

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen,

On behalf of the co-secretariat of the Anti-Corruption Initiative for Asia and the Pacific, the Asian Development Bank, and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, welcome to the ACI 11th conference.

And welcome to bustling Manila, a city like no other, and the beautiful Philippines.

It is ADB's honor to host this conference as it particularly resonates with the true vision and mission of the ACI, being cooperation and inclusion with and amongst anticorruption and integrity policymakers, practitioners, experts, law enforcement, and private sector representatives in a time when all countries and societies emerge from the effects, to one degree or another, from the global pandemic and venture into the new normal.

Transparency, integrity, and trust are building blocks to facilitate rebuilding and recovery in the Asia-Pacific region in the post-pandemic environment.

Crisis situations, stemming from natural or man-made disasters, are often followed by a second tragedy: corruption and other integrity risks in the response to such disasters.

This is due to a combination of sudden pressure on the decision-making and disbursement processes, a high volume of funds involved, and logistical and coordination challenges involving a myriad of actors from government, private sector, and civil society.

This conference and its network groups are aptly focused on promoting transparency, integrity, and trust to rebuild and further strengthen resilient economies and the societies that underpin the economies.

ACI is unique in the Asia and the Pacific region as it focuses on collaboration and inclusiveness of a diverse group of stakeholders with a common goal of utilizing peer-learning, mutual support and exchange of expertise, while taking into account the geographical and developmental diversity of its members; demands on members' human and financial resources; and the need to provide added-value in view of the functions and roles of other multilateral anti-corruption bodies.

In that same spirit of rebuilding and reinvigorating as society emerges from the pandemic, ACI is also undertaking a rejuvenation.

On behalf of the ACI and its Advisory Group, we ask that you please complete a short survey to assist ACI undertake a pulse check and assist greatly in setting the go-forward strategy of the ACI and also developing the next 3 years' workplan.

Your feedback is essential in what is actually an initiative for the diverse and multi-faceted Asia and the Pacific that is owned by us all.

It is now my pleasure to introduce to you: John Versantvoort, Head of Office of Anti-Corruption and Integrity, ADB, and Nicolas Pinaud, Deputy Director, Directorate for Financial and Enterprise Affairs, OECD, to give the opening remarks.

The floor is yours, gentlemen.