

Asia-Pacific Development Cooperation Forum

21-22 October 2008, Bangkok

Opening statement by Mr. Shigeru Mochida, Deputy Executive Secretary

Distinguished participants, ladies and gentlemen,

I am very pleased to welcome you all to this Asia-Pacific Development Cooperation Forum, jointly organized by UN DESA and UNDP Special Unit of South-South Cooperation and UN ESCAP.

This Forum constitutes an important part of the preparatory work for the biennial high-level Development Cooperation Forum (DCF), which will be convened by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) at the global level in 2010. It is in fact the first of the series of comprehensive consultation process involving all five regions of the world, in an effort to receive views and feedback from a wide range of stakeholders at the regional level. Being global platform for representative, participatory and multi-stakeholder dialogue on major development cooperation issues, DCF serves as a key venue for a global dialogue and policy review towards effective and coherent international development cooperation

At first session of DCF, held in New York in July 2008, it was pointed out that "*a process is needed to facilitate the exchange of information and enhanced analysis, through which other development actors can learn the positive lessons from South-South and triangular development cooperation.*" I believe we are well-placed to start such a consultation process here in Asia-Pacific.

Ladies and gentlemen,

ESCAP engages in many activities which are aimed at promoting south-south and triangular cooperation, either implicitly or explicitly, be it economic development, trade and investment, transport, communication, social development or sustainable development. We have therefore been working as a catalyst for an exchange of experiences among Member States striving for effective development strategies.

In the area of aid for trade, for example which is crucial in an era of trade-driven globalization, we have been playing an active role in promoting public-private partnerships with a focus on capacity- building, undertaking pilot projects and promoting the exchange of best practices. We also took the initiative of establishing the Asia-Pacific forum on efficient trade as a means of promoting the exchange of experiences through regional cooperation. We also provided forums for sharing experiences and best practices among statistical and census offices and in the use of information and communication technologies. These are just a few examples of our initiatives to facilitate exchanges of experiences among countries in the region.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Consultations with stakeholders on such subject as we have been discussing is particularly important for us, given that sixty per cent of the world population is living in the UN ESCAP region. The region is also very diverse, in terms of the size of the country, and population, geography and social, political, economic and environmental conditions. That makes for many challenges as well as opportunities in our joint efforts to promote South-South and triangular cooperation in this region. I believe that particularly for this reason, discussions in this forum on the issues faced by other regions might be very useful in drawing lessons for our region.

Ladies and gentlemen,

We are very pleased to have you here today, representatives from over 15 countries with various backgrounds-government officials including south-south cooperation focal points, academics, and representatives of NGOs, donor agencies, and UN agencies. As the Secretary-General urged at the launch of the Development Cooperation Forum, "*...let us ensure that all voices be heard and that all stakeholders participate actively in building a broad consensus on the governance of international development cooperation.*" We will look forward to your valuable guidance as to how, the United Nations can assist countries for effective development cooperation.

I wish you a very fruitful discussion.

Thank you.
