



**Speech by Dato' Patricia Yoon-Moi Chia, Secretary-General
The Colombo Plan Secretariat at the
53rd Session of APO Governing Body, 20 April 2011
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia**

Excellency Mr Somdy Inmyxai, APO Chair
First Vicechair, Tan Sri Azman Hashim
Second Vicechair, Mr. Yamaranz Erkhembayar
H.E Fidel V.Ramos, former Preseident of the Republic of the Philippines
Excellency Mr Ryuichiro Yamazaki, Secretary-General of the APO
Distinguished Delegates,
Directors and Staff of APO and PAPA, the other International Organization
present here,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Colombo Plan, I would like to thank the Asian Productivity Organization (APO) for inviting the Colombo Plan to this 53rd Session of the APO Governing Body. Also, I would like to thank the Government of Malaysia through the Malaysian Productivity Corporation for hosting this Meeting.

I would also like to express our deep felt sympathies to the government and people of Japan over the tragic loss of so many lives and property during the March 11 earthquake and tsunami. We wish them strength and a speedy recovery.

This year, both our organization, APO and the Colombo Plan have reached significant milestones. I would also like to congratulate APO on the occasion of its 50th Anniversary this year. The Colombo Plan is also celebrating its 60th Anniversary on 1 July 2011.

I would like to highlight some successes of the Colombo Plan. The Colombo Plan scholarships have benefitted more than 300,000 best and the brightest in the Asia-Pacific region. These scholars return to their own countries to contribute to their social and economic development. Among these scholars are the Malaysian APO Director, Tan Sri Azman Hashim and the Minister of International Trade and Industry, H.E. Mustapa Mohamad, who need no introduction to their achievements and contributions to Malaysian economy, finance and economy. Another example is the APO Award Winner, Mr. Rachmat Gobel's late father who went on a Colombo Plan Scholarship to

Japan in 1955 where he was introduced to the Chairman of Panasonic. A joint venture ensured leading to the penetration of Panasonic brand into Indonesia.

The Colombo Plan collaborates with APO for implementation of technical training programmes on productivity increases of SMEs and developing livelihoods of the rural communities. The APO has been a collaborating partner of the Colombo Plan since 1995, the year the Colombo Plan restructured and was revitalized and transformed to meet the relevant needs of member countries and dispel the notion that it has outlived its usefulness.

Since 1995, the total number of the Colombo Plan and APO co-sponsored training programmes 72 courses and 459 participants have benefited from our collaboration. This continuing collaboration not only creates synergistic partnerships, optimising increasingly scarce resources premised on a win-win approach that will contribute towards making an impact for the development of private sector through productivity increases in APO and the Colombo Plan member countries. 18 of APO members are also among the 26 Colombo Plan member countries, except for Republic of China and Cambodia. Of course, this will definitely make inroads in the alleviation of poverty in the Asia-Pacific region.

For 2011, the Colombo Plan and APO will have joint programme in the Philippines, Indonesia, Fiji and Thailand. We look forward to a future of excellent cooperation between the Colombo Plan and APO.

Mr Chairman,

I would like to extend an open invitation to all present here today to join us in our celebration in Colombo, Sri Lanka, 1-3 July 2011. There will be several activities in Colombo including a South-South Cooperation Seminar. Once again, I would like to thank APO for the kind invitation and MPC, Malaysia for your warm welcome and kind hospitality.