



57th GBM concludes

The 57th Governing Body Meeting (GBM) of the APO opened in Bangkok on 27 April 2015. Fifty-six delegates comprising APO directors and their advisers from 19 members, along with observers from the Centre on Integrated Rural Development for Asia and the Pacific (CIRDAP), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Pan African Productivity Association (PAPA), Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture (SEARCA), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), United Nations Economic & Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), Republic of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI), and Singapore Productivity Association (SPA) were in attendance.



Minister of Industry Chakramon Phasukavanich delivering the inaugural address.

Minister of Industry Chakramon Phasukavanich was the guest of honor at the event. In his inaugural address, he commented that, “Productivity enhancement could elevate our national competitiveness platform in all sectors, improve social equality, provide more opportunities and quality of life to our people, and utilize our resources in the most effective and efficient ways.”

APO Director for Thailand Dr. Atchaka Sibunruang delivered the welcome remarks. She stated that, “This meeting is one of the most important steps for member countries in defining direction to enhance the productivity of each nation. The APO’s direction toward the year 2020 is considered very crucial to support the concept of sustainable development to balance economic, social, and environmental aspects of our countries.”

APO Chair Jaya Mukunda Khanal was unable to attend the meeting due to a catastrophic earthquake in Nepal. First Vice Chair and APO Alternate Director for Pakistan Khizar Hayat Khan assumed the role as Acting APO Chair of the GBM. He started by extending condolences to the families of the earthquake victims. He added that, “We are also here to look ahead and share with fellow members the directions that our countries are taking to advance our economies and improve overall productivity. A lot has been achieved. A lot remains to be done. But I am confident that with our strong cooperation and commitment, we will overcome the challenges.”

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57th Session of the APO Governing Body Meeting.

May–June 2015
Volume 45 Number 3
ISSN: 1728-0834

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The APO News is published bimonthly by the APO Secretariat. The online edition is available at: www.apo-tokyo.org.

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The inaugural session was highlighted by conferring the APO Regional Award 2015 on an individual who had contributed significantly to advancing the productivity movement in the Asia-Pacific region. This time, Secretary-General Mari Amano conferred the award on Jong-Chin Shen from the Republic of China.

During the plenary session, APO Alternate Director for Pakistan Khizar Hayat Khan was elected APO Chair for 2015–2016, with APO Director for the Philippines Margarita R. Songco and APO Director for Singapore Tan Kai Hoe assuming the position of First and Second Vice Chairs, respectively. Important GBM agenda items included the annual report of the Secretary-General, approval of the APO revised budget for 2016, report on the proposed roadmap to achieve the APO Vision 2020, and assessment of the proposals for new centers of excellence.

The meeting approved the APO revised budget for 2016 and proposal that the Development Academy of the Philippines (DAP) become the next COE on Public-sector Productivity. It also endorsed the directions of the roadmap to achieve APO Vision 2020 and requested members to provide further comments. The revised roadmap will be circulated to the Governing Body for its final approval.

APO Directors made presentations on key challenges facing their countries to improve productivity through innovation; national economic policies related to innovation that helped promote productivity improvement, and the type of government support provided to NPOs to help fulfill their missions.



APO Chair and Vice Chairs for 2015–2016: (L–R) APO 2nd Vice Chair Tan Kai Hoe, APO 1st Vice Chair Margarita R. Songco, and APO Chair Khizar Hayat Khan.



Secretary-General Mari Amano (R) conferred the APO Regional Award 2015 on Jong-Chin Shen from the Republic of China.

GBM delegates were invited to visit F&N Dairies (Thailand) Limited, Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya Province Factory Tour, and Arts of the Kingdom, Ananta Samakhon Throne Hall. The former is a leading food and beverage company in Thailand which uses a computerized database to drive its production quality system. The latter houses exquisite but rarely seen traditional Thai artwork by the craftsmen of Sirikit Institute, an organization under royal patronage to help raise living standards in rural areas by encouraging traditional creative skills.

Presenting the vote of thanks, APO Director for Iran Dr. Roya Tabatabaei Yazdi expressed appreciation to the Government of Thailand for hosting the meeting as well as APO Director for Thailand Dr. Atchaka Sibunruang for her leadership and guidance in making the meeting successful. Dr. Yazdi looked forward to seeing all present next year in Jakarta.

In his closing statement, Secretary-General Mari Amano also expressed gratitude to the Government of Thailand. He thanked Minister of Industry Chakramon Phasukavanich for attending the GBM and supporting APO activities; outgoing Chair Jaya Mukunda Khanal, APO Director for Nepal, for his leadership during his tenure; and APO Chair Khizar Hayat Khan who skillfully chaired the GBM with great success despite the lack of time for preparation. He also expressed appreciation to APO member governments and their NPOs for the support given to the Secretariat; and the FTPI and its staff for working with the Secretariat to organize a successful GBM. 🌀

Photos courtesy of FTPI.