



ADB-OECD TO HOST CONFERENCE ON COMBATING CORRUPTION IN ASIA-PACIFIC

MANILA, PHILIPPINES (28 November 2003) – Senior policy makers from 35 countries, and representatives of the private sector, civil society and the international donor community are gathering next week in Kuala Lumpur at the fourth regional anti-corruption conference for Asia and the Pacific to discuss progress made by countries of the region in implementing the regional Anti-Corruption Action Plan. The conference is organized by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), in cooperation with the Anti-Corruption Agency of Malaysia.

Malaysian Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Haji Ahmad Badawi will deliver the keynote address at the conference.

The ADB-OECD Initiative was launched at a regional workshop in Manila in October 1999. Its main instrument, the Action Plan, has to date been endorsed by 21 countries and contains legally non-binding principles and standards for strengthening national and regional anti-corruption efforts. Under this agreement, participating governments of the Asia-Pacific region have committed to undertake actions to combat bribery and money laundering, and to promote public sector integrity in a coordinated and comprehensive manner. The key objective under the ADB-OECD Initiative is to support endorsing countries in their reform efforts that aim at implementing the Action Plan.

Against this background, the three-day conference to begin on 3 December will review progress made by endorsing countries in curbing corruption in the framework of the Action Plan; discuss problems encountered in this context and identify concrete solutions; and foster cooperation among countries in the region to fight corruption. Targeted capacity building workshops will furthermore allow participants to increase knowledge on specific themes in the field of anti-corruption that participating countries have identified as being of particular importance to their anti-corruption strategies.

The conference follows the two-day Steering Group Meeting also to be held in Kuala Lumpur which will discuss participating countries reform projects under the Action Plan; prepare the Plan's second implementation phase and activities to be undertaken in the framework of the Initiative over the coming 12 to 18 months; and discuss a report prepared by the group on the region's legal and institutional framework for combating corruption.

The results from the Steering Group meeting and from discussions at the conference will assist to benchmark the current legal and institutional anti-corruption framework to facilitate evaluation of progress, assist in identifying additional capacity building needs, and to encourage additional countries to join the Action Plan.

Two news conferences are planned, on Wednesday 3 December at 4.00 p.m. at Hotel Shangri-La with Malaysian Prime Minister Dato' Seri Abdullah Haji Ahmad Badawi, OECD Deputy Secretary General Kiyotaka Akasaka and ADB Vice President Gerry van der Linden, and on Friday 5 December at 12.00 noon, also at Hotel Shangri-La, with Hon. Tan Sri Samsudin Osman, Chief Secretary to the Government of Malaysia, the Director General of the Anti-Corruption Agency Malaysia, the ADB and the OECD. The opening session on Wednesday afternoon 3 December (3pm to 4pm) and the closing session on Friday morning 5 December (11am to 12am) are also open to journalists.

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