

10th Annual Board Meeting of the e-ASIA Joint Research Program

Wednesday, 1 September 2021
10:00-12:00 (Thai Time: UTC+7)

Minutes

Attendance: Full list of attendees are listed as the table belows

#	Country	Organization	Name	Title
1	Australia	NHMRC	Ms. Prue Torrance	Executive Director of Research Quality and Priorities Branch
2	Australia	NHMRC	Dr. Adam Chapman	Director
3	Australia	NHMRC	Mr. Trent Greentree	Assistant Director, Priorities and International Engagement
4	Australia	NHMRC	Ms. Jane Lofts	Senior Project Officer, Priorities and International Engagement
5	Cambodia	MISTI	Dr. Fidero Kuok	Director General of National Institute of Science, Technology & Innovation
6	Cambodia	MISTI	Dr. Tieng Kimseng	Deputy Director, Department of Technology Research & Development
7	Japan	MEXT	Mr. Yukihiro Hisanaga	Director for International Cooperation, International Science and Technology Affairs Division, Science and Technology Policy Bureau
8	Japan	AMED	Mr. Masahiko Noda	Managing Director, Department of International Strategy
9	Japan	AMED	Dr. Makiko Kusama	Director, Division of Healthcare, Department of Medical Device and Healthcare
10	Japan	AMED	Ms. Yukiko Watanabe	Section Chief, Office of International Collaboration
11	Japan	AMED	Mr. Takuto Miyamoto	AMED Washington DC
12	Japan	AMED	Dr. Haruko Tsurumi	AMED Washington DC
13	Japan	AMED	Dr. Naoko Kojima	Deputy Manager, Office of International Collaboration,
14	Japan	JST	Prof. Teruo Kishi	Chair of Scientific Advisory Council of the e-ASIAJRP, Program Director of JST, President Emeritus, National Institute for Materials Science, Professor Emeritus, the University of Tokyo, President, Innovative Structural Materials Association (ISMA)
15	Japan	JST	Mr. Osamu Kobayashi	Director, Department of International Affairs
16	Japan	JST	Mr. Masaki Sato	Manager, Department of International Affairs
17	Japan	JST	Mr. Masayoshi Higuchi	Chief, Department of International Affairs
18	Japan	JST	Mr. Hiroshi Kambegawa	Senior Program Coordinator, Department of International Affairs
19	Japan	JST	Mr. Hideaki Kodani	Senior Program Coordinator, Department of International Affairs
20	Japan	JST	Ms. Junko Katayama	Program Coordinator, Department of International Affairs
21	Malaysia	MOSTI	Mr. Teoh Phi Li	Undersecretary of International Division
22	Malaysia	MOSTI	Mdm. Haslinda binti Abdul Razak	Principal Assistant Secretary, International Division
23	Malaysia	MOSTI	Mr. Nurulah Ernesto Bin Kennedy	Assistant Secretary, International Division

24	Myanmar	MOST	Dr. Phyu Phyu Win	Director General, Department of Research and Innovation
25	New Zealand	HRC	Professor Sunny Collings	Chief Executive
26	New Zealand	HRC	Ms. Fiona Kenning	Research Investment Manager
27	Philippines	DOST-PH	Dr. Rowena Cristina Guevara	Undersecretary for Research and Development
28	Philippines	DOST-PCAARRD	Dr. Reynaldo V. Eborá	Executive Director
29	Philippines	DOST-PCIEERD	Dr. Enrico Paringit	Executive Director, Philippine Council for Industry, Energy and Emerging Technology (DOST-PCIEERD)
30	Russia	RFBR	Mr. Yaroslav Sorokotyaga	Division Director, International Relations Department
31	Singapore	A*STAR	Prof. Andy Hor	Deputy Chief Executive (Research)
32	Singapore	A*STAR	Dr. Yeo You Huan	Director International Operations & Relations Office
33	Thailand	ARDA	Mr. Torlarb Thanvareerat	International Relation Officer
34	Thailand	ARDA	Ms. Isariyaporn Jaisen	
35	Thailand	NRCT	Ms. Kwansiri Wanwiwake	Foreign Relations Officer, Head of Mission of International Affairs
36	Thailand	NRCT	Ms. Kanruethai Rod-iw	Foreign Relations Officer
37	Thailand	NSTDA	Prof. Prasit Palittapongarnpim	Executive Vice President
38	Thailand	NSTDA	Dr. Lily Eurwilaichitr	Vice President, International Collaboration
39	Thailand	NSTDA	Ms. Mullika Kulsiripruck	International Relations Officer
40	Thailand	NSTDA	Ms. Anongnart Khawsang	Analyst, International Collaborative Project Appraisal and Evaluation Section
41	Thailand	TSRI	Ms. Luntharima Prommi	Programme Officer of network and collaboration team
42	Thailand	PMU-B	Dr. Kanyawim Kirtikara	Director
43	Thailand	PMU-B	Ms. Nopparat Wanitsuksombut	Senior Analyst
44	US	NCI	Dr. Paul C. Pearlman	Program Director, National Cancer Institute
45	US	NIAID	Mr. Gray Handley	Associate Director for International Research Affairs
46	US	NIAID	Ms. Gayle Bernabe	Regional Program Officer
47	Vietnam	MOST	Ms. Le Thi Viet Lam	Deputy Director General of Department of International Cooperation
48	Vietnam	MOST	Ms. Bui Thi Thu Lan	Head of Division, Department of International Cooperation
49	Vietnam	MOST	Ms. Hoang Minh Hang	Official, Department of International Cooperation
50	Secretariat		Ms. Emi Kaneko	Secretary-General, e-ASIA JRP
51	Secretariat		Mr. Ken Kawabata	e-ASIA Special Program Coordinator
52	Secretariat		Ms. Varavan Ishikura	

