

**Asian Development Bank Institute
Annual Conference**

***10th Anniversary: A Decade of Developments
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Tokyo, Japan***

**Welcome Remarks
by
Haruhiko Kuroda, President, Asian Development Bank**

Dr. Masahiro Kawai, Dean of the Asian Development Bank Institute, esteemed conference participants, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen. Good morning.

It is my pleasure to welcome you to ADBI's Annual Conference marking 10 years of service to the region. ADBI was established as a subsidiary of ADB to respond to two needs of ADB's developing member countries: (1) to identify effective development strategies and (2) to improve the capacity for sound development management of agencies and organizations of those countries. I believe that ADBI has met these needs and continues to look ahead, exploring and addressing key development challenges from a broad perspective.

It was decided to locate ADBI in Tokyo in order to provide some distance from ADB's day-to-day operations allowing it to focus on medium- and long-term strategic issues vital for sustained economic growth and social development in the region. This indeed has worked well as ADBI has been able to conduct policy-oriented research on development issues and provide capacity building and training activities designed to enhance capacities of developing member countries to formulate and implement policy reforms. Being in Tokyo, ADBI has been able to use its unique position to partner with

many other regional and international organizations, allowing scholars from various renown universities and research institutes in Japan to be active participants in many programs offered by ADBI.

The title of today's conference, "A Decade of Developments", will highlight the evolution of ADBI's research and the region from the turbulent times following the 1997/98 financial crisis. Ten years on, the region has regained economic buoyancy and vibrancy and achieved remarkable growth and development. I am pleased to observe that ADBI has also experienced a dynamic transformation, expanding both its research efforts and capacity building and training activities.

From an early emphasis on the financial crisis, ADBI shifted its research attention to Poverty Reduction when ADB adopted this as its overarching goal in 1999. Over time, in order to maximize the use of its resources, ADBI has focused on four strategic areas: private sector development, good governance, poverty reduction and regional cooperation. As ADB aims to support the regional trend towards deeper integration, so will ADBI's research efforts. Indeed, the ADBI has launched a new flagship study examining issues of regional cooperation within the long-term strategic focus of infrastructure development.

As ADB re-evaluates its long-term strategic framework, ADBI is playing an important role in this review. Once the new LTSF is in place, I expect ADBI will again realign its programs in a way consistent with the new priorities.

Transfer of knowledge has always been an essential, catalyzing element of the ADB mandate. Recognizing the critical role knowledge plays in the advancement of its

developing member countries (DMCs), ADB, in 2002, refined its structure to strengthen knowledge management. ADBI is an integral part of this knowledge management framework, along with the three other knowledge departments at the ADB headquarters, namely Economic Research Department, Office of Regional Economic Integration and Regional and Sustainable Development Department.

Indeed, I am pleased to observe that ADBI has been pursuing knowledge management and dissemination in better coordination with ADB headquarters to enhance the synergies with the other knowledge departments. I expect ADBI to play an even greater role within ADB as knowledge service is likely to become one of the priority areas of the new LTSF.

I can say that recent efforts to coordinate work within ADBI have also yielded significant benefits. The strengthened collaboration between research and capacity building and training (CBT) activities have been implemented in such a manner so that research outputs are being used as inputs for developing CBT programs, and unresolved issues identified during CBT activities are being reflected in future research work plans.

I also acknowledge the expanded outreach efforts ADBI has made over the years. For example, the Visiting Researcher Program has attracted over 60 visiting scholars from ADB member countries since its inception. ADBI's CBT programs have benefited thousands of senior to middle level officials from various ministries, agencies and institutes throughout the Asia-Pacific region. I am sure the new strategic focus to ensure quality, relevance and impact will help ADBI achieve its vision of becoming a leading center for the creation and sharing of knowledge in the region.

ADB as a development institution faces formidable challenges in the decades to come as Asia is rapidly transforming itself. These challenges will test ADB's ability to stay relevant at a time when a number of its traditional borrowers are fast developing. The ADB must rise to these challenges, adapt and move with the times to demonstrate that it is fit to meet the needs of its clients. In this regard, ADBI has an important role to play in providing inputs to help strengthen the relevance of ADB.

So on the occasion of its 10th anniversary, I congratulate ADBI on its achievements. I encourage the Institute to continue in its efforts to remain prescient and forward looking and hope to see the Institute become a leading knowledge center for the region by, if not before, its twentieth anniversary.

Thank you very much.