

55th Workshop Meeting of Heads of NPOs
21–23 October 2014, Colombo, Sri Lanka

Welcome Remarks
Secretary of the Ministry of Productivity Promotion and
APO Director for Sri Lanka
Upali Marasinghe

Senior Minister of International Monetary Co-operation Dr. Sarath Amunugama,
Minister of Productivity Promotion Bashir Segudawood,
APO Secretary-General Mari Amano,
Distinguished Delegates, Advisers, and Observers from APO member countries,
APO Secretariat Representatives,
Ladies and Gentlemen:

It gives me great pleasure to extend to you all a very warm welcome on behalf of the Ministry of Productivity Promotion to the 55th Workshop Meeting of Heads of NPOs.

First, I would like to thank Dr. Sarath Amunugama, the Senior Minister of International Monetary Co-operation, for taking time off from your busy schedule to attend this important meeting. Also, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to and welcome Minister Bashir Segudawood, who stands behind us to guide us in all the activities we do to promote productivity throughout the country.

I would also like to extend a warm welcome to APO Secretary-General Mari Amano and all the delegates, experts, and observers for making it to this very important workshop meeting.

2002 was a very important milestone in the productivity journey in Sri Lanka. In 2002, the National Productivity Secretariat (NPS) transferred to the Ministry of Labour from the Ministry of Industries in order to expand the productivity movement in Sri Lanka. Formulation of a National Productivity Policy for Sri

Lanka was a significant achievement in 2002, and the assistance given by the APO strengthened productivity promotion in the country.

In 2005, the NPS was expanded by recruiting 20 graduates as productivity development officers. The achievements from 2002–2009 created a necessity for forming a separate Ministry for Productivity Promotion, and in 2010 it became a reality. It was an unforgettable milestone in the productivity movement in my country. By attaching 700 graduates as productivity officers to serve at divisional levels, another significant contribution was made to the productivity journey.

From 2002 to today, the NPS has conducted many programs in all sectors (schools, public, private, and communities) in order to promote productivity throughout the country. The Ministry of Productivity Promotion has several initiatives to formulate, implement, and reorient productivity policies. 2014 and 2015 will be another turning point in the productivity journey in Sri Lanka. The assistance provided by the APO for various training courses, workshops, conferences, observational study missions, seminars, and e-learning programs have made a significant contribution to achieving the expected goals.

On this occasion, I would like to point out some important programs provided by the APO which contributed immensely to enhancing the productivity movement in Sri Lanka. The Development of Productivity Specialists in-country program in 2007 helped us to create high-quality resource persons in productivity and that was the first in-country program in APO history also. Mr. Yamana was deputed as an expert to improve the capacity of the NPS and to improve the quality of the productivity programs delivered to the private sector. In addition, the Member Country Support Program improved the capability of NPS staff as well as selected private-sector organizations. This is not the time to talk about all the programs and assistance given to us by the APO. However, I take this opportunity to appreciate that assistance.

I am sure this three-day meeting will bring about fresh and innovative ideas for the betterment of the APO and its member countries. Once again, I would like to thank you all. Have a pleasant stay in Sri Lanka.