

Welcoming Remarks by Mr. Hiroshi Ikegawa

Ms. Davaasuren Chultemjamts, Director, United Nations Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific (SIAP),

Mr. Paul Cheung, Director, United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD),

Ms. Adelheid Burgi-Schmelz, Director, Statistics Department, International Monetary Fund (IMF),

Dear Participants, ladies and gentlemen:

It is my great pleasure to say a few words at the opening of the Ninth Management Seminar for Heads of the National Statistical Offices in Asia and the Pacific, as the Director-General for Policy Planning of Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, MIC, the cooperating agency in the host country to the Institute. The seminar is conducted as a part of the 40th anniversary celebration of SIAP.

In an increasingly globalized world, in order to establish reliable official statistics, it would be urgent common issue for each government to cultivate highly specialized statistical personnel. It means that the national statistical organizations, NSOs are expected to play a major role in dealing with this issue.

In Japan, the new Statistics Act was enforced in April 2009. According to the Act, official statistics are identified as critical information that serves as the infrastructure in order to carry out decision-making that is rational from the public's perspective. It also recommends the establishment of a Basic Plan as a government's overall principle and we are promoting development of comprehensive official statistics.

In the Basic Plan, cultivating and securing statistical personnel is a challenging issue. I think that in order to develop our future statistical administration, it would be critically important to cultivate specialized statistical personnel based on a new perspective, 'statistics for the public'. The specialized statistical personnel means a sophisticated person who can select truly expected statistical needs accurately and develop accessible statistical data for the public.

The government of Japan, host country to SIAP, hope sincerely that in the seminar you will exchange valuable opinions on the roles of NSOs in the future and the cultivation of statistical personnel to implement their roles.

In conclusion, I wish that the statistical offices of the respective countries and the international organizations concerned as well as SIAP, which is celebrating its 40th Anniversary will continue to develop further.

Thank you