

**Asian Development Bank Institute
Annual Conference 2007**

10th Anniversary: A Decade of Developments
4 December 2007
Tokyo, Japan

Introductory Remarks
by
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Distinguished participants, honored guests, ladies and gentlemen: good morning.

It is my pleasure to personally welcome all of you to the Asian Development Bank Institute (ADBI) and to our Annual Conference marking our 10th anniversary. The conference, entitled “A Decade of Developments”, will revisit ADBI’s past research activities while helping navigate the way to its future. As mentioned by President Kuroda, knowledge management has become a priority area for the Asian Development Bank (ADB). As one of the four knowledge centers of ADB, ADBI wishes to remain ahead of the curve and provide intellectual leadership in identifying issues and challenges of medium- and long-term strategic importance to the region.

I would like to take this opportunity to share my vision of ADBI with you. It is my hope that ADBI will become a leading center for the creation and sharing of knowledge in Asia and the Pacific. We at ADBI intend to focus our efforts to ensure that our work is of the highest **quality** by pursuing excellence, originality and professionalism, of highest **relevance** to the major development challenges and policy issues of the region, and has a distinct **policy impact**.

I hope to achieve this vision by being selective in our work program, focusing on the four priority areas already outlined by President Kuroda—that is, poverty reduction, private sector development, governance and regional cooperation. I also believe that by strengthening ties with ADB headquarters, particularly the other knowledge departments, we can further support ADB as it implements its new Long-term Strategic Framework to better meet the challenges facing the region.

In vigorously pursuing our three main areas of work: (1) research, (2) capacity building and training, and (3) outreach, we expect to sharpen our analysis of cross-country perspectives. By working with various development partners and other knowledge institutions, we can improve our quality and relevance by learning from their rich experiences and best practices. By strengthening the linkages with policymakers and think tanks in the region, we can enhance policy impact of our research and capacity building and training activities.

Today we will revisit the topics highlighted by the Institute over the last ten years. A *Decade of Developments* covers a lot of ground and we have asked distinguished scholars who can competently address the questions covered by the broad topics and equally competent discussants who can objectively comment on the key issues raised by the scholars. We are also confident that the honorable chairpersons with their broad knowledge will be able to guide us into an interesting set of intellectual debates on some specific issues. We will certainly not dwell on the past but instead look to the future on each of the topics, answering the key questions of:

1. How the legacy of the Asian financial crisis of 1997-98 impacts future economic and financial initiatives at the national and regional levels;

2. What analytical and policy implications are drawn by moving from the single objective of poverty reduction to including concerns about inclusive and socially sustainable growth; and
3. What will come as the region embarks on even greater regional cooperation and integration.

Finally, we will hear from our distinguished panelists on what the future holds for developing Asia. In this final session we hope to identify the most pressing emerging issues and challenges for Asia in the next 10 to 20 years. Indeed, this long-term focus is central to ADBI's mission.

I hope all guests will participate, generating a substantive and lively discussion. I truly believe that the discussions will provide valuable direction to help ADBI identify key priority areas of focus for both research and capacity building and training, and thereby achieve its goal of becoming a leading creator of knowledge in the Asia-Pacific region.

Thank you very much.