



CANADA

Andrew Clark, Temporary Alternate Governor

I would like to warmly thank the Government of the Republic of Fiji for hosting this year's Annual Meeting, the first Annual Meeting to take place in a Pacific Island Country. As the world seeks to address the on-going challenges of disaster risk and climate change adaptation, we view this as particularly meaningful and symbolic. Canada sincerely hopes we can translate this symbolism into strong collective action. We continue to place great value on our engagement with the Asia-Pacific region, and we view the Asian Development Bank (ADB) as a key multilateral development partner in fostering sustainable, green, gender-responsive and inclusive economic growth throughout the region.

The development landscape has changed considerably in the Asia Pacific region with over one billion people lifted out of extreme poverty since 1990, an outcome in which the ADB and all of its partners have played a crucial role and should be justifiably proud. But we know significant challenges remain, such as building disaster and climate change resilience and addressing widespread income and gender inequalities.

Canada welcomes the completion of the new strategic framework for the ADB: *Strategy 2030*. This forward-looking strategy will help the ADB respond to the region's changing needs and achieve a more prosperous, inclusive, resilient and sustainable Asia and the Pacific, and sets important targets in the key areas of gender, climate and private sector operations. We are encouraged by the inclusion of a number of key issues, such as a differentiated approach towards support for Small Island Developing States; and fragile, conflict affected States; accelerating progress in gender equality; and tackling climate change. We are pleased the Bank will develop a range of differentiated pricing options reflective of member countries' economic development.

Canada also greatly appreciates the quick response of the ADB and partners in this past year in addressing a number of environmental and humanitarian crises including, perhaps most importantly, the dire situation in Cox's Bazar, responding to the substantial urgent infrastructure requirements of the Rohingya refugees, for which there remain significant unmet needs. We therefore welcome the ADB's greater involvement in highly complex, fragile or difficult environments, which will require the comprehensive application of the Bank's "One ADB" approach.

But we cannot ignore **the growing inequality in the region**, and must ensure that economic growth works for everyone. Focusing on the poorest and most vulnerable countries and people, especially women and girls, is a priority for Canada. We also believe that this must remain at the core of the ADB's work, particularly through the Asian Development Fund.

We would like to underline the crucial importance for both ADB and the region to bridge the gender gap by greater promotion of gender equality and **empowering women and girls**.

Canada believes strongly that focusing on advancing gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls is the best way to reduce poverty and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, which is why Canada has a Feminist International Assistance Policy.

We need to foster greater participation of women in the social, economic and political spheres – starting with project design and aiming for ambitious gender equality targets and tangible results that close gender equality gaps across all sectors of ADB programming. Canada believes that addressing the systemic barriers that women and girls face, and providing them with the tools and opportunities to be powerful agents of change, are of paramount importance to the region’s long-term prosperity.

Canada encourages ADB to continue its efforts to implement gender mainstreaming into all programming, in order to reach the increased targets for gender equality integration into all projects. Canada is pleased that ADB will reach beyond previous targets and is now committed to achieving at least 75% of ADB’s operations will promote gender equality by 2030. While the new target could have been a bit more ambitious from our perspective, it is a good step in the right direction and we would encourage the Bank to surpass this commitment. To that effect, we would also urge ADB to consider projects focused specifically on gender equality and establish specific targets that demonstrate how the results of ADB’s work is closing gender equality gaps in all sectors, particularly infrastructure programming.

We believe the importance of women in leadership roles cannot be underestimated and so we value improved gender diversity on ADB’s Board of Directors and would suggest Governors, Directors and senior officers explore ways to enhance and promote gender equality in all board decision-making, and increase Board diversity when making appointment decisions. For its part, the ADB needs to put into place additional staffing, training resources and capacity at all levels in order to achieve these important objectives. As an organization, the ADB has made significant progress to address gender inequalities, with good gender equality tools and policies and the Bank should continue to recruit and further empower its staff, especially women, at the senior levels, with adequate training and resources to meet these challenges.

We also need to emphasize the global challenge of **climate change, and particularly its impact on the Asia and Pacific region.**

The fight to limit the impacts of global climate change is tremendously important for the Asia and Pacific region, and the ADB can play a leadership role in addressing this enormous challenge. Canada welcomes the ADB’s commitment to double its annual climate financing by 2020, and we encourage stronger consideration of adaptive solutions. We also support the target of 75% commitments by ADB to be climate relevant, and look forward to seeing the methodology that will underlie this commitment, which should be defined in collaboration with other MDBs to ensure consistent accounting of climate financing.

