Welcome

This economic update is prepared by the CUTS Hanoi Resource Centre (CUTS HRC) on a quarterly basis to provide news and analysis over the latest developments in terms of trade and economics, competition and regulations in Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia as well as other countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

CUTS HRC is a member of the Consumer Unity & Trust Society (www.cuts-international.org), an international research, advocacy and networking group headquartered in India. CUTS HRC's objective is to work as a catalyst in transferring objective knowledge and advocacy skills from India and elsewhere to the Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS) countries toward mainstreaming the civil society movement into the development process therein.

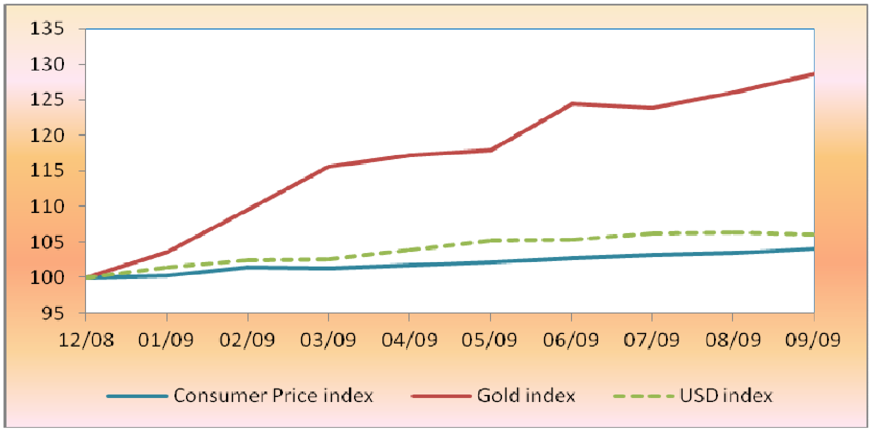
Vietnam

Economy & Indexes

In the first half of 2009, Vietnam's GDP growth rate was only 3.9%, the lowest growth rate ever, as compared to the previous years. The economy is feeling the strain of the global meltdown. However, thanks to the government's stimulus package, industrial production value to August 2009 has increased by 5.6%, compared to the same period last year. In general, there have been positive signs of a stable Consumer Price Index (CPI) throughout the first half of 2009.

Figure 1: Vietnam CPI, Gold Index, USD Index of the first 9 months 2009 (compared to that of 12/08)

Unit: %



Source: General Statistics Office

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The total merchandise retail level and service revenue went up by 18.4%. Trade deficit of the first 8 months of 2009 was US$5.1bn, equal to 13.7% of the total merchandise export value. The export and import value both decreased in comparison with that of 2008. In the first nine months of 2009.

All in all, Vietnam has dropped five positions to 75th out of 133 countries in the latest Global Competitiveness Index rankings compiled by the Switzerland-based World Economic Forum. The Global Competitiveness Report 2009-2010, released lately, said for Vietnam, "the considerable worsening of its macroeconomic situation" had weighed heavily on its economy and competitiveness.

Trade & Investment

According to the World Investment Report 2009, released on September the 17th by the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), a number of Southeast Asian countries, including Vietnam, have been able to maintain growth in foreign direct investment (FDI) despite the global economic slump. The overall trend in Asian countries to make national policies and legislation more favorable to FDI is opening up more opportunities for foreign companies to do business in the region. Government policy responses to address the financial crisis and its economic aftermath have also played an important role in creating favorable conditions for a recovery of economic growth and FDI inflows, the report said. However, the region has not been able to escape the shock of the global financial and economic crisis, and FDI inflow has been slowing since the last quarter of 2008.

Accordingly, Vietnam has been cautious in making FDI forecasts until the end of next year, on the back of international analysts' predictions that a rebound could be postponed until 2011. Initial forecasts, which were made by the Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI) in August, put the nation's registered FDI funds across 2009 at around US$20bn, a sharp decline of 70 per cent in comparison with last year's figure (a record US$64bn). At the same time, the nation will be able to reach only US$9-$10 billion of disbursed FDI capital, equal to that of 2008.

