**2nd Meeting of the ICAPP Business Council**
(Bangkok, Thailand, May 27-30, 2024)

**ICAPP/2IBC/004**

**Concept Paper**

## Background

At the 40th Meeting of the ICAPP Standing Committee (SC), held in Kathmandu, Nepal on October 13, 2023, the SC Members agreed to hold the 2nd Meeting of the ICAPP Business Council (IBC) on the sideline of the 41st SC Meeting to be held in Bangkok, Thailand during the first half of 2024.

On January 15, 2024, Hon. Dr. Nalinee Taveesin, SC Member of the ICAPP, and Advisor to the Prime Minister and Trade Representative of the Kingdom of Thailand, proposed that the 2nd Meeting of the IBC will be hosted by the Parliament of Thailand, back-to-back with the 41st SC Meeting in Bangkok during May 27-30, 2024. The Thai host also suggested "Food Security and Tourism Promotion" as the theme of the IBC Meeting, and it was agreed that the meeting will be divided into two sessions on the topics of "food security" and "tourism promotion" respectively.

## Food Security

The year 2023 witnessed significant economic and geopolitical challenges that had a profound impact on global food security. According to the Mid-Year Update of the Global Report on Food Crises 2023 published by the World Food Program (WFP), high levels of food insecurity persisted. Data available for 48 countries as of August 2023 showed that over 20 million more people faced high level of acute food insecurity, which was 10% increase from the previous year. This increase was mainly due to persistent or intensifying conflicts, weather extremes and economic aftershocks from the covid-19 pandemic.

The impacts are being felt across our region as well, and, in particular, posing a grave threat to the food security of vulnerable communities. A significant portion of world population is also deficient in the basic food and nutrition, and suffering from higher prices in food commodities as many countries face economic uncertainty. Indeed, the low-income countries are experiencing the acuter inflation rate than the high-income countries.

The food industry is fundamentally linked to the four pillars of food security: i.e. availability, access, utilization, and stability. The factors impacting the food security are also multi-dimensional, with both the national and the global supply chain playing crucial roles. Thus, the food security cannot be properly guaranteed without the collaboration between the political leaders and the business leaders in the food industry, not only on national, but also on regional and international level.

Participants in the 2nd Meeting of the IBC are invited to exchange views and strategies on how to promote food security by ensuring a stable global food supply chain which is consistent with food production, and effectively preventing and managing potential risks in the international market.

## Tourism Promotion

The year 2023 also witnessed an encouraging increase in international tourist arrivals. According to the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), the international tourism market grew by 14 % in 2023 compared to the previous year with joint efforts of governments and tourism industry. However, despite this recovery, the market has not yet reached pre-pandemic levels. This underlines the importance of maintaining and intensifying efforts toward constructing a more resilient and sustainable tourism sector.

Tourism has always proven to be crucial to economic growth and job creation in many countries in the region. In addition, tourism is closely linked to, and inseparable from, various sectors including transport, hospitality, culture, and environment. It has also contributed to cultural exchange between countries.

It is therefore important to discuss how to promote tourism extending beyond the industry and national boundaries and this necessitates the involvement of both political leaders and business leaders in the tourism industry.

Political leaders can play a pivotal role by facilitating the relaxation of travel restrictions, the investment in infrastructure, and the promotion of sustainable practices, while business leaders in the industry can directly influence the market trends and the consumer behavior for tourism promotion through innovative strategies. Political and business leaders can share valuable insights with each other, thus creating huge synergy in promoting tourism.

Given the current trends and the potential of the tourism industry, participants in the 2nd Meeting of the IBC are strongly encouraged to discuss the way forward, focusing on strategies to build a more resilient and sustainable tourism sector and address disparities in recovery among countries in the region, which will not only contribute to the recovery of the tourism industry but also to the broader economic and social development.

## Bangkok Statement

The “Bangkok Statement” that reflects the key outcomes of the discussions at the 2nd Meeting of the IBC will be adopted at the closing session. The first draft of the statement will be circulated to all participants during the first plenary session of the meeting.