



AFGHANISTAN

Mohd. Humayon Qayoumi, Governor

The Fifty-Second Annual Meeting of the Board of Governors in Nadi, Fiji from 2 to 5 May 2019.

Honorable President, Members of the Board of Governors, Representatives of International Development and Financial Institutions, delegates from civil society organization, ladies and gentlemen;

Let me first thank you the government of Fiji for hosting the 52nd Annual Meeting of the Board of Governors here in Nadi, Fiji. Thank you for the excellent preparations to the host country and the management of the Asian Development Bank (ADB).

Mr. President,

On behalf of the government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, I extend my heartfelt congratulations for the excellent leadership and management of the ADB team. The team has contributed exuberantly while working with the member states.

Taking this opportunity, I extend my emphasis on growing needs on poverty index and support to the achievements in year 2018. In particular, I refer to the following key highlights.

- ADB disbursed a record \$14.18 billion in 2018— \$2.74 billion more than in 2017.
- Continued decline in absolute poverty amid moderating economic growth.
- Poverty reduction has continued, but 264 million people in the region still lived below the extreme poverty line in 2015 and 836 million people lived just above that level.
- The prevalence of stunting among children under the age of 5 in ADB DMCs remained above global averages. Child mortality declined from 36 per 1,000 live births in 2014 to 31 per 1,000 in 2017 but remained substantially higher in the concessional assistance countries, at 49 per 1,000.
- About 92% of people in ADB DMCs had access to electricity in 2017, although the share generated from renewable sources declined.
- The rates of water and sanitation coverage remained largely unchanged, with wide rural–urban disparities.
- While road access increased by 2.2 kilometers per 10,000 people during 2013–2016 to 22.3 kilometers per 10,000.
- Environmental trends still a concern. Forest cover remained unchanged and the region saw a continued rise in total carbon emissions, albeit at a slower pace, while carbon intensity declined.

In addition, to the last year's achievement and continued work to address the challenges in the region, I believe it's important for ADB to showcase digital solutions for urban development that will help optimize urban planning and infrastructure development.

Furthermore, private sector also has a key role to play both in promoting efficiency in the use of resources and mobilizing investments to augment the limited public sector funds available to achieve sustainable growth. As ADB plans to increase its private sector operations so that they account for one-third of supported projects by 2024. Hopefully, ADB's demonstration role in catalyzing private sector capital for achieving a sustainable development path in the region will go a long way.

About the Asian Development Fund (ADF) 12 Midterm Review Meeting which was held in Manila two months ago. It was an opportunity to start discussing the future of ADF, as well as ADB concessional assistance more generally. I would like to thank the representatives from the ADF donors for the constructive discussions and extending Afghanistan's phase out period under the ADF 13. My team relayed to me the content of these discussions and I highly appreciated the specific and comprehensive comments and inputs by donors.

On behalf of the people of Afghanistan, I thank you all for the contributions and assistance provided to the government of Afghanistan.

Thank you.