

The 58th Workshop Meeting of Heads of NPOs (WSM)
Opening Speech

October 24, 2017 (Tuesday)

Chairman & CEO of Korean Productivity Center (KPC)

Soon Jick Hong

Honorable Deputy Minister for Industrial Policy, Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy Dr. Gunsu Park,
Honorable Secretary General of Asian Productivity Organization (APO), Santi Kanoktanaporn,
Distinguished NPO Delegates of member countries,
Distinguished Agriculture Delegates and advisors,
Distinguished observers who have come to Seoul for this WSM and Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, I would like to extend my warmest welcome to all distinguished participants. Autumn is the most beautiful season in Korea, which is why I am very pleased that the 58th Workshop Meeting of Heads of NPOs (WSM) is held here in Seoul, Korea on a beautiful autumn day like today.

Distinguished guests and participants,

This year marks the 60th founding anniversary of Korea Productivity Center (KPC). Since 1957 when even the word “business management” was unfamiliar right after the end of the Korean War, KPC has contributed in enhancing national competitiveness as Korea’s representative institution for knowledge services, including leading in improving productivity and disseminating management practices to Korean companies. Also, KPC established the basis for the Five-Year Economic Development Plan that acted as the milestone for Korea’s economic growth.

APO has been a strong supporter for us to make such remarkable achievements. I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone here today for sharing your country’s valuable experience and knowledge with us so that we could boost productivity and economic growth. Now, Korea has developed into a country that shares its information and know-how related to productivity with not only APO member countries, but other countries around the world. To help foster shared development, KPC will strive to do share its knowledge and know-how

with others.

This WSM is a very important meeting where we will decide on APO programs for the following year and set up detailed plans on the 2019-2020 programs. In particular, we offered a venue for exchanging opinions about ways to effectively cooperate on productivity among member countries, companies and academia at this WSM. For this, we prepared a global conference under the theme “The 4th Industrial Revolution and The Future of Productivity” on the third day of the WSM that is unprecedented.

As you are all aware, the global village is currently standing at the most crucial inflection point of the human history called the Fourth Industrial Revolution. It might be called differently in different countries, such as “digital transformation” in the US, “Industry 4.0” in Germany, “Society 5.0” in Japan and “China Manufacturing 2025” in China. However, advanced countries are all competing fiercely at a national level in order to dominate megatrends of the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

It is necessary for Korea and all of the APO member countries to take advantage of these changing times to take a leap forward. In order to provide real help to member countries at the conference, we have worked hard during the past several months to find best practices that enable further development through cooperation between small and medium-sized enterprises and globally advanced companies.

As a result, we were able to invite globally advanced companies of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, including Amazon, Microsoft, Nvidia, Samsung and LG. Based on the technologies owned by these companies, including AI, cloud, Big Data, and robot, it will provide opportunities to find specific solutions for companies in different countries to cooperate. We have done our best to make the conference a success; we hope that you all attend to gain new ideas and insights.

Ladies and gentlemen,

At KPC, we will do our best to ensure that everything runs smoothly for the next three days. We kindly ask for your patience and understanding even if things don't run as smoothly as planned. We sincerely hope that you all enjoy your stay in Seoul and gain something worth taking home with you.

Once again, I would like to welcome all of you to this WSM.

Thank you.