AITAA Mother Chapter |
| 10. Ms.Nisakorn Kositratna | Former President of AITAA Thai Chapter |
| 11. Mr.Chawalit Chantararat | Executive Secretary of AITAA Thai Chapter
representing the President of AITAA Thai
Chapter |

Summary:

- HE Dr.Tej:** He emphasized on the New Charter which has to be accelerated to finalize and to be implemented the soonest. As for the financial problem of AIT, it is known to all of us and AIT Board of Trustees and executives of AIT have tried very hard in searching for many ways to solve the problem. Situation of the financing to AIT has very much changed from the past. Dr.Tej and Prof.Irandoust have been traveling to visit several donor countries and found that the financial support tends to be decreased. Visits to the member countries of ASEAN have also made with the results of the same.
- Prof.Irandoust:** In visiting to several countries and Institutions, we found that the cooperation pattern of the opened world has been very much changed. We got no positive answers to the request and offers of collaborations and secondment of faculties is no more practicing. PPP concept is widely accepted in the Higher Educations with a lot of successful samples. The Board of Trustees has agreed to hire a qualified third party to carry out the studies on the financing model. The draft report will be issued by this April. Laureate Education proposed one of the solution using PPP concepts to assist in developing and expanding AIT to be one of the leading institution.
- Mr.Verbiest:** Executive Committee has gone through several financing models to seek for the best one to keep AIT a sustainable educational institution PPP is one of the possible options for the long term solution which shall be carefully studied. , But at the present situation, AIT has to engage the

expertise corporate for in short term firstly solving this problem. He also suggested that AIT should have a good CFO to look after financing aspects of the institute.

- 4. Dr.Prida:** With his long time experiences in educational and institutional management both in undergraduate and graduate schools, he recommended that research is the most significant for graduate institution which can contribute the income. Therefore, the figure that Prof. Irandoust said that the research of AIT contribute only 15% of income to AIT is not correct. Dr.Prida found from the latest report on income of AIT that the research contribute 25% to AIT's income. AIT should try to promote the linked study program with the undergraduate program of potential universities like what Dr.Prida recommendations, such as 3 year Bachelor + 2 year AIT Master Degrees or 4 + 1 year at AIT.

AIT should open to the international educational environment by having an External Academic Board and inviting high level executives of higher educational institutions and the resource persons in the international academic to be the member of the Board. To be wide and international, the members shall be 25% from European countries, 25% from Asian countries and 25% from outstanding academic institutions to work out with 25% of AIT executives. AIT should put its full attempt to do networking with the outstanding universities in developing countries.

Many universities under the supervision of Dr.Prida have got great success in networking with several universities in Japan and France. Many combined curricular, joint researches and faculty secondment have been done in a very good shape with many universities. Not only the Thai Governmental but also Thai private universities achieved great success and enjoy with those inter-universities collaborations. It depends very much on how, in what fields of interest and who, in what level, is doing the discussion for such cooperation. Professor to professor level of discussion, with the similar understanding and common interest, leads to high success.

A lot of research funds are available in Thailand, Thai universities have got also a lot of sponsored researches from private sectors. AIT should gear his faculties to aggressively searching for sponsor researches, and work out to get co-researches with other universities, not only to wait for it.

On the issue of the financial support from Thai Government, all Thai private universities are under the Government control, but all of them do not get any financial support from the Government. If AIT will offer the under graduate programs, it will be questioned why the Thai private universities do not get any financial support like AIT. This would lead the Government to thinking of the way to keep good balance of such financial support. And it is not possible

for Thai Government to give the same financial support to all Thai private universities, but to reduce the financial support to AIT.

5. **Dr.Thongchat:** Alumni appreciate the attempt of Prof. Irandoust in trying to solve the financial problem of AIT. Appropriate financial model can bring AIT to be a sustainable institution. Dr.Thongchat was invited to many meetings to discuss on the PPP, but Dr.Thongchat does not believe that the Laureate's PPP can solve the problem. The paper does not show how the undergraduate can get success, how to get the institute to be ready to pursue the undergraduate education and how to get the students. And AIT should carefully check the legal matters whether it is in violation of the Thai Law. We must keep the objectives and the prestige of the institute, and not to push the institute to be a commercial one. AIT must have the owner, and we must keep AIT as the international institution. ASEAN plus 3 and plus 6 should be seriously explored as a possible owner of AIT.
6. **Dr.Subin:** Dr.Subin, who is the first batch alumnus and honestly devoting for all the best to AIT, gave the advices which based on his experiences in the field of technology and education. After having gone through in detail of the Laureate' report, he is uncertain about the Laureate's PPP to be an effective solution. If AIT, at present, need fund for rehabilitation, it is another subject while the PPP is the matter of management that could give effects to AIT in the long run.

AIT must maintain the international institution status and be a graduate school as it is founded. International intergovernmental organization like ASEAN is finding the way to have an ASEAN university. AIT must take this opportunity to offer a good proposal.

He suggests that endowment fund is important but AIT must give clear information on the purpose of the fund and explain how to manage the fund. A rehabilitation fund may be required to lift the situation. The amount, saying 500 million baht, can be obtained as the bank loan and the contributions from the alumni up to the objectives and the management of this fund are clearly specified.

7. **HE Anand:** He is a former Prime Minister of Thailand and a former Chairman of the Board of the Trustees of AIT with very much experiences in managing several international schools. He told that AIT was established during the cold war by 6 countries to show the strong cooperation of the SEATO's member countries. With the end of such cold war, no one in the member countries have interest in paying to supporting AIT with no political benefits. Japan still gives good support but Scandinavian countries reach the fatigue point of their concern.

He supports that AIT must remain an international organization and AIT should continue its effort to get the new Charter approved by all supporting countries. While financial supports from western countries are declining, AIT should try to get more supports from financially strong countries in Asia especially Japan, then China, and possibly India in the future. He thinks AIT still has a good chance and AIT should not be too quick to conclude that it is impossible to get such supports. We must study, with the new paradigm, to find ways and we must define how fast we should go to that appropriate ways with good direction.

He also supports and would stimulate the idea to raise the Endowment fund if its objectives and the fund using mechanism is transparent and clearly defined. At present, it is informed that HRH Princess Sirindhorn has contributed her 1 million baht to the fund and HE Anand himself is willing to give a substantial contribution to the AIT Endowment fund as well.

HE Anand advises that AIT must take these comments and also seriously consider contributions from alumni. Thai Chapter is here, with prominent alumni holding high level positions in public and private sectors, they can contribute good supports to AIT. He also suggests that the President establish a discussion group comprising of 5 prominent alumni from Thailand, and another 5 prominent alumni from other countries like Taiwan, Japan, and East Asian countries, and meet every 2 months. He believes these prominent alumni can provide good input to AIT and are able to contribute support to AIT in many ways. This will create mutual understanding, eliminate doubts, and reduce unproductive rumors and arguments. And also, with the contributions of the alumni from every Chapters, we can find the appropriate solution for the prosperous future of AIT.

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