

**59th Session of the APO Governing Body**  
10–12 April 2017, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

**Opening Address**

**APO Chair and APO Alternate Director for the Philippines**  
**Dr. Elba S. Cruz**

Fellow APO Directors;

H.E. Jamshid Ansari, Vice President of IR Iran and Head of the Administrative and Recruitment Organization;

Secretary-General Dr. Santhi Kanoktanaporn;

Distinguished Guests, Advisers, and Observers; and

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 59th Session of the APO Governing Body (GBM). We are honored to have with us H.E. Jamshid Ansari, Vice President of IR Iran and Head of the Administrative and Recruitment Organization, and other dignitaries from IR Iran. Allow me to express my gratitude to the Government of IR Iran for hosting this important meeting in Tehran, as well as my sincere appreciation for the warm, friendly welcome and arrangements made by the National Iranian Productivity Organization (NIPO).

Asia-Pacific member economies have shown great resilience in growth in recent years. The year 2017 is expected to see strengthening of economic growth for all APO member economies. As we endeavor to grow stronger and more competitive, sustainable productivity growth remains one of our top priorities. In order to achieve our targets in line with the APO Roadmap to Achieve Vision 2020, the APO will continue making strong efforts to improve the productiveness and competitiveness of member countries.

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 2016 and the APO Revised Budget for 2018, as well as to endorse the report on the new center of excellence and to discuss establishment of the APO Executive

Board. Among other matters that come before us as deemed appropriate, 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. But I am confident that with the strong leadership of APO Secretary-General Dr. Santhi and our strong cooperation and commitment, we will overcome the challenges. We will see them as opportunities that we can take on to improve not only our individual organizations but the entire APO as a whole.

It has been a great honor for the Philippines to serve as the APO Chair since the last GBM. I have just assumed the role of APO Alternate Director for the Philippines since last week. Taking this opportunity, I would like to express my appreciation for the support rendered to the Philippines during the past year from member countries and the Secretariat. Later today, a new APO Chair will be elected. I ask member countries to provide the new APO Chair with the same strong support.

I wish to conclude here with the hope that this 59th 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 Tehran. Once again, I would like to thank the Government of IR Iran, the host country, and the staff of NIPO and APO Secretariat for working very hard behind the scenes in preparation for this GBM.

I thank you.