

Strategic management of technology and innovation

The APO organized the 23rd Top Management Forum in Kyoto, 26–28 February, in collaboration with the Japan Productivity Center for Socio-Economic Development (JPC-SED) and Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, Japan. The theme of this year's forum was Strategic Management of Technology and Innovation. Corporations practice the management of technology to promote innovation, achieve sustainable growth, maximize the cost-effectiveness of investments in technology development, and ultimately contribute to enterprise value.

Opening addresses were given by APO Secretary-General Shigeo Takenaka, JPC-SED President Tsuneaki Taniguchi, and Kansai Productivity Center Chairman Kozo Shindo. In his opening remarks, Takenaka emphasized the new Japanese business model based on corporate innovation as key to the nation's recent economic recovery. The forum led off with a presentation by Dr. Kiyonori Sakakibara, Keio University Graduate School of Media and Governance, on Capturing the Value from Innovation—Introduction to Our Discussion at TiM-Japan. The 35 overseas participants from 18 APO member countries and 20 local participants then heard presentations by top Japanese executives from such corporations as Zeon, Omron, Denso, and Matsushita Electric Industrial, as well as from leading scholars and government policymakers.

Chairman Katsuhiko Nakano of Zeon Corporation, in his presentation entitled Original and Without Compare: Zeon Management Strategy to Maximize Corporate Value, emphasized that the management of technology is the core of corporate practice at Zeon, in line with its human resources development strategy for promoting managerial leadership to facilitate R&D innovation. Dr. Noboru Maeda, Osaka City University Graduate School for Creative Cities, stated that corporate venturing is a key to innovation for overcoming the limitations of the catch-up business model. He also highlighted the spin-off phenomenon among elite Japanese engineers after the 1990s as a proactive sign of accelerated innovation. General Manager Yoshifumi Kato, Technology Planning Department, Denso Corporation, introduced the medium-to-long-term R&D roadmap for product development under Denso's strong commitment to R&D, reflected by investment of more than 8% of total expenses.

Near the end of the forum, the participants broke into groups to discuss the topics covered in the sessions, chaired by Dr. Astushi Sunami, Associate Professor and Director of the Science and Technology Program, National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies, Japan.