

53rd Session of the APO Governing Body
19–21 April 2011, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Opening Address

APO Chair and APO Director for the Republic of Korea Dr. Dong-Kyu Choi

Yang Berhormat Dato' Sri Mustapa Mohamed, Minister for International Trade and Industry;
Fellow Directors;
Secretary-General Ryuichiro Yamazaki;
Honored Guests, Advisers, and Observers;
Ladies and Gentlemen:

On behalf of the Asian Productivity Organization and the Government of the Republic of Korea as the current Chair of the APO, it is my great pleasure to welcome you all to this opening session of the fifty-third Governing Body Meeting. We are deeply honored to have with us this afternoon Yang Berhormat Dato' Sri Mustapa Mohamed, Minister for International Trade and Industry of Malaysia. We are also very grateful to the Government of Malaysia for hosting this important meeting.

As you know, Japan was struck by natural disasters causing serious damage to life and property. I call upon you in expressing our deepest sympathies to all those who suffered in the disasters. The darkest hour is always followed by the dawn of a new day. I sincerely hope that Japan will be stronger than ever.

In the shadow of this disaster, we rightly decided to cancel the APO's 50th anniversary celebrations, and the GBM venue had to be changed. I once again thank the Government of Malaysia and Malaysia Productivity Corporation for volunteering to organize this GBM at such short notice. This is clear evidence to the partnership and mutual cooperation that we share in the APO family.

This year marks the 50th year since the foundation of the APO. Reaching this milestone and continuing to improve is a matter of pride for all of us. Over the past 50 years, the relation of productivity to APO member countries has become much greater, and the scope of its coverage has increased considerably in step with the changing global socioeconomic and business environment, along with the development of the world economy. This highlights the dynamism of the productivity concept. Productivity now embraces areas such as competitiveness, business excellence, innovation, and sustainability.

Productivity improvement will remain a significant means for achieving greater economic growth. In this endeavor, the APO is still influential and its importance cannot be overemphasized. The APO should be commended for the total commitment with which it carried out its mission and objectives over the last 50 years. We are all sure that it will continue to inspire member countries to make ever-greater efforts to improve their productivity performance for more rapid progress.

It is time for the APO to determine a new, forward-looking vision and strategy and revive the productivity movement by enhancing networking and partnerships for its next takeoff. I call

upon all member countries to continue to extend wholehearted support to the APO in its next phase.

We have a lot of work to do during this meeting. The most important is to agree on membership contribution allocation. I sincerely hope that we will be able to reach a friendly agreement. This year the APO will also honor five distinguished individuals, who are with us today, with the APO Regional Award, which is presented every five years, in recognition of their outstanding contributions in championing productivity in the Asia-Pacific region.

At this GBM, we will elect the new Chair. It has been a great honor for me to serve as the APO Chair over the past year. I would also like to express my deep gratitude for the honor and support you have given to me. I urge you to offer strong support to the new Chair and to the Secretary-General in dealing with the many challenges that exist ahead.

I sincerely hope that you enjoy your stay in Kuala Lumpur and the time you spend here is memorable and productive in every possible way. Thank you very much.