

JFCCT Chairman's Address

“Open for Business: The Next Chapter in Thailand's Competitiveness”.

25 November 2016

Your Excellency, Prime Minister General Prayuth Chan-Ocha

Your Excellencies Ministers of the Royal Thai Government

Your Excellencies Ambassadors and heads of foreign missions

Heads of the foreign chambers of commerce & business associations

Heads and representatives of industry organizations

Ladies and gentlemen

This is a special occasion. We are marking 40 years this year of the JFCCT and have just launched the JFCCT BOOK, and we are graced by the presence of His Excellency the Prime Minister, and key Ministers to hear more about plans and responses to questions.

What is it to be competitive and why is it important? It means that Thailand is an attractive investment destination, it means that doing business is based on more and more efficient and easy ways to carry out administrative and daily tasks, it means that skills and education levels are enhanced (capacity is strengthened), it means that there is more innovation and it means that national wealth, quality of life and happiness are all enhanced.

It does not simply mean that we can do the same thing faster and more cheaply, although that is part of it.

Thailand has achieved upper middle income status in development terms. What about the next stage?

To achieve this requires us to focus on all of the various elements – including investing in hard and soft infrastructure and skills, taking the tough decisions to reform and restructure certain sectors, liberalizing services, and generally supporting the ‘4.0’ vision.

This all requires some tough decisions, in many instances not only being well co-ordinated at government level but also collaborating with the private sector, both Thai and foreign, through consultation and engagement, to drive through the right policies (working with different views and even opposition to some policies) for success.

The JFCCT has had the privilege of many dialogues with the Royal Thai Government, including with ministries, departments and agencies represented here today. We greatly value this engagement and we can all continue to play a part in enhancing our Competitiveness. Progressive, sustained and consistent effort will help us to overcome challenges.

I thank all distinguished guests for their presence, I thank the sponsors of the JFCCT Book, and the JFCCT and chamber team members who have worked on the book and this event.

We are looking forward to hearing from His Excellency the Prime Minister and to the Q&A session which follows his address.

I will now hand back to the MCs to introduce His Excellency the Prime Minister.