



## Asian Productivity Organization (APO)

Leaf Square Hongo Building, 2F  
1-24-1 Hongo, Bunkyo-ku  
Tokyo 113-0033, Japan  
www.apo-tokyo.org

## Press Release

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### **APO Secretary-General pushes for “Smart Initiative” at 57th WSM in a bid to boost Asian productivity**

- › The APO will work with NPOs to help member countries tap emerging technologies like the Internet of Things and develop smart initiatives for industry, agriculture, and services.
- › Focus on pioneering, upstream research on productivity measurement across the key areas of the public sector, higher education, knowledge, and cities to help achieve Vision 2020.
- › APO to help member economies create global benchmarks and operational standards for public sector.

**PUTRAJAYA/TOKYO:** In his first official address after assuming the post last month, Asian Productivity Organization (APO) Secretary-General Santhi Kanoktanaporn today announced at the 57th Workshop Meeting (WSM) of Heads of National Productivity Organizations (NPOs) that the organization would be taking up a myriad of technology-enabled initiatives to push forward the goals of the Roadmap to Achieve Vision 2020 and help member economies become more competitive and productive in the new digital economy era. The WSM convened today in Putrajaya, Malaysia.



(From Left to Right) Malaysia Productivity Corporation (MPC) Director General Dato' Mohd Razali Hussain; APO Director for Malaysia Tan Sri Azman Hashim; Malaysia's Second Minister of International Trade and Industry Dato' Seri Ong Ka Chuan; and APO Secretary-General Santhi Kanoktanaporn at the opening session of the #APO #WSM2016 at Putrajaya, 19 October 2016.

Underlining the present-day relevance of “ICT for Smart” for all member economies as a key means to achieve the Vision 2020 goals, the Secretary-General said that in a hyper-connected digital world, seamless flows of data and information could generate more economic value than the global goods trade. “Virtually every type of cross-border transaction has a digital component. This trend toward a digital world economy will only accelerate,” he stated.

The Secretary-General emphasized the need for more focused, goal-oriented collaboration between the APO and NPOs to facilitate sustainable economic development across the Asia-Pacific. He announced that the APO would be driving more pioneering, upstream research on productivity measurement across the key areas of the public sector, higher education, knowledge, and cities. “The APO will also work with NPOs to develop new projects for emerging trends such as the Internet of Things and smart initiatives for industry, agriculture, and services,” he added.

Malaysia’s Second Minister of International Trade and Industry Dato’ Seri Ong Ka Chuan graced the WSM as its Guest of Honor and delivered the inaugural address, while APO Director for Malaysia Tan Sri Azman Hashim offered the welcome address. Second Minister Dato’ Seri Ong Ka Chuan noted that productivity was a crucial game-changer in the 21st century economy. “The Fourth Industrial Revolution, even in its current early stages, is already beginning to alter the way we work, live, and interact with each other. In order to embrace the Fourth Industrial Revolution, productivity organizations have a crucial role in ensuring that all factors are optimally used to achieve productivity gains,” he said.

Calling upon WSM delegates to review overall initiatives and create a better framework for improving productivity across member economies, the minister continued, “As the leading mover of productivity in your respective countries, you have the unenviable task of raising productivity levels to enable your economies to be more competitive. This gathering provides an opportune occasion for all of you to take stock of where we are in terms of our achievements.”

Appreciating the APO’s contribution to expanding opportunities for cooperation and greater socioeconomic development of member countries, APO Director for Malaysia Tan Sri Azman Hashim pointed to the country’s recent achievements in implementing the Business Excellence Framework (BEF). “The Malaysia Productivity Corporation has successfully leveraged the APO Center of Excellence on Business Excellence in Singapore to promote the BEF among all organizations and to push for higher productivity in the country. Close to 4,000 companies have successfully adopted the BEF since 2013,” he informed the WSM.

The three-day workshop, which kicked off today, is attended by representatives of 19 APO member countries, along with agriculture delegates and advisers. Observers from other organizations are also in attendance.

**Note:** Click [here](#) to access high-resolution photograph of the workshop.

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**For details contact**

Shubhendu Parth/Yoko Fujimoto  
Information & Public Relations Unit  
Tel: 03-3830-0411; Fax: 03-5840-5322

**e-Mail:** [sparth@apo-tokyo.org](mailto:sparth@apo-tokyo.org)/[yfujimoto@apo-tokyo.org](mailto:yfujimoto@apo-tokyo.org)  
**Website:** <http://www.apo-tokyo.org>

### **About the APO**

The Asian Productivity Organization (APO) is the sole nonprofit international organization in the Asia-Pacific devoted to productivity enhancement. Established in 1961 as a regional intergovernmental organization, the APO contributes to the sustainable socioeconomic development of the Asia-Pacific through productivity enhancement. The current membership comprises 20 economies. Three strategic directions guide the APO: strengthen NPOs and promote the development of SMEs and communities; catalyze innovation-led productivity growth; and promote Green Productivity. The main activities of the APO are capacity building of institutions and human resources development.