

Benjamin E Diokno: Welcome remarks to the GRIPS Academic Conference

Welcome remarks by Mr Benjamin E Diokno, Governor of Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP, the central bank of the Philippines), to the GRIPS Academic Conference, Manila, 21 June 2019.

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Mr. Takehiko Nakao, President and Chair of the Board of Directors of the Asian Development Bank (ADB), Dr. Akihiko Tanaka, President of the National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies (GRIPS), distinguished session presenters and discussants, GRIPS alumni, faculty members and staff, ladies and gentlemen, good morning.

Welcome to the first ever BSP-GRIPS Academic Conference. With the theme “*Public Policy for Sustainable Development Goals*,” this conference is a special one as it is, in fact, a triple event. Not only is this conference being held as part of the 70 years’ celebration of central banking in the Philippines, it also commemorates the 20th year anniversary of GRIPS and the 40th year anniversary of its predecessor, the Graduate School of Policy Science (GSPS).

For this, let us give ourselves a round of applause (Gov. leads everyone to applause).

As the samurai, Yamamoto Tsunetomo, said over 300 years ago in the book *Hagakure: The Book of the Samurai*, “Wisdom comes from paying attention to wise people.”

And this, I believe, is what GRIPS—and its predecessor GSPS—has been doing over the last 40 years. That is helping us achieve wisdom by creating a venue where we can listen to wise people and hone the skills of policymakers worldwide, acquire valuable and innovative ideas to strengthen their knowledge, and formulate research-based studies to support worthwhile policy-making.

All this using a comparative perspective and practical approach, with due consideration to Japan’s wide-ranging experience and utmost consideration of country-specific issues and circumstances.

Needless to say, there are many wise people in this conference. Browsing through the line-up of the paper presentations, I could also see many timely, relevant, and innovative policy ideas that may emanate from such discussions. From the impact of innovation in achieving inclusiveness; the BSP’s role in the process of state building in the Philippines; to the relationship of financial literacy to achieving financial inclusion—these are rich subject matters worthy of much discussion.

I leave this up to all of you to discuss policy and its practical implications in the ensuing sessions. But it is not enough that we discuss and become wise for ourselves.

I urge everyone to turn these discussions into actions that would lead to public policy for sustainable development goals of our country, just as our conference theme reflects. Let us use our wisdom to help not just ourselves but others as well.

After this conference, I look forward to being with everyone at the alumni homecoming this evening. But I will not keep you any longer. I hope for everyone to have fruitful discussions and meaningful exchanges at this conference. Once again, thank you very much and I wish you all a productive day ahead.