

TURKEY

BURHANETTIN AKTAŞ, Head of Delegation

It is a great pleasure for me to address you today in Jeju Island, which is well known as a Land of “fantasy and mystery”.

For this unique opportunity, I would like to express our sincere thanks to our hosts, the Government of the Republic of Korea and, the friendly people of this lovely island, who are so kind to share such wonderful nature with us.

Despite the several setbacks of early 2003, the recent developments in the Asia and Pacific Region are positive in general. The well-contained SARS epidemic outbreak as well as reduced geopolitical uncertainties generated a more dynamic environment in the region.

The favorable global conditions and their reflections in the region enabled countries to continue their efforts towards the poverty reduction. Strong domestic demand in the region increased the intraregional trade. It is pleasing to note that growth in the region as a whole reached 6.3% in 2003. I believe that the Asian Development Bank’s (ADB’s) important role behind this success should not be underestimated.

However, the different rates of economic and social development still creates significant discrepancies among the subregions as well as the countries within these subregions.

Actually, the new ADF replenishment period provided us an important opportunity to review the current policies of ADB which further enhance its capacity. President Tadao Chino’s speech at the first round of the Asian Development Fund (ADF) IX meeting in Copenhagen was an important step forward for development effectiveness and internal reform.

I would like to thank the President and the Management for their commitment to the necessary policy changes as well as ADB staff for their diligent work in producing very comprehensive policy documents for the ADF 9. In this respect, we welcome the launching of the Human Resource Management study, which aims at the enhancement of transparency and efficiency.

We expect this study to introduce stronger staff accountability, better staff incentives, and working conditions, balanced workload distribution and merit-based appointments. We believe such an investment in the human capital of ADB will increase the effectiveness of its operations in the near future.

With such capacity building, ADB would have a more proactive and creative role in the region. Continued consultation with the borrowers and performers on how to improve the policy and development strategy remains the crucial point in achieving

economic growth and poverty alleviation in the region. In this respect, focusing on results management and performance-based resource allocation will strengthen ADB's pivotal role in the region and increase the efficiency of its activities in such countries even further.

In conclusion, I would like to express our appreciation and thanks for the achievements and good performance of ADB to the President and his dedicated team for the successful conclusion of the ADF IX.

On this occasion, I would like to mention that we would be very much pleased and honoured to see you all in Istanbul next year. Being the junction point of continents and cultures, I believe, Istanbul will offer a good environment for deliberations of 38th Annual Meeting of the Asian Development Bank.