Apologies: Cambodia (MOH), Indonesia (RISTEK/BRIN), Lao PDR (MOH), Lao PDR (MOST) (Mr. Vongthong Xayyaphet, Deputy of Planning and Cooperation Division and Mr. Souththiphong Vongxaiya, Cabinet of Lao Academy of Science attended as observers on behalf of MOST), Thailand (TCELS)

Item 1. Welcome and Introduction

Ms. Emi Kaneko, Secretary-General of the e-ASIA JRP opened the virtual meeting and noted that the annual board meeting was not being held in accordance to Article 6 of the e-ASIA Program Statute, being a face-to-face meeting, however the virtual meeting is the best available option in the current COVID-19 circumstances.

Ms. Kaneko welcomed all that were in attendance and noted the apologies. She thanked the NHMRC for taking the minutes of this meeting and NIAID, JST and DOST-PCAARRD for taking minutes for the Joint Review Meetings in the 3 call areas held during August 2021.

Mr. Ken Kawabata, e-ASIA Special Program Coordinator, was invited to lead the introduction of the Member Organisation (MO) representatives attending the annual board meeting. MO representatives briefly introduced themselves. It was noted that Mr. Yukihiro Hisanaga was delayed and would speak briefly at the end of the meeting.

Members were advised of the amended agenda, which had led to the removal of Revision of the Progress/Final Report Template and Improvement of Program Management and the Annual Activity Report agenda items, which will be disseminated and discussed with the Board Members via email later.

Item 2. Short Discussion 1: Challenges around MOs caused by COVID-19

Mr. Teoh Phi Li (MOSTI), gave a presentation titled '*Malaysia Challenges and Response during COVID-19 Pandemic*'.

He described the challenges faced and responded to during the pandemic which included vaccination supply, vaccine hesitancy and the emergence of the Delta variant. He noted that Malaysia:

- has commenced their immunisation program, that targets 80% of the adult population to be immunised by October 2021 to reduce infections, hospitalisations and death rates
- developed an app (MySejahtera) which utilises blockchain technology to assist with COVID-19 outbreak monitoring and management of vaccinations
- is using a science diplomacy approach through bilateral and multilateral platforms to secure vaccine doses from several countries including Japan, China, Singapore, United Kingdom, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.
- has developed a national vaccine development roadmap and is seeking partners to explore technology

Ms. Kaneko thanked Mr. Li for the presentation and opened the floor for any questions. There were no questions asked.

Item 3. Discussion on 11th Call for Proposals

Mr. Kawabata provided the MOs with the tentative schedule for the 11th call and noted that the timings are similar to the 10th call.

Ms. Kaneko advised that MOs need to finalise the 11th call topics by the end of the month. Confirmation of support for any of the call topics should be through email to the JRP secretariat. She noted that the call can only support a maximum of four areas and currently there are six up for discussion. MOs need to consult and refine the topic areas down to four. Topic areas will need to have the support of at least three MO country support to proceed.