On the trade side, Vietnam has enjoyed many benefits of joining the World Trade Organization (WTO) over the past two years, such as a sharp increase in foreign investment and expanded export markets. Vietnam has developed a more transparent legal framework, which helps boost confidence in Vietnamese manufacturers within the international arena. Also, while some nations have resorted to industrial protectionism to cope with the global economic recession, Vietnam has publicly protested against protectionism and taken effective and appropriate measures to defend itself commercially. On the other hand, Vietnam has also felt the full impact of its entry into the WTO such as fiercer competition, a rising trade deficit, and fluctuations in the domestic market following shifts in the world market, especially due to the current global financial crunch, and most of all, legal complications related to its merchandise exports, most of all, leather products and seafood.

Till late 2007, there have been nearly 30 anti-dumping cases filed against Vietnamese exports. Many of these cases filed in recent years were by Vietnam's key trading partners such as the United States, Canada, and the European Union (EU). The products that are often targeted include catfish, shrimp, and footwear. Since most Vietnamese exporters have very limited experience in responding to anti-dumping charges, these cases often resulted in high anti-dumping duties.

Competition & Regulations

Vietnam has promulgated a Competition Law since the year 2004-2005. However, it is only very recently that the law enforcement agencies of the country got their hand on the first antitrust case ever. On the other hand, there are calls that the law be amended for more effective implementation.

In addition to a full-fledged and effectively implemented Competition Law, Vietnam also needs to develop a comprehensive regulatory framework for several of its regulated industries, such as telecommunications, banking & finance, electricity, etc to ensure the safeguards of its economy in face of globalisation pressure. For example, the telecommunications market in Vietnam will be bustling with fierce competition when Vietnam fully opens it in 2012 under its WTO commitment. Along with implementing the commitment, Vietnam is required to enact a law on telecommunications that fits international practices and integration. Recently, the government has tightened control over sales promotions to drive the industry in the right way.

On another instance, economic development in Vietnam has driven strong growth in electricity demand, with the system barely being able to

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keep pace. The greatest challenge facing the power sector is to ensure sufficient new capacity, while implementing the restructuring and market reform approved by the government. Vietnam's Electricity Law of 2004 set in motion the reform towards a market-oriented power sector through three successive phases: (i) a generation competitive (Single Buyer) market; (ii) a wholesale competitive market; and (iii) a retail competitive market. Implementation regulations towards this end are now being drafted with support from the World Bank Vietnam.

Laos

Economy and Indexes

In September, the Lao newspaper Vientiane Times reported that Laos registered an economic growth rate of 7.1 percent in the first half of this year despite the global economic downturn. Lao Deputy Planning and Investment Minister Bounthavy Sisouphanthong said the economic growth in this period was attributed to good performance of foreign direct investment and exports of some key products. The country's trade deficit will account for less than 8 percent of the expected GDP. The inflation rate is low. From 2005 to 2008, the inflation was kept at one single digit. The overall inflation is projected at 3 percent in 2009 compared to 7.6 percent in 2008. The nominal exchange rate has been strong and fairly stable against the U.S. dollar and the Thai baht during the last six months of 2008. However, it started to depreciate slightly against the dollar this year.

According to the World Bank's report on doing business in Lao PDR, this country is ranked the 165th out of 183 economies in terms of ease of doing business and it is forecasted that it will be 2 more positions lower in 2010.

Trade and investment

In recent years, Laos has seen a significant increase in FDI, especially in mining, hydropower, and plantation agriculture. According to government statistics, the five largest foreign investors are Thailand, China, Vietnam, France, and Japan. As Laos is in transition from a landlocked to a land-linked country, it is facing a number of challenges in attracting FDI for industrial manufacturing, assembling, and processing operations. Despite its efforts to attract foreign and local investment for manufacturing industry, the results have been limited. The country's location, underdeveloped infrastructure, and weak technical and human resource capacity are among the hurdles for investors. The development of Special Economic Zones is expected to offer a competitive environment for investors with the provision of land, basic infrastructure and facilities, and an adequate legal and regulatory framework. At the moment, ADB is carrying out a Capacity Development & Technical Assistance project to help Laos to reform its business environment. While Laos should weather the global crisis better than many countries in the region, the crisis is having an impact on FDI in the mining and hydropower sectors. Weaker external demand has resulted in a sharp drop in copper prices that has hit Lao mining sector hard. Agriculture prices have also affected, depressing export earnings and rural incomes, garment export and tourism have been impacted by weaker external demand, and inward remittances and other capital flows are also likely being affected. ODA, in the form of grants and concessional loans, plays an important role in both the overall public expenditure and Public Investment Program (PIP). Over the last few years, ODA projects comprised, on average, about 80% of the total PIP budget. The domestic private sector has very limited access to formal finance. The Government remains heavily dependent on ODA to finance expenditure.

