

STAFF GUIDELINES ON PREPARING CHAIR'S SUMMARIES FOR MEETINGS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

I. INTRODUCTION

1. On 22 April 2005, ADB's Board of Directors approved the Public Communications Policy¹ (PCP), to take effect on 1 September 2005. The PCP calls for the disclosure of chair's summaries for each Board discussion on country and regional strategies and programs (CSPs, RCSPs, or their updates) and for each policy and strategy discussed at a formal Board meeting. The PCP also stipulates that the chair's summary for a policy or strategy discussion be made publicly available (posted on ADB's web site) at the same time as the policy or strategy paper is disclosed.²

2. The Board of Directors agreed on 12 July 2005 to make the PCP provision related to chair's summaries effective 15 July. This guidance note outlines the procedures for preparing such summaries. Questions about this procedure may be directed to the Public Information and Disclosure Unit (InfoUnit) of the Department of External Relations.

II. FORMAT AND CONTENT OF THE SUMMARY

3. Chair's summaries will be prepared in the same manner and level of detail as they are currently being developed for Board discussions on CSPs. A chair's summary should have the following characteristics:

- i. The length of the document will normally be kept to one page.
- ii. An introductory statement should be included, indicating the paper the Board discussed, and whether they approved or endorsed it. The number of Directors who opposed or abstained may also be mentioned (note that this will be disclosed in the Board minutes).
- iii. The chair's summary should not attempt to cover the discussion as a whole or reflect divergent Board views, but rather to convey the major points of discussion with three to five key points on which the Board placed emphasis. It is to be drafted as a statement of the Chair summarizing the views of the Board.
- iv. For each point covered, ensure a balanced perspective is reflected. For example, if some Directors expressed concern about one area, but other Directors held a different view on the subject, then both perspectives should be covered.
- v. The choice of language should be neutral (no value statements), factual, and succinct.
- vi. Do not include any names in the summary. Instead, "many Directors" may be used to reflect the majority opinion (e.g., half or more of the Board expressed this view), "some" or "several" may be used to reflect the opinion of 3-5 Board members, and "a few" may be used to characterize the opinion stated by two members. If there is a major point

¹ 2005. ADB. The Public Communications Policy of the Asian Development Bank: Disclosure and Exchange of Information. Manila.

² See paragraph 67 of the public communications policy.

raised by only one Director, staff should use their discretion regarding whether or not to include that point in the summary.

4. Two samples of chair's summaries are attached.

III. PROCEDURE FOR APPROVING THE SUMMARY

5. The goal is to produce the summary and post it on ADB's web site as soon as possible after the Board meeting.

6. For policy and strategy papers, the PCP stipulates that the chair's summary must be posted along with the associated Board paper, so delays in preparing and approving the summary will result in a delay in posting of the policy or strategy paper itself.

Step 1: A draft chair's summary will be prepared by staff from the department that creates the policy, strategy, or CSP/RCSP document. Usually the policy/strategy task manager or country team leader will draft the summary. She or he should plan to develop the initial draft on the afternoon of the day of the Board meeting. She or he should get director and DG approval for the draft on the following day.

Step 2: Following DG approval, the draft summary will then be sent to the responsible VP. The department should ensure that the draft is circulated to the VP's office no later than 48 hours after the Board meeting.

Step 3: After the VP has reviewed the draft, the department incorporates any VP comments and sends the revised draft through email to The Secretary, copied to the Deputy Secretary. OSEC will review the draft for consistency and quality, consulting with DER and other departments as necessary. OSEC will then return the draft (with comments, if any) to the department by email to the DG, copied to concerned staff.

Step 4: The department will then formally submit the revised draft to the President, through the VP and copied to The Secretary, requesting the President's approval to circulate the draft to the Board of Directors. The memo should indicate that the draft has been reviewed by OSEC.

Step 5: Once the President's approval is obtained, the department will forward the memo approved by the President to The Secretary, who will then circulate the summary to the Board.

Step 6: The Board will be requested to provide comments to OSEC by email by the close of business on the next working day.

Step 7: Upon receipt of any proposed changes by Board members, OSEC will then forward the suggested revisions to the respective DG, copied to concerned staff, by email for their review. Step 7 should be completed within one working day.

Step 8: The department will then submit the final draft to the President, through the VP, with any proposed changes submitted by Board members attached, for final review and approval to post on ADB's web site. The memo should indicate that changes were

incorporated in consultation with OSEC. If at all possible, step 8 should be completed within one working day (depending on the availability of the VP and President).

Step 9: Once approved, the department sends the final chair's summary (preferably as a PDF document) as an email attachment to the DER Web Team for posting (docs4web@adb.org), and to OSEC (eboard@adb.org) for storage on the eBoard. For policies and strategies, the policy or strategy paper should be sent to DER along with the chair's summary (the CSP or RCSP paper should have been disclosed immediately after Board endorsement).