Health Research (AMR, Infectious diseases, Cancer)

Ms. Prue Torrance, Executive Director, Research Quality and Priorities, NHMRC, was invited to provide a presentation on 'Antimicrobial Resistance' under the Health Research call area. Ms. Torrance outlined that AMR is a current health priority of NHMRC and that it is a significant regional and global health concern. She also detailed elements of the Australian National AMR strategy, highlighted its One Health focus and alignment with WHO efforts. Ms. Torrance provided a list of potential topic focus areas which included:

- development of new innovative classes of antimicrobials that are efficacious, rapid and cost effective
- revisiting older, but clinically useful, antimicrobials (i.e., no longer manufactured or marketed)
- understanding resistance patterns in infectious organisms
- enhanced therapeutic alternatives to antimicrobials
- effective sanitation, hygiene, infection control and prevention methods
- rapid diagnostic technologies
- enhanced surveillance techniques and methods

NHMRC indicated it would be happy to lead a workshop to further develop the AMR call details if there was support by other MOs. Links to online resources to identify AMR research collaborators in Australia were promoted to participants.

Ms. Kaneko provided results of the online survey which indicated that Thailand (NSTDA & PMU-B) and the USA (NIAID) also supported the inclusion of AMR as a topic and that Japan (AMED) and USA (NIAID) supported Infectious Diseases (ID) as a topic. She noted that only Japan and the USA (NCI) had indicated support for Cancer and invited other organisations to express their support.

Mr. Handley (NIAID) inquired if the proposal regarding Production Technology of Drug Preparations from Indonesia (RISTEK/BRIN) would be discussed. Mr. Handley identified that there were some synergies between the proposed topic, AMR and/or ID, and that consideration could be made to incorporate this into these topics. Ms. Kaneko advised that as there was no representative from RISTEK/BRIN on the call that full discussion wasn't possible, but that it could be considered as a topic going forward, and that feedback from RISTEK/BRIN would be sought. He also asked if NHMRC would prefer a standalone AMR or if it could be grouped with ID. Ms. Torrance advised that NHMRC would accept the consensus of MOs, but that a standalone AMR topic under the Health Research call would be the preference. The Philippines (DOST-PCAARRD) provided their support for a standalone AMR call.

Mr. Noda (AMED) highlighted that AMR is an important area of infectious diseases in the context of human health, food, animal, and the environment in Asian nations. The preference of AMED was to allow AMR submissions within the ID topic, and call for proposals across a broad area in order to support ongoing research in this field.

NHMRC will lead the development of the Health Research 11th call text and consult with the secretariat and MO representatives.

MOs were informed that that input for all 11th call topics were due by the end of September.

Digital Cities

Mr. Masaki Sato (JST) was invited to provide a presentation on '*Digital Cities*' under the Advanced Interdisciplinary Research towards Innovation call area. Mr. Sato outlined the serious issues that threaten the survival of urban cities and the potential for research to support the environment (rising sea levels), mobility (technology for traffic congestion), energy (energy management systems) and agriculture (Agriculture production automation). He also highlighted the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and its reference to global warming and other weather events resulting from increasing urbanisation.

Ms. Kaneko invited Professor Teruo Kishi, SAC Chair, to talk further on digital cities. Professor Kishi commended Mr. Sato on his presentation and talked about the importance of using cutting edge technologies throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. He also mentioned the recent G20 summit in relation to smart cities and the ASEAN smart network projects that are progressing well. Professor Kishi noted the importance of promoting international cooperation in participation of this call. They invited support for the call and noted that a workshop was planned to be held soon.

Water Resource Management and Advanced Materials

Ms. Le Thi Lam (VMOST), was invited to provide a presentation on '*Water Resource Management*' under the Advanced Interdisciplinary Research towards Innovation call topic and '*Advanced Materials*' under the Materials topic. Ms. Lam noted the issues of water management in terms of cross border water governance, water resource management and the water environment. Information was provided on previously funded projects in the field of advanced materials and concluded that the topic focus should be on efficiency.

Ms. Kaneko opened up discussions on both the Advanced Interdisciplinary Research towards Innovation and the Materials call topics. There was interest from a number of MOs to support both proposals on Digital Cities and Water Resource Management from the Philippines, Myanmar, and Singapore, especially with an agriculture and/or energy focus. It was agreed that both MOs can take the lead in developing the call guidelines with a view to combine both topics if appropriate.

Advanced Materials and Alternative Energy

VMOST provided an overview of the material topic. PMU-B expressed their interests on alternative energy focussing on bioenergy from manufacturing waste products. They highlighted that waste is common problem in the areas and that any advances can help developing countries.

Ms. Kaneko suggested that Materials could be combined with Alternative Energy as Thailand (PMU-B) and Indonesia (RISTEK/BRIN) were interested in this topic area and there is a component of energy in VMOST's proposed topic too. VMOST agreed that it could be possible and received support from Singapore (A*STAR).