The ADB is a key stakeholder in efforts to ensure the region moves further away from non-renewable energy sources to meet its COP21 commitments. We reiterate the desirability for the Bank to update its 2009 Energy Policy so the ADB can play a greater and more catalytic role in promoting clean energy, energy efficiency, climate-proofed infrastructure and environmentally sustainable, gender-responsive growth throughout the Asia-Pacific region. If just four of ADB’s regional member countries proceed with their current coal fired generation plans the Paris 2-degree target will be essentially unachievable. We are convinced there are utility scale renewable

energy alternatives, which ADB is already piloting, and we encourage all Asian nations to join the global Powering Past Coal Alliance. Finally, Canada notes the World Bank's commitment and leadership to stop all investments in coal, oil, and gas and believe ADB should give serious consideration to doing the same.

As a result of the 2018 G7 Leaders' Summit, under Canadian leadership, G7 Leaders committed to the Charlevoix Blueprint for Healthy Oceans, Seas and Resilient Coastal Communities. The health of our oceans and seas is critical to the well-being of our planet and plays a fundamental role in the global climate system and supporting communities, jobs and livelihoods, food security, health, biodiversity and economic prosperity. We were very pleased that Bangladesh, the Marshall Islands, the Seychelles and Vietnam have also joined the G7 leaders' commitment to protect the health of marine environments and ensure a sustainable use of marine resources as part of a renewed agenda to increase global biodiversity.

As a further demonstration of our leadership on healthy oceans, Canada committed \$100 million to a marine litter mitigation fund to help developing countries prevent waste from entering the oceans, address plastic waste on shorelines, and better manage existing plastic resources. This fund will help the main Asian global hotspots, and African countries at risk.

Canada is also providing \$20 million in support of sustainable fisheries management in developing countries, including \$10 million to the Pacific Initiative for Biodiversity, Climate Change and Resilience initiative announced at the November 2018 APEC Summit to assist the Pacific region adapt to climate change, protect biodiversity, and improve ocean health.

And the Sustainable Blue Economy Conference, co-hosted by Canada, Kenya, and Japan, built on Canada's efforts to safeguard our oceans and support resilient coasts and coastal communities. Many around this table have signed on to the Oceans Plastics Charter: 6 of our G7 partners, as well as the Netherlands and Norway, the Marshall Islands, Nauru, Palau, Myanmar and Samoa. We welcome the ADB and all member states' efforts to join us in addressing these pressing global problems.

These commitments reflect the development assistance strategy and priorities that Canada is pursuing in the Asia Pacific, notably: advancing gender equality and women's empowerment; climate change, ocean health and clean energy; and developing innovative financing models.

Canada and our partners at the 2018 G7 Leaders' Summit also committed \$3.8 billion to support quality education for women and girls in crisis and conflict situations. Canada welcomed an additional \$527 million from partners at the UN General Assembly to help developing countries give every child access to quality education and modern skills training. We are pleased that ADB has expanded its support for technology advances in primary education in Bangladesh and youth and vocational education for technology and skills upgrading in India and Sri Lanka. We are also happy to note that ADB was again successful this year in their application for the Women Entrepreneurs Finance Initiative (We-Fi) for the Asia and Pacific region, over which Canada has the Presidency and helps fund.

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Recognizing that public resources alone will be insufficient to meet the Sustainable Development Goals, we encourage the ADB to use its capital wisely by increasingly seeking to mobilize private capital to increase total resources available for projects. The success of Canada's partnership with the ADB and the other multilateral development banks, working together as a system, highlights the effectiveness of blended finance as a tool to both attract private sector investment to developing countries and to disseminate technological knowledge and expertise, which Canada's 200 Million Climate Fund for the Private Sector in Asia exemplifies. Canada is pleased that the ADB is considering using Canadian funds from this Climate Fund for the Private Sector to support the ADB's Pacific Renewable Energy Program, for which at least 5 Pacific developing member states will receive support to work with the private sector in developing their own power generation facilities through partial risk guarantees, loans and letters of credit.

We support ADB's efforts to strengthen its results-based approach to its new corporate results framework, and want to ensure strong monitoring and measurement frameworks are in place for this dynamic new framework. We continue to encourage the ADB to increasingly approach its operations in the context of multilateral development banks operating as a system. By working together and coordinating their interventions, these banks have the potential to achieve a transformational development impact that is beyond the reach of a single institution. Ongoing work such as the G7 and the G20's Eminent Persons Group on Global Finance Governance point to a growing appetite of shareholders to increase MDBs' effectiveness, coherence and coordination. Multilateral development banks working together as a system are playing an instrumental role in advancing the G20 Roadmap to Infrastructure as an Asset Class, which seeks to unlock large volumes of capital into much need infrastructure investments.

To conclude, I would like to repeat Canada's steadfast commitment to the ADB and the Asia and Pacific region as together we address poverty reduction, gender equality and climate change challenges.