The fact that Laos is considered as a least-developed country makes its trading activities limited. After joining ASEAN in July 1997, this nation has now developed close relationship with neighboring countries such as Australia, Thailand and China. Now, Laos is cooperating with China to enhance trade and investment activities to balance Thai's dominance in its foreign economic relations. It has been 12 years since the country submitted its registration

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form to become a member of WTO but the negotiation with other countries is still an ongoing process and it requires much effort from this nation. To become an official member of this trade body, the government of Laos is trying to improve its business environment as well as regulatory framework and infrastructure because of its inconvenient location. One of the main obstacles to trade promotion is that the small and medium enterprises experience difficulties in expanding their exports. Those enterprises lack lessons and experiences in marketing their products in foreign market and are in need of capital. In addition, due to high cost of transportation and stringent rule of origins laid out by importing countries, the Lao exports are not competitive. There are opportunities for Laos if the country can provide products of internationally acceptable standards. However, the Lao enterprises cannot rise to the opportunities offered, due to a multitude of problems: substandard quality of products, lack of skilled labour and lack of capital to install new technology equipments for production, ineffective export transactions via third parties.

Competition and regulations

Laos has no comprehensive competition policy or specific competition law (except a Prime Minister's Decree on Trade Competition, promulgated in 2004), and lacks the authorities to give specific attention to ensuring fair competition. The country has engaged upon transitioning from a centrally-planned to a market-oriented economy since 1986, and an extensive privatisation and liberalisation programme has been introduced in this connection, the results of which are claimed by the Laotian government to have been satisfactory to some extent. However, Laos still maintains price surveillance of some strategic products such as food and fuel. Competition law and policy is a rather complex issue and Laos faces the fundamental problems of weak institutions, lack of experience and no competition culture.

The only intellectual property law in force in the Lao PDR at the moment is a Prime Minister's Decree on Trademarks No 06/PM (1995) and a Prime Minister's Decree on Patent, Petty Patent and Industrial Designs No 01/PM (2002). Lao PDR legislation gives the holder of an intellectual property right the possibility of recourse to either the civil court or the penal court for an order to cease the infringements of his rights.

The Lao government has improved the regulatory framework for promoting investment by merging the domestic and the foreign investment law. The aim is to create unity between domestic and foreign investments and facilitate the investment licensing process. The law was adopted by the National Assembly in July 2009 and is expected to be enforced soon. Approval of the Negative List (Conditional List) of Business Activities under the Enterprise Law is expected soon and will help simplify business entry regulations. Also, an Enterprise Registration Office has been created to implement the new and simplified business registration procedures. With support from the donor community, the Ministry of Industry and Commerce plans to introduce a new business registration system by 2010 and create a national business registry containing information on all registered enterprises.

The energy sector in Laos is characterised by low conventional energy consumption. Biomass petroleum products and electricity are the main sources of energy for this country. The high proportion of fuel wood consumption reflects its widespread use, particularly in the rural areas. Imported oil and LPG are mainly used in the industrial sector. Lao PDR is a mountainous country with major tributaries flowing to the Mekong River, so the country has a high potential for development of hydropower. Recently, the country is encouraging investors to invest in this industry and it is hoped that upon completion of ongoing construction, three hydropower projects (Nam Theun 2, Nam Ngum 2 and Xekaman 3) will provide more electricity for the country to improve its infrastructure.

