



# APO NEWS

Volume 39 Number 11

November 2009



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## 50th WSM convened in Manila

**T**he 50th Workshop Meeting (WSM) of Heads of National Productivity Organizations (NPOs), the annual program planning meeting of the APO, was held at the Edsa Shangri-la Hotel in Manila, the Philippines, 20–22 October 2009. The WSM brought together 56 NPO and Agriculture delegates and their advisers. It was also attended by two observers, from the Colombo Plan Secretariat, Sri Lanka, and Productivity SA, South Africa.

The WSM was assigned to undertake two major tasks: finalizing the APO program plan for 2010 and reviewing the proposed priority projects for 2011–2012. The WSM's role in project prioritization started with the new budgeting system that came into effect in 2009. After review at the WSM, the list of the priority projects will be revised and submitted to the Governing Body Meeting (GBM) to assist the APO Directors in considering the total membership contributions for the coming biennium. The prioritization exercise was conducted at the two concurrent Strategic Planning Sessions, by the Industry and Service Committee and the Agriculture Committee, respectively.

The Industry and Service Committee was chaired by NPO Delegate from Thailand Dr. Phanit Laosirirat with Sri Lanka's NPO Delegate D.L. Kumaradasa assisting him as rapporteur. Philippine Agriculture Delegate Salvador S. Salacup chaired the Agriculture Committee session, with Bangladesh Agriculture Delegate Md. Jamsher Ahmed Khandker as rapporteur. Both committees confirmed the hosting of the projects for 2010 and endorsed the proposed priority of projects for the 2011–2012 biennium. They also agreed that the necessary modifications to be presented to the GBM would be entrusted to the Secretariat, taking into consideration the comments and suggestions made at the meeting. Other major items on the agenda included a statement by the Secretary-General (*see page 2*) and country presentations by NPO and Agriculture delegates to provide suggestions on the roles of the APO in relation to its coming golden jubilee and possible directions over the next decade.



Secretary-General Takenaka (R) thanking Executive Secretary Ermita (L) for his keynote address



Plenary Session Chair Kalaw (L) and Vice Chair Dr. Phanit (R)

The WSM delegates were welcomed by President Antonio D. Kalaw, Jr., Development Academy of the Philippines (DAP), the host of the meeting. Kalaw, speaking on the two tropical storms that struck Metro Manila and Luzon Island two weeks ago, stated that, "Calamities like this bring out the best in everyone as the *bayanihan* spirit or volunteerism surfaced through the outpouring of help not just from fellow Filipinos but from people in other countries around the globe." APO Director for the Philippines Margarita Songco, Deputy Director-General, National Economic and Development Authority, delivered the opening address. She recognized the APO's contributions to productivity and praised its current efforts to "address the particular needs of member countries." The meeting was graced by Executive Secretary to the Office of the President Eduardo

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R. Ermita, who delivered the keynote address. Executive Secretary Ermita greeted the delegates by saying, “Let me welcome our foreign delegates to our beautiful country, which typhoons, floods, or landslides can never deter from asserting itself as a strong and productive nation and people.” In his speech, Executive Secretary Ermita stressed the importance of public-sector productivity and introduced efforts and accomplishments of the Philippines in this field. The meeting elected Kalaw and Dr. Phanit as Chair and Vice Chair, respectively, to lead the discussion at the plenary sessions.

Along with a report on the evaluation of 2008 projects, the Secretariat made special presentations on four topics: the newly revised prioritization criteria for the 2011–2012 projects; knowledge management initiatives; the individual observational study mission program; and the two-tiered project approach. The concurrent strategic planning sessions were conducted on the second day.

On the final day, before the closing session, delegates visited Philippines Cut Flower Corporation (PCFC), the largest single grower, wholesaler, and supplier of premium roses in the Philippines, located in Tagaytay City, 55 km from Manila. After touring one of the PCFC greenhouses, the delegates heard a presentation on PCFC’s business strategy, focusing on its successful e-commerce activities. On the return to Manila, the delegates took the opportunity to view Mt. Taal, at 400 m the smallest active volcano in the world, and visited the nearby DAP Conference Center and Hostel, which sits on a 4.8-ha site ideal for live-in training courses, seminars, and workshops.



*Industry and Service Committee at the Strategic Planning Session*

In his closing statement, Secretary-General Shigeo Takenaka listed the major achievements of the WSM and confirmed the follow-up to be conducted by the Secretariat. Regarding the 2010 projects, he stated that, “There was no mistake that member countries demonstrated their preparedness and firm commitment to host the projects assigned to them, for which I am truly grateful and much encouraged.” Discussing 2011 and 2012 projects, he mentioned that “our prioritization exercise at the present WSM has helped to stabilize the biennial budgeting system.” He cited it as an important achievement and attributed it to delegates’ active participation and unfailing support and cooperation. Secretary-General Takenaka concluded his statement by conveying sincere appreciation to DAP President Kalaw and his “ever cheerful staff members,” who made the meeting a great success. 🌀