

52nd Workshop Meeting of Heads of NPOs
18–20 October 2011, Vientiane, Lao PDR

Welcome Remarks

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His Excellency Minister of Industry and Commerce Dr. Nam Viyaketh,
APO Secretary-General Ryuichiro Yamazaki,
Distinguished Directors, and
Ladies and Gentlemen:

It is my pleasure and a great honor to welcome all of you to Lao PDR on behalf of Mr. Somdy Inmyxai, Head of the Lao National Productivity Organization (LNPO) and APO Director. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the APO Secretariat for assisting the Small & Medium Enterprise and Development Office (SMEPDO), LNPO, Ministry of Industry and Commerce, in making this meeting a reality. SMEPDO/LNPO is honored to host this 52nd Workshop Meeting of Heads of NPOs (WSM) from 18 to 20 October 2011. I wish you not only a fruitful meeting but also a pleasant stay in Vientiane.

In this meeting, the delegates will be discussing a broad range of issues and challenges concerning the improvement of APO programs for productivity development. We are confident that the meeting will provide an opportunity to discuss the experiences and emerging needs that will improve the framework of our programs.

As the development of the world has changed in the process of economic reform, globalization and liberalization have created greater need for countries to produce more competitively than ever before. Presently, the global economy is facing severe challenges, due to the debt crisis in Europe, financial and economic difficulties in the USA, and an economic slowdown in other economies. All these will potentially affect the economies in our region. However, all of us are aware of the different levels of global and regional economic integration and development among APO member countries. Nevertheless, we understand that APO programs are important instruments for coping with both global change and the different levels of development of member countries.

The APO's significant contributions to the expansion of opportunities for cooperation and greater socioeconomic development of the countries in the Asia-Pacific region through its five key roles as a think tank, catalyst, regional adviser, institution builder, and clearinghouse for productivity information are nowadays more important than probably ever before. The WSM is an effective tool for continuously improving and creating innovations in the delivery of programs and projects. It is also a suitable forum to create multiplier effects for productivity initiatives and to cascade innovation at a faster rate.

There are important issues to discuss in this meeting such as the new membership contribution formula, APO Program Plan for 2012, and the new strategic directions ahead for 2013 and 2014 where we will contribute to the prioritization of projects for the next three years. I am confident that this meeting will bring up fresh, innovative ideas for the further improvement of the APO and its members. I hope that all of you will be able to work effectively and take the opportunity to enjoy the charm and beauty of our capital Vientiane. I

wish all of you a pleasant and enjoyable stay.

On behalf of the LNPO, Ministry of Industry and Commerce, I extend a very warm welcome to all distinguished guests. It is indeed a pleasure to have you all here today. I am sure that we will benefit from the ensuing three-day workshop discussions. May this meeting be a success and thank you.