Banking and telecommunication sectors in Laos are considered oligopolistic markets. In telecommunication sector, the participating enterprises are: LTC, ETL, LAT, Millicom, Sky Telecom, and Sawaasdee Sabaidee. In the banking industry, there are 2 main forms of banks: State-owned commercial banks and foreign branches. It is a fact that although the financial sector has grown, it remains small and dominated by banks, other forms of financial institutions like insurance or finance companies are still limited. Currently there are four joint-venture insurance companies and a private one. In the near future an increased number of companies will be established in the insurance market in Laos. A Commercial Bank Law (No.03/NA dated 26 November 2006) has been enacted and drafting of implementation decrees for the same completed, together with a decree on leasing. Since 2003, the reform of the state-owned commercial banks has initiated improvements for this industry.

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Cambodia

Economy & Indexes

A decade has witnessed sustainable strong economic growth and sound macroeconomic management in Cambodia, with the highest economic growth rate from 1998 to 2007 until the global crisis began to have a severe impact on Cambodia during the last quarter of 2008. In 2008, the economic growth was only about 5.2 percent, down from a growth rate of 10.2 percent in 2007. The most vulnerable were the garment industry, tourism and construction – three growth pillars of the country. In its latest outlook report, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) revised the 2009 Cambodia GDP growth forecast from slight growth to a 1.5 percent contract. Inflation in Cambodia continued to slow in August as the consumer price index (CPI) rose just 0.7 percent on the previous month, marking the sixth consecutive month of annualised deflation. The London-based Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) has forecasted 2.1 percent year-on-year deflation for Cambodia in 2009, with inflation expected to resume in 2010. Cambodia is a highly dollarized economy and nearly all transactions in either business or daily living are in US dollars. Together with the prudent monetary policy of the National Bank of Cambodia (NBC), the relative strength of the *riel* was mainly a result of the US economic recession. Despite the US economic recession's continued weakening of the US dollar, the expected 2009 deficit in balance of payments will pressure the government to maintain a stable exchange rate against US dollar. Outstanding debt for microfinance loans dipped slightly in the first half of the year, with less people borrowing in a slow economy, according to a national group of microfinance lenders.

Trade & Investment

It is reported that Cambodian FDI has gone down 73% in the first half of 2009. Fifty-three (53) investment projects worth a total of US$1.2bn have been approved by the Council for the Development of Cambodia (CDC), a sharp drop from the first half of 2008, when the CDC approved US$4.43bn in investments. Of the investments approved, the majority came to such industries as tourism sectors, agriculture, industry and private sector developments. The decrease in the FDI flow is attributed to the adverse impacts of the ongoing global financial crisis, which forced China and the Republic of Korea – the two big investors in 2008 - to channel their investment to small-scaled projects instead of big ones as previously. A reason behind the FDI drop is the low competitiveness of the Cambodian investment environment. Prospects are slim that the number of projects approved in the whole 2009 will increase significantly given the current global financial crisis and limited local skills and resources.

In terms of trade, Cambodia has been admitted as member of the WTO, the global free trade body, in October 2004 after 10 years of hard work in negotiation. Cambodia's entry as a full member of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) seems to have had limited direct impacts on trade expansion or diversification in the short term as being a "least developed country", Cambodia already enjoys a number of trade preferences. Over the long term, domestic economic reforms provided by WTO accession have served to put the country back on the world and, importantly, investors' map, which has likely contributed to the almost six-fold increase in 2006 foreign direct investment since the approval of Cambodia's membership in 2003. In addition, Cambodia has prepared itself to join with other countries in regional integration like the ASEAN Trade in Goods Agreement. However, the crisis gave evidence of the vulnerability of Cambodia's growth sectors to external meltdowns. Cambodia's economy rests on four key pillars - agriculture, tourism, construction and garments. The last three have all been badly hit by the crisis, which led to a widening of the trade deficit. During 2008, total exports increased by only 15.2 percent, while total imports increased by 19.6 percent. The total trade deficit is expected to widen by 31.3 percent in 2008, reaching about 16.9 percent of GDP. This deficit coupled with an income balance deficit created a deficit of current accounts (including capital transfer) totaling about 7.3 percent of the GDP despite a significant increase in balance of services and a surplus in transfer accounts. However, the worst of the economic crisis is not yet over in Cambodia, when exports in July 2009 plummeted an annualised 26.4 percent, a larger decrease than in June. The decline in imports has had a significant effect on Customs and Excise, which reported a 22 percent drop in the tax take to $280 million in the first six months of 2009.

