RATIFICATION PROCEEDURES AND IMPLEMENTATION AT NATIONAL LEVEL: THE CASE OF SOME SOUTHEAST ASIAN COUNTRIES

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The Status

- 3 out of 11 SEAMEO member countries have ratified the 1983 UNESCO Regional Convention
  - Lao PDR (2003)
  - Philippines (2003)
  - Indonesia (2008)

- Signatories to the 1983 Regional Convention in Southeast Asia:
  - Lao PDR
  - Indonesia
  - Philippines
  - Thailand
  - Vietnam
The Region at a glimpse

1. DIVERSITY

- Diversity (population, economic status and education system)
- Diversity of governance and legislative systems
- Diversity of higher education institutions, types of programs, and institutional policies (admission and transfer)
- Diversity in Governance of public and private HEIs and dynamics

2. UNITY

- Promotion of inter-university academic cooperation and exchange
- Focus on international competitiveness (local, regional and global levels)
- Participation in Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRAs) at the regional level.

1. CHED Directive to pursue MRAs and ratification
2. Advocacy - Preparations were done through publication, consultative meetings and policy forum

1999-2001: from Policy to Action: Lobbying Period
1. Executive - CHED worked to get the President’s signature on the Instrument of Accession
2. Legislative - needed support for the 1983 RC ratification from the Senators

2002-2003: Legislation
1. Public hearings were conducted and floor debate on the value of ratification
2. Votes - The debate got 17 votes from the Phil Senators
   • The treaty was ratified in 2003
The Indonesian Ratification

- The process of ratification was carried out carefully, gradually, and in conformity with the requirements of development and the needs of the Indonesian people.
- In 2008, the Indonesian government ratified the Convention.
- The MONE (now the MoEC) took the lead role in the ratification process.
Ratification in Lao PDR

- The National Assembly approves all new laws and ratifies regional treaties and convention.
- The Lao National Assembly ratified the UNESCO Regional Convention in 2002 and deposited the instrument to UNESCO HQ in 2003.
Lessons Learned from Ratification Experience (5 Cs)

- **C**- Need for a **Champion** (executive, legislative and the MOEs) to sponsor the ratification bill
- **C**- **Campaign** and Advocacy - Need to develop Information Brochure to expedite ratification
- **C**- **Cash** - A budget to push the ratification forward (materials reproduction, meetings and discussion forum)
- **C**- **Consistency** of purpose. Focus on ratification timelines.
- **C**- **Commitment** to push forward UNESCO Recognition of Qualifications to enable the peoples of ASPAC to take full advantage of the educational resources in the region & to facilitate international mobility of students and academics
Post-ratification ACTIVITIES

- Establishing the national Information Centers
- Developing policies and standards for evaluating foreign credentials
- Data collection and Inventory of Asia Pacific educational systems, types of studies, programmatic content etc.
Capacity-Building and research

A. University Level

- Training on university credit transfer schemes
- Capacity building on the use and preparation of the Diploma Supplement, evaluation of foreign credentials

B. National Education Ministries

- Procedures, policies, guidelines, and systems with respect to the evaluation of qualifications in higher education
- Establishing and strengthening the information center for International Concerns
Capacity-Building and research

C. Regional and International Levels

- **Cross-border manual/handbook** - to establish regional mechanisms whereby students can present documents and other evidence of competence and skills when substantial difference exist.

- Inventory of parameters for “Substantial Difference”

- Handbook for ASPAC academic recognition and equivalency
Future Steps

- **Information Exchange** - Actively exchange information on the education systems in the region.

- **Quality Assurance and Accreditation** - Support the nomination of Quality HEIs to UNESCO Portal.

- **Research and Development** - Conduct regional study on the comparability of subjects of studies, typology to accelerate progress of evaluation of credentials in higher education.
Convergence and Collaboration

- Gather best practices and challenges in promoting and implementing mutual recognition programs in the region:
  - APEC Mutual Recognition Programs
  - Washington Accord
  - ASEAN MRAs in various profession (e.g. Accountancy, Nursing, Teaching)
  - UNESCO International Comparison of educational systems and professional qualification standards
  - Bilateral agreements
  - UNESCO Regional Convention
Thank you so much