

**60th Session of the APO Governing Body
8–10 May 2018, Vientiane, Lao PDR**

Opening Address

**APO Chair and APO Director for Singapore
Chew Mok Lee**

Fellow APO Directors;

H.E. Somchith Inthamith, Deputy Minister of Industry and Commerce of Lao PDR;

Secretary-General Dr. Santhi Kanoktanaporn;

Distinguished Guests, Advisers, and Observers; and

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Welcome to the inaugural 60th Session of the APO Governing Body. It is an honor for me to be here as the Chair of this GBM held in Lao PDR. Today, we are honored to have with us H.E. Somchith Inthamith, Deputy Minister of Industry and Commerce for Lao PDR. Thank you for gracing this occasion with your valuable presence. On behalf of all member countries, I would like to express gratitude to the Government of Lao PDR for hosting this important meeting, as well as my sincere appreciation for the warm and hospitable arrangements made by DOSMEP, the LNPO, and Ministry of Industry and Commerce of Lao PDR.

Since its inception in 1961, the APO has made valuable and significant contributions to greater socioeconomic development in the Asia-Pacific region. We are aware that economic growth can only be sustained through higher productivity and it remains fundamental to the prosperity of all member countries. Thus, it is my hope that the APO will continue to grow and achieve its vision to be the leading international organization on productivity enhancement, enabling APO economies to be more productive and competitive by 2020.

We gather here at this year's GBM with several matters to be discussed and decided. Among other agenda items, the GBM will be called upon to approve the Financial Report for the Year 2017 and the APO Preliminary Budget for 2019–2020 as well as to endorse the report on the performance of the APO Centers of Excellence. At this point, we would like to remember our colleagues from Malaysia who are unable to attend this GBM because of national elections and we send them our good wishes. Throughout the years, the APO has

been able to resolve issues by agreement and consensus among all members through its strong spirit of mutual cooperation. 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. I am confident that with the strong leadership of APO Secretary-General Santhi and commitment of member countries we will be able to achieve greater success.

It has been a great honor for Singapore and for me to serve as the APO Chair since the last GBM. I am thankful for the honor and support rendered to me during this time from member countries and the APO Secretariat. Later today, a new APO Chair will be elected. I urge you to provide your fullest support to new APO Chair Javigodage Jayadewa Rathnasiri, APO Director for Sri Lanka.

I wish to conclude with the hope that this 60th GBM will be a great success. We gather here to set the directions for the future of the APO, while not forgetting to enjoy this beautiful city of Vientiane. Once again, I would like to thank the Government of Lao PDR and the staff of DOSMEP, the LNPO, and Ministry of Industry and Commerce of Lao PDR as well as the APO Secretariat for working very hard over the past few months to plan this GBM and to make our stay a pleasant one. Thank you.