

Eco-products International Fair 2011  
Press Conference  
Remarks by APO Secretary-General Shigeo Takenaka  
14 July 2010  
India Habitat Centre, Delhi

Ladies and Gentlemen:

We are here to announce that the APO will hold its seventh Eco-products International Fair, or EPIF, in Delhi at the beginning of March next year. One question that may immediately come to mind is “What is the APO?” You may also wonder what the EPIF is and why the APO is involved in it. I am happy to answer those questions.

The APO is an international organization with the aim of promoting productivity in the Asia-Pacific region. It was founded 49 years ago in Tokyo, Japan, with eight original member countries. Both India and Japan were founding members. The membership has now grown to 20, comprising practically all major countries in Asia except the People’s Republic of China. We conduct dozens of training courses each year to teach productivity tools and techniques such as 5S, kaizen, ISO 9000, the balanced scorecard, Six Sigma, and knowledge management to participants from member countries and economies. We also organize workshops, study meetings, and seminars to examine and discuss current productivity-related topics.

As we attempted to achieve increases in productivity and competitiveness, we realized that the pursuit of productivity must be conducted in a manner that is compatible with a safe, healthy environment. Therefore in 1994, we launched the concept of Green Productivity, a strategy for harmonizing productivity enhancement with environmental preservation. In 2003, in collaboration with about 40 major environment-conscious Japanese companies, the APO established the GP Advisory Committee, or GPAC, whose membership has now grown to more than 60. The GPAC’s first suggestion was to hold an international eco-products fair in an Asian capital. In 2004, with the full support of the GPAC, we organized our first EPIF in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The objective of the fair was to promote public awareness of environmentally friendly products and services by showcasing the most advanced green technologies. We believed that environmentally enlightened consumers would seek out greener products, and that the use of greener products would eventually lead to higher productivity.

The first EPIF in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, was a great success, attracting over 12,000

visitors. Subsequently it was followed by fairs in Bangkok, Singapore, Hanoi, Manila, and Jakarta. Each of the last three EPIFs attracted more than 80,000 visitors. Although visitor numbers are important, the impact of the EPIFs in the host countries is no less significant. Our local partner in Thailand, the Federation of Thai Industry, organized its own national Eco-products Fair in 2007. The Malaysian government is scheduled to sponsor its version of an Eco-products Fair in Kuala Lumpur in October this year, with the target of more than 100,000 visitors. Another result is that all EPIF host countries now have active green purchasing networks, with the most recently established one in Indonesia.

With our experience of six previous fairs under our belt, we will hold the seventh EPIF in Delhi. India is already the second-largest economy in the APO region after Japan and is destined to become the largest in the not-so-distant future. Its influence will increase slowly but steadily. Some predict that India will be the driving force of the 21st century. Therefore, if we can stage the 2011 EPIF successfully, its impact will be far greater than any previously, and that is what we aim to achieve in Delhi next year.

Fortunately, we are receiving full support from the Government of India, the National Productivity Council of India, and other stakeholders in the country. I am sure that with their support and cooperation we can make this fair a huge success.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to Mr. Rajinder Pal Singh, Secretary, Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion, or DIPP, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Ms. Anjali Prasad, Joint Secretary, DIPP, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, and Mr. N.C. Vasudevan, Director-General, National Productivity Council for personally attending this conference for the 2011 EPIF. I would also like to thank Mr. Takashi Yamagishi, Senior Executive Adviser of Teijin Ltd., who also serves as the Chairperson of the Preparatory Committee for the EPIF, for coming all the way from Japan to attend this press conference and for his tireless efforts to make the next EPIF a success. Thank you.