



A·P·O *news*

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE ASIAN PRODUCTIVITY ORGANIZATION

APO has new Secretary-General

On 16 September 2004, the APO welcomes its new and eighth Secretary-General, Mr. Shigeo Takenaka. He succeeds Mr. Takashi Tajima who completed his second and final term as Secretary-General on 15 September.

Mr. Takenaka served as a Japanese diplomat for many years, with postings to Japanese embassies in India, Republic of Korea, and Thailand, including as the Ambassador to Bangladesh (1993–1995) and Turkey (1999–2003). Mr. Takenaka's assignment from the Japanese Foreign Ministry before joining the APO was as the Ambassador in Charge of Inspection (2003–2004; also during 1995–1996), during which time he visited Cambodia, Republic of China, Laos, Mongolia, Philippines, and Vietnam. His work in other capacities has also taken him to Fiji, Indonesia, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. Mr. Takenaka is clearly well acquainted with most, if not all, APO member countries.



Mr. Shigeo Takenaka

Among other prominent positions held by Mr. Takenaka were: Deputy Director-General for Asian Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Executive Director, Metal Mining Agency of Japan; and Director-General in charge of immigration, Ministry of Justice.

Mr. Takenaka is a graduate of the prestigious Hitotsubashi University, Japan, and Swarthmore College, USA. He studied law, political science, and international relations. Apart from the Japanese language, Mr. Takenaka is proficient in four others: English, French, Korean, and Turkish. He is married and has a son and a daughter.

Writing in the preface to the new APO promotional brochure, Mr. Takenaka said that he was very proud to be associated with the APO, which he describes as unique, important, and the most active and effective regional productivity organization in the world today. He was very glad to be a part of the productivity quest, adding that increasing productivity will continue to be of prime importance in the development of the region. "Although much has been achieved, there is also much that remains to be done. In addition, there will be new challenges, the result of changes in the social, economic, political, and technological environments, which can come thick and fast."

Noting that the pursuit of higher productivity has been said to be a race with no finishing line, Mr. Takenaka commented: "The good news is that the path we traverse as we press forward with our efforts will lead us to what matters most to people—jobs, food security, a better quality of life, leisure, and a secure future." ☺

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"It's not enough to recognize the need for change. A leader must be able to make it happen."

Sanjay Kumar

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