

*(As of 18 March 2009)*

Eco-products International Fair 2009

Official Opening

Opening Remarks by Chairperson of APO GP Advisory Committee, and

Chairman of Mitsubishi Electric Corporation

Dr. Tamotsu Nomakuchi

19 March 2009, SMX Convention Center, Manila, Philippines

Honorable Estrella F. Alabastro, Secretary of the Department of Science and Technology;

Honorable Jose L. Atienza Jr., Secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources;

Honorable Eduardo R. Ermita, Executive Secretary;

Ladies and Gentlemen.

It is a great honor for me to be here at the SMX Convention Center on the occasion of the opening ceremony of the Eco-products International Fair 2009. First, I would like to express my deep gratitude to Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita for honoring us by attending this major event.

We are currently experiencing unprecedented global economic challenges. They include sudden economic downturns, increasing bankruptcies, inevitable lay-offs, and an uneasy sense that things may become even worse. At a time like this, our natural tendency is to focus on the short term, such as how to make the next mortgage payment or how to meet the payroll during the next financial quarter, forgetting that long-term issues must also be addressed

immediately. One of those issues is the environment. Whatever the state of the economy, we cannot ignore the need to protect our environment, particularly reducing the worst effects of climate change.

I am therefore very glad to be among so many people today who understand this need and who have contributed to the success of the Eco-products International Fair 2009. They represent the private sector, the public sector, and NPOs from the Philippines, Japan, and many other countries.

I am proud to announce that 36 companies from Japan are participating and showcasing their products at this fair. In spite of the current economic difficulties, the number of Japanese exhibitors has increased compared with last year's fair held in Vietnam. This indicates the commitment of Japanese businesses to manufacturing eco-conscious products. In an address to a joint session of Congress on February 24th, US President Barack Obama referred to advanced solar technology developed in Japan. Japanese hybrid cars are popular worldwide. In many other fields, the Japanese private sector is doing well in terms of producing eco-compatible goods and services, and it is always trying to do better.

I very much hope that as many people as possible from Manila and other parts of the Philippines will have a chance to visit the SMX Convention Center to see our exhibits and become more aware of how critical it is to protect our environment. Those unable to visit can still benefit from media coverage of the EPIF. Exhibitors at this year's fair total nearly 120, which is a significant number in these difficult economic times.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the people and Government of the Republic of the Philippines for hosting this event. I would also like to

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express my appreciation to the Japanese government for its support and the Japanese private sector for its cooperation. Without the contributions and encouragement from the members of the Green Productivity Advisory Committee, of which I am the chairperson, this fair would not have been possible.

Finally, my thanks go to the EPIF co-sponsors, the Asian Productivity Organization, Development Academy of the Philippines, and Philippine Business for the Environment, for all their efforts to make this event a success.

Thank you.