

**International Conference on Productivity and Sustainable, Inclusive
Development in the Asia-Pacific
and the
APO 50th Anniversary Publication Launch Ceremony and Taipei Declaration
on Productivity
9–10 August 2012**

Welcome Remarks

APO Chair Azman Hashim

His Excellency Vice President Den-Yih Wu,
Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs Yea-Ping Shih,
Vice Minister of Economic Affairs Tyzz-Jiun Duh,
Chairman Sheng-Hsiung Hsu of the China Productivity Center (CPC),
APO Secretary-General Ryuichiro Yamazaki,
Chief Expert of the 50th Anniversary Publication Dr. Tsu-Tan Fu,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen:

A very good afternoon to you all. The APO celebrated its golden jubilee last year. To make that celebration more meaningful, the Government of the ROC graciously provided a special grant to finance research involving over 30 experts who reviewed the past 50 years of productivity improvement efforts in the region and assessed the major innovations and best practices that influenced productivity changes. This was a landmark undertaking culminating in the launch of the special 50th anniversary publication. This publication, to be unveiled today, documents the productivity journey of APO member countries. It features the past, present, and future directions of productivity in the region and how it contributes to the sustainable, inclusive economic development of its members.

More than 50 years ago, when the founding members of the APO including the ROC convened in Manila to establish this intergovernmental organization to help drive the productivity movement in the Asia-Pacific region, they pledged a commitment to mutual cooperation and support, transcending differences in their stages of economic development, political ideologies, and cultural backgrounds. The APO set out to fulfill its mission of contributing to the socioeconomic progress of its members through the sharing of innovations, best practices, and expertise that could be useful in raising productivity. Today, the monumental progress in the

Asia-Pacific economic landscape testifies to the contribution of productivity-enhancing activities.

However, we cannot rest. There is a lot more to be done. We must sustain these gains and ensure that economic development benefits not only certain groups; we have to ensure that all our people will benefit from economic growth and development. This is what our member governments are striving to achieve: not only sustainable but also inclusive growth and development. When we speak of SMEs, we also include microenterprises, which need to be included in our growth plans. Translating the goal of achieving sustainable, inclusive growth and development into our work at the APO, we need to encourage productivity consciousness to take root even at the village and rural community level.

We must also look to the world, such as the Middle East, to expand the APO membership base. This proactive approach will not only increase the APO's reach and influence, but also enrich the APO community with added innovations and expertise as well as broaden our cultural perspective.

The experts who were involved in this special APO 50th anniversary publication explored various angles of the challenges faced by the APO and its members as well as identified opportunities that could benefit our member countries and their people. Their findings and recommendations have been consolidated and will be presented and discussed during this conference. I believe that with all the experts and business and government leaders assembled here, our discussions will be very productive and fruitful.

On behalf of the APO, I would like to express our sincere appreciation and gratitude to the Government of the ROC, a pioneering and progressive member of the APO, for providing the special grant that has made it possible for us to convene today at this important conference and produce the publication that will become tangible proof of the close partnership between the ROC and APO. I would like to thank Chief Expert Dr. Tsu-Tan Fu and the team of writers who have devoted valuable time and effort to the research included in the special publication. I also commend the CPC for its leadership, enthusiasm, and commitment in undertaking this year-long project. The support for this undertaking given by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Economic Affairs of the ROC is also gratefully acknowledged.

I am confident that everyone here today will gain valuable knowledge while enjoying the hospitality of our gracious hosts during these next two days.

Thank you very much.