Chair's Summary of Meeting of the Board Directors

7 October 2004

Nepal: Country Strategy and Program (2005-2009)

1. The Directors appreciated Management's decision to postpone Board discussion of the CSP to permit the Development Effectiveness Committee (DEC) to discuss the Country Assistance Program Evaluation Report (CAPE) for Nepal before the CSP was discussed by the Board. Both documents were prepared in parallel. While appreciating the efficiencies that could result from a "parallel" process in which the CAPE and the CSP were prepared, the DEC recommended that in the future a more sequential process should be followed, allowing some time between finalization of the CAPE and preparation of the CSP. The Directors noted that DEC endorsed the primary recommendations of the CAPE, and that these had been taken into account in preparing the CSP in one way or another.

2. The Directors appreciated Management's decision to postpone Board discussion of the CSP to permit the Development Effectiveness Committee (DEC) to discuss the Country Assistance Program Evaluation Report (CAPE) for Nepal before the CSP was discussed by the Board. Both documents were prepared in parallel. While appreciating the efficiencies that could result from a "parallel" process in which the CAPE and the CSP were prepared, the DEC recommended that in the future a more sequential process should be followed, allowing some time between finalization of the CAPE and preparation of the CSP. The Directors noted that DEC endorsed the primary recommendations of the CAPE, and that these had been taken into account in preparing the CSP in one way or another.

3. The Directors endorsed the Nepal Country Strategy and Program (CSP) for 2005-2009. The Directors commented that it was well prepared and based on a sound conflict assessment. They agreed with the general thrust of the CSP and the need to continue to support Nepal's development at this difficult time. Some Directors queried whether a 5 year period is appropriate in case of the Nepal CSP. Staff responded that the time frame is consistent with the Government's medium-term planning documents, but that it would be reviewed annually through the CSPU process.

4. The Directors appreciated the Nepal CSP as ADB's first pilot results-based CSP and stressed the importance of greater specificity of indicators identified to track outcomes or results. Some Directors suggested that the results matrix could be improved by establishing a clearer linkage between outcome indicators and sector objectives, and systems to show the contribution of ADB's assistance to the specified outcomes. Several Directors emphasized the importance of strengthening monitoring and evaluation capacity and allocating more resources to implement the results-based CSP. Some Directors also recommended more delegation of authority and operations to the resident mission to help implement the results-based CSP. Staff responded that the results matrix will be reviewed to improve its design as a management tool.

5. The Directors stressed the importance of strengthening institutional capacity and appreciated the operations implementation strategy embedded in the CSP to enable effective implementation of projects and programs in Nepal in the present conflict environment. Many Directors raised concerns about the Government's weak implementation capacity and adverse impacts of the conflict, and the absence of elected local bodies. Staff responded that while the government's project implementation had deteriorated since 2001 mainly due to the conflict and political instability, its implementation capacity to carry out critical reforms has remained strong as demonstrated by the wide-ranging and complex agenda the Government has been implementing in the past 2 years. The Government is also making efforts to address project implementation weaknesses as part of the ongoing dialogue and review process with development partners.

6. Some Directors felt that it would be important for ADB to support sectors which have growth potential through sound economic analysis and help the Government to improve domestic revenue mobilization.

7. Some Directors emphasized the importance of the selectivity and flexibility of ADB's country program. Staff stated that ADB's sectoral focus has increased significantly in the present CSP and that sector approaches to allow greater operational flexibility in the country program will be encouraged.



Chair's Summary of Meeting of the Board Directors

22 April 2005

The Public Communications Policy of the Asian Development Bank: *Disclosure and Exchange of Information*

1. Directors stated their support for the public communications policy (the Policy). One Director abstained because it falls short of legislative requirements of his government. Directors emphasized the need for efficient and effective implementation of the Policy.
2. Directors expressed support for the new external relations strategy, and welcomed the approach outlined in the Policy. In particular, Directors supported the emphasis on management's role as ADB's most visible communicator, and targeting decision makers and opinion leaders. However, some Directors cautioned ADB not to shift priority only to donors and neglect borrowing countries.
3. In its approach to disclosure, the Policy reflects a balance between maintaining a presumption for disclosure and respecting the views and interests of ADB's partners. Directors noted that greater transparency will ensure that ADB's operations have greater development impact. Directors cautioned that transparency should not impede a candid internal exchange of views.
4. Directors emphasized the importance of not adding to the transaction costs of the borrowers. Enhancement of the Bank's public communications cannot be achieved at the expense of efficient and effective operations. Management clarified that any new costs will be borne by ADB.

Asian Development Bank

5. Some Directors commented on the upgrading of the Office of External Relations to a department, and expressed their support for the work of the representative offices being integrated into the new department.

6. Directors stated concern about the Policy's costs and questioned whether the costs for disclosure were underestimated. They argued that ADB must be more willing to make resource cuts in those functions that are no longer integral to its strategic mission.

7. Directors welcomed the more recent policy changes for the disclosure of private sector documents. Some Directors, however, called for the payments to host governments for large projects in the extractive industries to be disclosed.

8. Some Directors were concerned about the Policy's restriction on the disclosure of the list of sanctioned firms and individuals and called for ADB to work toward full disclosure of the sanctions list. Management responded that the list may be provided to governments on a confidential basis, and promised that the pros and cons of disclosing the list will be kept under review.

9. Some Directors emphasized the importance of the selectivity and flexibility of ADB's country program. Staff stated that ADB's sectoral focus has increased significantly in the present CSP and that sector approaches to allow greater operational flexibility in the country program will be encouraged.