Ms. Kaneko noted that as Indonesia (RISTEK/BRIN) was not in attendance at today's meeting that further discussion would have to continue through email.

Overall

Ms. Kaneko summarised the above discussions to confirm agreement by MOs to support the call topics. These are:

- Health research – three topics: AMR, Infectious Diseases and Cancer. Support from Australia (NHMRC), Indonesia (RISTEK/BRIN), Thailand, USA (NIAID and NCI) and Japan (AMED). NHMRC will lead the development of the call.
- Advanced Interdisciplinary Research towards Innovation – two topics: Digital Cities and Water Management. Support for Digital cities Japan (JST), Philippines (DOST-PCAARRD) and Thailand (ARDA) with JST leading the call text. Vietnam (VMOST) to lead water management call text with support from Myanmar (MOST), Singapore (A-STAR) and Vietnam (VMOST). VMOST will lead the development of the call text with the potential to combine both Digital Cities and Water Management topics; to be determined by the participating MOs.
- Alternative Energy - Vietnam's proposed topic in Advanced Materials will be included in Alternative Energy. Thailand (PMU-B), Vietnam (VMOST) and Singapore (A*STAR) expressed their acceptance. Singapore (A*STAR) also expressed their intention to become MMO in Alternative Energy and lead the discussions to determine the direction of the Advanced Materials and Alternative Energy and the possible consolidation of topics.
- Disaster Risk Reduction and Management – Ms. Kaneko pointed out that there were some components of IoT in the proposal regarding Technology and Management of Hydrometeorological and Extreme Weather, Volcanic, Tsunami, Earthquake, and Biological, Chemical, Radioactive, and Food Hazardous Disasters in the field of Disaster Risk Reduction and Management from Indonesia (RISTEK/BRIN) and it could be included into Digital Cities. The Secretariat will discuss with Indonesia (RISTEK/BRIN) if combining their proposed topic in the field of Disaster Risk Reduction and Management into Digital Cities is acceptable.
- Environment – support from the Philippines (DOST-PCAARRD, but further clarification required from its Council on final topic areas) and Thailand (NSTDA and NRCT). However, for this to go ahead a third country will need to agree to support this topic area. This could possibly be Indonesia (RISTEK/BRIN). MOs were again reminded that input and finalisation on all 11th call topics were due by the end of September.

Item 4. Eligibility and Review Criteria

Ms. Kaneko invited Mr. Gray Handley, NIAID, to lead a discussion on eligibility and review criteria. Mr. Handley noted some concerns that arose from the 10th call under the health research topic about transparency and consistency in eligibility, including clear review criteria, for applications.

Moving forward, it was agreed that for participating MOs must ensure that applicants are aware of all participating countries' eligibility requirements, including any additional MO's review criteria, to ensure that they comply. For example - including at least three participating MO countries. Applicants need to be aware of all assessment requirements as well for fairness.

Ms. Torrance noted that MOs should ensure that they are consistent with the overall lens and objectives of the e-ASIA JRP. This would assist in ensuring that there is a better distribution of funding across all MOs countries.

AMED also supported these concerns and agreed that transparency is very important and that all MOs should be acting in conveying the objectives of the e-ASIA JRP.

Ms. Kaneko summarised that MOs should have clear eligibility (including assessment/review) criteria in the call guidelines, and the development of call text for the 11th call must incorporate these wishes. MOs noted this comment.

Item 5 Report 1: Joint Review Meetings of e-ASIA 10th Calls for Proposals

Mr. Kawabata provided the MOs with an update on the number of applications received, the number of applications that were ineligible and the number of applications there were reviewed under the 10th Call. He noted that the next steps were: selection of candidates proposals, email voting by the Board Members and the announcement of selection to be made by the end of November 2021. Relevant MOs will then start the contract procedures from December, and the funding will be started from January.

Introduction of Events

Mr. Handley was invited to provide an update and talk about the workshop on '*Climate Change impact on human health*'. This was a workshop that was originally planned to occur during the 10th Annual Board Meeting in Hawaii in 2020 (then in 2021); however as the meeting was convened virtually, the workshop was postponed. The scientific planning committee is going to re-convene and start planning the workshop to potentially occur at the next Annual Board Meeting in 2022. Mr. Handley asked MOs to advise if they had suggestions for additional experts to be included on the scientific planning meeting for this workshop.

Mr. Kawabata was invited to announce that the 10th anniversary of e-ASIA JRP was occurring in 2022 and although dates or details have not yet been confirmed, a celebration event will occur. He requested MOs to provide him with any suggestions.