Competition and regulation

Though there is no competition law in effect or promulgated in Cambodia at this time, though the Constitution of Cambodia contains various provisions relevant to competition issues and supports the enactment of such laws. Besides, a draft competition law has been developed by the Ministry of Commerce (MOC) with technical assistance from UNCTAD. Several workshops have been held in order to obtain further inputs from stakeholders. The draft has been examined by a working group set up by the MOC. Final revised draft is in place and expected to be submitted to the Council of Ministers in end 2009 for consideration and adoption.

At present, the telecommunications system in Cambodia is seen as progressing strongly with nine mobile operators vigorously competing with each other in a market segment that was growing at an annual rate of more than 50% by early 2009. The market was still in a very strong growth phase, as evidenced by the keenness shown by foreign operators seeking to be part of it. By March 2009, 4.3 million mobile subscribers (a penetration ratio of 29%) were recorded in Cambodia. However, in the background, the telecom system in Cambodia is being said to have many problems, and the major one is the overlapping of frequency ranges, which relates to installation techniques. Besides the overlapping of licenses provided is also another complicated problem. One of the major reasons to be blame for is that Cambodia has no systematic law and no policy to regulate the telecom systems. Until now, a draft Telecommunications Law is now with the Council of Ministers and is awaiting discussion.

The tourism industry, one of the key pillars of the Cambodian economy, is growing fast and a law should be in place to make the industry accountable. The Law of Tourism has been launched on June 2009, which is aimed at tightening industry regulations as part of efforts to increase security and crack down on rogue operators.

In the power sector, the 2001 Electricity Law has clarified the institutional roles, with the Ministry of Industry, Mines and Energy (MIME) as policy-maker, the Electricity Authority of Cambodia (EAC) performing the regulatory function and the Cambodian Power Company (EdC) and other operators actually producing and distributing electricity. Till now, the electricity sector in Cambodia is very small in size, only a fraction of the population residing in Phnom Penh has access to electricity. The Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC), thus, aims to rapidly develop the electricity sector as a major contributor to a balanced social and economic growth. Electricity reforms will be pursued to enhance the involvement of the private sector towards efficiency and competitiveness of the electricity industry.

The draft legislation on corporate bonds, which aims to establish a capital market in this country in 2009 is currently under process of finalising. From this year start, concerns were that Cambodia stock market planned for 2009 may be hindered by crisis. Until very recently, the Cambodian government signed an agreement to set up the country's first stock market yesterday with the Korea Exchange (KRX). The exchange will start small, with up to five companies listed. But authorities have no fixed date for the stock exchange launch. The original launch date was in September 2009, but the global economic slowdown forced authorities to delay until December at the earliest. The launch date will ultimately depend on the progress of publicity, training and infrastructure. The agreement gives the Ministry of Finance 55 percent of shares and KRX the remaining 45 percent. The launching of the Cambodian Stock Market is likely to attract foreign investors and massive injections of foreign investment, which should make for a positive investment outlook for the next few years.

Other ASEAN Countries

Economy & Indexes

Major indicators have indicated that ASEAN's real economies are more or less suffering due to the world financial crisis. Specifically, GDP growth rates in ASEAN countries tend to decrease in the first half of 2009.

