

**56th Session of the APO Governing Body**  
15–17 April 2014, Hanoi, Vietnam

**Opening Address**

APO Chair and APO Director for Mongolia  
Yamaaranz Erkhembayar

Fellow APO Directors,  
Secretary-General Mari Amano,  
Distinguished Guests, Advisers, and Observers,  
Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am delighted to be here today as the Chair of the APO to welcome you to the inaugural session of the 56th session of the APO Governing Body. We are honored to have with us His Excellency Vice Minister of Science and Technology Tran Viet Thanh and other dignitaries from Vietnam. Allow me to express my gratitude to the Government of Vietnam for hosting this important meeting in Hanoi, as well as my sincere appreciation for the warm, friendly welcome and arrangements made by the Vietnam Productivity Centre (VPC).

In recent years, Asia-Pacific member economies have shown great resilience in growing despite the global economic and financial crises that took place over several years. The year 2014 is expected to see strengthening economic growth for all APO member countries. As we endeavor to grow stronger and more competitive, productivity enhancement remains one of our top priorities. In order to achieve these targets, the APO therefore still has to continue making strong efforts to improve the productiveness and competitiveness of member countries.

Looking back since the last GBM in Tokyo, it was a year when a lot has been done and a lot of changes have been made. We welcomed new Secretary-General Mari Amano last September and later other new staff members to the Secretariat. Two weeks ago, during the visit of Secretary-General Amano to Mongolia, we discussed the developments in the APO since he had assumed his position and exchanged views on future plans. Mongolian government ministers and leaders agreed with him that Mongolia's resource-driven economy needs to invest in human capital and improve productivity to sustain economic growth. This is where the APO can play a role for Mongolia and other member countries. I sincerely believe that with his vision and energy, the APO will be successful in continuing to develop and adapt to the changing times.

We gather here at this year's GBM with several important matters to be discussed and decided. Among other agenda items, the GBM will be called upon to approve the Financial Report for the Year 2013 and the APO preliminary budget for the 2015–2016 biennium, as well as to endorse the report on the revised APO membership contribution formula. 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.

It has been a great honor for Mongolia and for me in particular to serve as the APO Chair during the last year. I am thankful for the support rendered to me during the past year from member countries and the Secretariat. Later today, a new APO Chair will be elected. I believe that the new APO Chair will receive the same strong support that I have received.

I wish to conclude here with the hope that this 56th GBM will be a great success. We gather here to set the directions for the near future of the APO, while not forgetting to enjoy the beautiful city of Hanoi. Once again, I would like to thank Vietnam, the host country and the staff of the VPC and APO Secretariat for working hard behind the scenes in preparation for this GBM.

Thank you.