



APO *news*

New Year Message

APO Secretary-General Shigeo Takenaka

This is the first time I have addressed readers of the *APO News* since assuming the office of the APO Secretary-General in September 2004. I am glad to have this opportunity to greet you and to convey my best wishes for the New Year.


I count it an honor to serve as Secretary-General of the APO. Being new to the productivity movement, there is much for me to learn. At the same time, it is my sincere desire to make a meaningful contribution to strengthening the movement during my service in the APO. An individual striving alone can at best have only a limited impact. With an effective and cohesive team, however, much can be achieved. For this reason, I look forward to working closely with the APO Directors and Alternate Directors in the Governing Body, Heads of NPOs, and Liaison Officers to ensure that the productivity movement will make a significant difference to the growth and development of our member countries.



We are deeply saddened by the unimaginable loss of life and property in a number of APO member countries caused by the tsunami that struck on 26 December 2004, triggered by a massive earthquake in Indonesia. Our condolences go to the people in those countries in their grief, pain, and despair. When the time comes to rebuild and redevelop the affected areas, productivity will be an important factor in ensuring that resources are used to bring maximum benefits to the people. The APO hopes to be able to play a part in the reconstruction efforts.

The APO is essential because the mission it is entrusted with—accelerating the socioeconomic development of the Asia-Pacific region in general and of its member countries in particular through productivity enhancement—is fundamental to the well-being of the region, especially the alleviation of poverty and improvement of the quality of life. The organization has two major perennial challenges: staying relevant to the needs and aspirations of member countries and maximizing the benefits to them.

The *APO News* is one of two major vehicles for disseminating news and information about the mission and activities of the APO, its network of NPOs in member countries, and the productivity concept. The other is the APO Web site. Both are under constant review and improvement. This issue of the *APO News* features a new masthead and the beginning of a cartoon series that treats a serious subject in a lighthearted, fun manner. The Web site has a new homepage that is more sophisticated, pleasing to the eye, and easy to use. Both provide a wealth of ideas, news, and information.

I thank you for your interest in the *APO News*. I hope that it will always prove useful to you. 

Volume 35 Number 1
January 2005

"Under budgetary pressure (arbitrary or not) it is truly remarkable how many options one discovers one can do without."

James R. Schlesinger

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Published monthly by
Asian Productivity Organization
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Printed on Recycled Paper