Table: GDP growth rate – ASEAN countries

Country	**2008**	**2009**		
		1Q	**2Q**	**1H**
Indonesia	6.1	4.4	4.0	4.2
Malaysia	4.6	- 6.2	- 3.9	- 5.1
Philippines	4.6	0.6	1.5	1.0
Singapore	1.1	- 9.5	- 3.5	6.5
Thailand	2.6	- 7.1	- 4.9	-6.0

The full report on Economic Survey of Singapore revealing most of economic indicators have shown an improvement of the country in the second quarter of 2009. In terms of GDP, the economy contracted by 3.5 per cent in the second quarter of 2009, after a 9.5 per cent decline in the first quarter of 2009. On a seasonally adjusted annualised quarter-on-quarter basis, the economy expanded by 20.7 per cent, compared to a 12.2 per cent contraction in the previous quarter. The services producing industries fell by 4.8 per cent, following a 5.1 per cent decline in the first quarter of 2009. The business services and the information and communications sectors were the other major sectors that showed positive growth in the second quarter. CPI declined by 0.5 per cent in the second quarter, after a 2.1 per cent increase in the previous quarter. Thailand appears to experience the similar situation. This economy contracted by 7.1% in the first quarter in GDP. However, the balance of trade still showed a surplus of US$11696mn. In the case of the Philippines, inflation eased to 0.2 per cent in July due to a slowdown in price increases of basic commodities. The July inflation rate brought to 4.3 per cent the average inflation rate for the first half of the year. Unlike Singapore and the Philippines, Thailand suffered a deflation rate of 14.3% up to August, 2009. Instable political situation may be one of the main reasons for this economic downturn. Referring to the World Bank's report "Ease of Doing Business", while Singapore is ranked the first out of 183 countries, the 12th position was for Thailand and the Philippines stood at 141 in the list. The Philippines economy did better than expected during the second quarter. Real gross domestic product (GDP), or the sum of all goods and services produced in the country, grew by 1.5 percent.

Trade and investment

Affected by the global economic crisis, foreign direct investments (FDIs) to the 10 ASEAN countries in 2008 dwindled from US$69.48 billion in 2007 to US$60.17 billion in 2008. A United Nations report released on September 17 stated that FDI flows into Southeast Asia will track a global contraction this year, with full recovery expected only by 2011. The same will be true for the Philippines as plummeting profits and wait-and-see attitudes will hurt firms' ability to invest. Latest available data, however, buck these forecasts, and monetary authorities have claimed that investor sentiment was rising given nascent signs of a global economic recovery. Specifically, in early 2009 a number of other South East Asian countries including Philippines, Indonesia, and Thailand have been able to maintain growth in FDI despite the crisis. Outside the trend, Malaysia FDI plunges in Jan-May 2009.

The recession has had massive knock-on effects on ASEAN's real economies in terms of trade. Due to the region's high degree of openness, the synchronized slowdown has brought about a precipitous drop in ASEAN exports, seriously affecting growth prospects. Those countries that earn well from commodity exports are also being affected by the drop in commodity prices. Intraregional trade has also fallen dramatically, bringing factory closings, layoffs, supply chain disruptions, slower remittance inflows, and the threat of increased poverty. Being too dependent on the US and Europe, Singapore, the country in the heart of the South East Asia, are suffering hard times. Total exports continued to record a double-digit decline. Domestic exports declined at a slower 27 per cent, while re-exports registered a 24 per cent decrease following last quarter's 24 per cent decline. Meanwhile, trade balance in the Philippines showed a widening deficit during June along with increasing imports. Philippines exports dropped in June at a slower pace as world demand stabilized leading to a slight recovery in the nation's exports sector. Exports dropped 24.7% in June from a prior decline by 27.0%. In the case of Thailand, up to July, export value contracted for the third consecutive month while import fell even more rapidly. Export value dropped 25.3 percent (year on year) to US$10,382mn. This was due mainly to contraction across the board except for labor-intensive industries which still expanded from gold export. Import value contracted 36.5 percent (year on year) across the board to US$8,694mn. However, the situation is not as bad as that in early 2009. Several ASEAN members such as Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia have introduced fiscal stimulus packages to varying degrees aiming at intraregional trade encouragement. Meanwhile these stimulus packages are starting to bear fruit, a second economic stimulus is being taken into consideration by such countries as Philippines, Malaysia, and Thailand.

