

**WELCOME REMARKS BY PRESIDENT TADAO CHINO
AT CLOSING PRESS CONFERENCE
34TH ANNUAL MEETING
11 May 2001**

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen:

Thank you very much for coming to this press conference, the closing event of our 34th Annual Meeting. I trust you all have copies of my Closing Remarks.

I am very happy to report that our Annual Meeting was a great success. Governors fully endorsed the way we are implementing our poverty reduction strategy, and expressed approval of our other initiatives, including the Long-Term Strategic Framework – our essential road map for the first decade and a half of the century.

I appreciate the insights and views of Governors on the issues facing the region and ADB in our efforts to reduce poverty. Many noted that ADB is now well equipped with the right policies to tackle this daunting challenge. Some Governors also reaffirmed ADB's traditional emphasis on promoting regional and subregional cooperation, and stressed the importance of ICT in the future development of the Asia and Pacific region.

ADB is a leading institution serving this region, which is home to two-thirds of the world's poor. It is a unique position to combine global and regional knowledge and resources to assist the national efforts of its developing member countries to achieve global antipoverty goals. With the strong support of all our members, our Board of Directors, and our dedicated staff, and in close cooperation with all our developing partners, ADB is fully committed to an Asia and Pacific region free of poverty.

I wish to express my appreciation to the Government of the United States, to the City State of Hawaii and County of Honolulu for their excellent arrangements. We have held a most productive meeting in delightful circumstances.

Our next Annual Meeting will be in Shanghai, People's Republic of China. I hope to see many of you there.

I now invite your questions.