

**62nd Session of the APO Governing Body
8 June 2020, Virtual Session
Opening Remarks by the Incoming APO Chair (Vietnam)
and APO Alternate Director for Vietnam Dr. Ha Minh Hiep**

Fellow APO Directors,
Secretary-General Dr. AKP Mochtan,
Distinguished Advisers and Observers,
Ladies and Gentlemen:

Welcome to the Inaugural 62nd Session of the APO Governing Body. I am honored to represent the Vietnamese government as the Chair of the APO.

We are meeting during challenging times when all countries around the world are fighting COVID-19. In Asia, even though lockdown measures have been lifted in several countries, life is far from going back to normal. That makes this virtual session of the 62nd GBM even more relevant.

The Asia-Pacific region in the last few decades has shown significant growth from social and economic development perspectives. However, in the near future, all APO member countries will have to deal with unprecedented, severe socioeconomic consequences from the COVID-19 pandemic. It is very important for us to have a clear vision and program of actions to support economic activity and recovery post-COVID-19. The APO must continue and accelerate its efforts to support productivity improvement in its member countries. It is also time for the APO to determine a new vision and strategy to revive economic activities.

We are attending this virtual meeting today to set the directions for the future of the APO. There are 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 2019, the APO Preliminary Budget for the 2021–2022 Biennium, the APO Vision and Strategy 2025, Proposal on Utilization of Unappropriated Surplus, and APO Regional and National Awards.

I conclude with the hope that this 62nd GBM conducted using a new virtual modality will be a great success. I would like to thank all my fellow APO Directors and advisers for your valuable participation. My appreciation also goes to the APO Secretariat and Liaison Officers for working hard behind the scenes to prepare for this first virtual GBM.

Finally, I hope that all of us, our families, and our colleagues stay safe and sound. Let's hope for brighter days ahead.

Thank you.