Competition and regulations

Recognizing the importance of competition law, ASEAN has promoted cooperation in the law enforcement. This Association exemplifies this phenomenon quite well. By 1998, not one member of ASEAN had developed its own competition law. Today, Thailand, Indonesia, Singapore, and all have full-fledged national competition laws in place. To date, with the exception of Thailand, the enactment of competition laws in ASEAN countries resulted from international commitments rather than from domestic policy. While the competition law has been implemented and reach some achievements in some ASEAN countries, the same situation did not happen in the Philippines. The business lobby in the Philippines was so powerful and the local legislature so corrupt and lazy that up to 2008 the country did not have an anti-trust law.

In a concerted ASEAN-wide effort to respond robustly to recent widespread cyber threats and viruses, the ASEAN ICT Ministers at the conclusion of the Third Telecommunications and Information Technology Ministers Meeting (3rd ASEAN TELMIN) in Singapore on August 29, 2009, committed to initiatives to enhance regional cooperation in cyber security. Besides, each nation in the region has implemented its own approach to regulate this industry within its border. A study series on the "Telecommunications Legal Systems of ASEAN Countries" have been performed in Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, Philippines to cover telecommunications legal systems of ASEAN countries to give an overall view on the present status of their respective systems. In the case of Thailand, the telecommunications industry employs the ubiquitous model of competition: Policy maker, Regulator, and Operators. The policy maker of Thailand is the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology on behalf of the government. The regulator is the National Telecommunication Commission (NTC), which is one of the two pillars communication commissions. Two telecommunication agencies: TOT and CAT, have been privatized in July 2002 and August 2003 respectively; however, their existing private concessionaires have succeeded to operate their ventures according to the transitory provision of the Telecommunication Business Act. With regard to regulatory aspects, the industry has achieved great developments. The most update is that a parliamentary science and communications committee proposes creating a new regulator to manage convergence of broadcasting and telecommunications technologies, which is being scrutinised.

In the field of electricity, the most notable is that Indonesia's parliament has just approved a new electricity law in replacement of Electricity Bill No 20/2002, opening up a sector that is inefficient, heavily subsidised and plagued by blackouts to more competition and fairer pricing. Besides in other countries, there exist regulations regulating the electricity industry. For instance, Malaysia Electricity Supply Act, approved by parliament and used with effect from year 1990 until present. Electricity Generating Authority of Thailand (EGAT) was established on May 1, 1969 by the promulgation of the Electricity Generating Authority of Thailand Act B.E. 2511 which merged assets and operations of the three previous state enterprises, namely Yanhee Electricity Authority, Lignite Authority and the Northeast Electricity Authority. It presently is the state enterprise under the Ministry of Energy.

In terms of banking, the US financial crisis and bank collapse has influence negatively to the banking sectors in many countries in the region. In addition to structural changes facing Singapore banking system, the right dose of regulation are needed to strengthen the rules according to Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong. That dose can include new legislation that will make it harder for foreigners to evade taxes back home by hiding their money in bank accounts in the city state or a relaxation on the strict bank secrecy laws. Guidelines on the Application of Banking Regulations to Islamic Banking (‘the Guidelines’) issued by Monetary Authority of Singapore (‘MAS’) took effect from 7 May 2009. The Guidelines provide guidance for those financial institutions intending to offer Islamic financial services and/or products in line with the Banking Act (Cap 19), Banking regulations and written directions issued by MAS in exercise of their powers under the Banking Act. There are now many banking laws in the Philippines. Thrift banks, rural banks and cooperative banks are now governed by the provisions of the Thrift Banks Act, the Rural Banks Act, and the Cooperative Code. Cooperative banks are not only monitored but also supervised by the Cooperative Development Authority. Section 94 of 8791 also provides the "phase out of Bangko Sentral Powers over building and loan associations. All the relevant supervisory and regulatory powers of the Monetary Board under that Section were transferred to the Home Insurance and Guarantee Corporation. As for the Islamic Bank, it is now governed by special laws as provided in Section 71, RA 8791 - rather than the general banking law. Against the global credit crisis, the case of the Philippine banking system, which experts noted has faced the financial maelstrom from a position of strength with the help of prudent regulations. The banking sector in Thailand is well-established and there are many banking and finance regulations in place. Moreover, Financial Institutions Business Act was implemented in August 2008, making the Bank of Thailand Act promulgated on 16 April 1942 fully accountable for banking supervision.