



Seventh Meeting of the Asia Tax Forum

20-22 October 2010

Cambodia

About the Asia Tax Forum

The seventh annual *Asia Tax Forum* (ATF) is an international gathering that brings together senior government officials in tax policy and administration from the Asia-Pacific region together with academic and industry experts and representatives from international organizations. Building on the successful history of the last six years, the *Forum* brings together leaders in the region, in a collaborative and neutral setting, to discuss solutions to common challenges and to share best practices in indirect taxation. As many regional countries continue their unparalleled economic growth, the ATF provides a convenient platform to gain insight about the issues faced and options available in more advanced economies.

The ATF has developed into an ongoing platform for tax research and deliberation in the region, and a number of workshops and research programs are held under its general oversight during the course of a year. The annual *Forum* is also a convenient location for reporting on these events and for the ATF Steering Committee to learn about the areas that ATF member-nations wish to consider.



Mr. Um Seiha, Deputy Director General, General Department of Taxation, Ministry of Economy and Finance of Cambodia, presents a letter from The Honorable Keat Chhon, Deputy Prime Minister, Ministry of Economy and Finance of Cambodia, to Daniel Witt, President, ITIC at the conclusion of the 2009 ATF meeting in Sydney inviting delegates to Cambodia in 2010 for the Seventh ATF meeting.

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Forum Host and Opening Address

The Cambodia Ministry of Economy and Finance is the formal host of the meeting.

The *Forum* opening address will be presented by His Excellency Keat Chhon, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance.



A Unique Gathering to Address Key Tax Issues in the Asia-Pacific region

The *Forum* offers a unique opportunity for participants:

- To present developments from countries, and to share the issues confronted.
- To stimulate thinking as a result of hearing some of the most respected and knowledgeable speakers on taxation explore different areas – import duties, trade liberalization, mining and petroleum taxes, VAT/GST and excise duties.
- To share best practices among senior officials from regional Ministries of Finance and from tax administrations on practical issues faced in indirect tax administration.
- To interact with key senior people from other revenue authorities, international organizations, academics and industry experts.
- To explore how public-private sector cooperation can enhance tax administration, and deliver certainty and efficiencies to the private sector.
- To help make an impact on improving tax policy and administration throughout the region.

The format of the *Forum* will be a mixture of presentations and interactive discussions. In general, a leading expert on a specific subject will make the initial presentation, followed by country perspectives from national governments. Industry perspectives from representatives of the private sector will also be presented where appropriate.

Key Forum Sessions

- Fiscal Measures after the Crisis – Approaches taken by regional policy makers to start making up the deficits run up during the current economic crisis
- Reflections on GST/VAT as the Central Measure in Tax Reforms
- Design and Practical Implementation of Excise Taxes
- Taxation of Natural Resources
- Indirect Taxation of Financial Sector Supplies – Country Analyses
- Use of Transfer Pricing Techniques in Indirect Tax Policy
- Environmental Taxation as Part of an Indirect Tax Policy Regime
- A Checklist for Compliance with WTO Rules during Tax Reforms; Tax Aspects of FTAs, Customs Unions, and WTO
- Taxation of Real Property

Who Should Attend the Forum?

Senior officials from Ministries of Finance, with an interest in tax policy, and from government departments and agencies entrusted with indirect tax administration. Given the broad scope and range of topics, attendees should be decision-makers in their organizations, who have had experience in policy design and execution. Past attendees have been the Deputy Ministers of Finance and top Fiscal Policy officials, and Director Generals/Director-level officials from Revenue and Customs Authorities. Such attendees have held responsibilities for tax policy and/or administration and have found significant benefits in working together with their international colleagues.

Forum Invitations

Forum invitations and registration forms will be sent to all public sector officials of ATF member-states. However, we will continue to welcome expressions of interest until 10 September 2010 from public sector participants. Please contact Diana Napolitano via email (Washington@iticnet.org) or telephone (+1 202 530 9799).

Master Classes: Training and Professional Development

The seventh *Asia Tax Forum* will also see an innovation in the agenda. Many member states have expressed an interest in gaining insight into methods for high-level policy formulation and system design in specific tax areas. We are pleased to announce that we will have two *Master Classes* with the objective of capacity building:

- *Excise Taxation* – led by internationally acclaimed public finance expert Professor Richard Bird, ITIC senior economic advisor and Professor Emeritus of Economics at the University of Toronto.
- *Natural Resource Taxation* – led by Mr. Philip Daniel, Assistant Director of Tax Policy of the Fiscal Affairs Department of the IMF; co-editor of the recently published IMF book, titled, *The Taxation of Petroleum and Minerals: Principles, Problems, and Practice* and author of several chapters, including, “Evaluating fiscal regimes for resource projects: An example from oil development” and “Contractual assurances of fiscal stability.”

All participants will receive a copy of “*Excise Taxation in Asia*” (that was published following a previous ATF meeting), and the new IMF book, respectively, and other ITIC resource materials.

Who Should Attend the Master Classes?

The *Master Classes* are designed to give detailed exposure to the latest thinking and practices for high-level policy formulation and system design in specific tax areas. They will be of significant benefit to mid-level officials who have had some experience of tax policy design or administration, and wish to acquire more knowledge on methods and approaches to tax policy development. Senior officials may also find the *Master Classes* useful as refresher courses and as updates on the latest thinking on the issues.

Participating Delegations

Past participants of *ATF Forums* have included Australia, Cambodia, Canada, China, Chinese Taipei, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, The Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, The Netherlands, United Kingdom, and Vietnam.

Previous ATF Forums*

March 2005	Singapore	Hosted by Singapore Customs
November 2005	Manila	Hosted by the Ministry of Finance of the Philippines
June 2006	Bangkok	Hosted by the Ministry of Finance of Thailand
May 2007	Hanoi	Hosted by the Ministry of Finance of Vietnam
May 2008	New Delhi	Hosted by the Ministry of Finance of India
April 2009	Sydney	Hosted by the Australian Tax Office

* ATF also organizes workshops and other events as part of its ongoing program of engagement between tax professionals in the private and public sectors. Examples of these are the workshops on indirect taxation of financial sector supplies (Hong Kong, January 2008), and on excise taxation of alcohol (Bangkok, November 2009.)

Forum Organization

The *Forum* is being organized by ITIC in collaboration with two regional partners, the CCES and the PFIP.



CCES is the international centre of excellence for innovative training, education, professional development, technical assistance and capacity building in relation to customs, excise, revenue management, border management, and related areas.



The Public Finance Institute of the Philippines is a non-profit organization that advocates the formulation and implementation of good policies in public finance through the conduct of researches, provision of advice and technical assistance, and empowerment of the public through the dissemination of information in public forums and tri-media.



The International Tax and Investment Center (ITIC) serves as a clearinghouse for information on best practices in taxation and investment policy, and as a training center to transfer such know how to improve the investment climate of transition and developing countries, thereby spurring formation and development of business and economic prosperity. Organised in 1993, ITIC is an independent nonprofit research and education foundation with offices in Russia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, the Philippines, Ukraine, Jordan, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

Forum Location

This year's *Forum* will be held in Seam Reap, Cambodia, near the Angkor Wat World Heritage site. The Royal Cambodian Ministry of Economy and Finance, our hosts this year, will arrange a cultural tour and show at the site.

Forum Language

The *Forum* language is English.