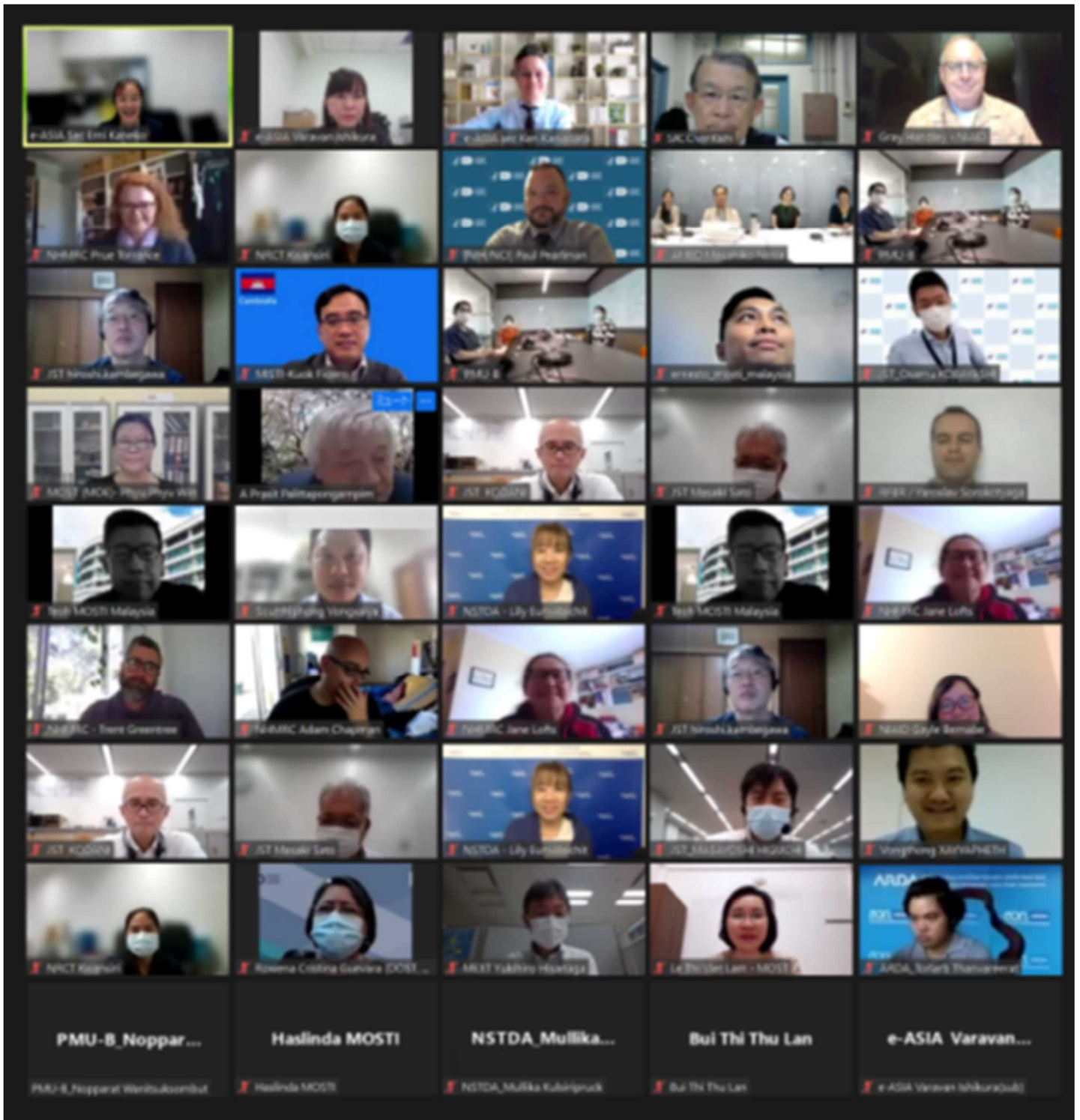
Other business

Mr. Yukihiro Hisanaga (MEXT) provided a brief presentation expressing the appreciation by Japan for the successes and collaborations formed by participating in e-ASIA during the 10 years it has been in operation. He welcomed future networks and collaborations in the region through the program. MOs noted his comments.

Ms. Kaneko noted that Professor Sunny Collings (HRC, New Zealand) would email an important announcement to the MOs later.

Ms. Kaneko thanked all MOs for attending and closed the meeting after organising a virtual group photo.

Meeting closed: 12:09 PM (Thai Time: UTC+7)



Group Photo