Welcoming Remarks (Plenary 1)

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State Councillor and Secretary-General of the State Council, P.R. China

The ADB/OECD Anti-Corruption Initiative for Asia and the Pacific 7th Steering Group meeting and the Fifth Regional Anti-Corruption Conference for Asia and the Pacific now open in Beijing. On behalf of the Chinese government and Chinese people, I would like to extend our congratulations on the convening of the conference and warm welcome to all delegates present here.

The theme of the conference of “Reducing Inequality and Promoting Growth — Driving down corruption” is of great significance. It is an important guarantee for equality and growth, and the common choice of the governments across the region to reduce corruption to the lowest possible level through conducting effective management and supervision and enhancing government integrity and efficiency. At this conference, delegates will focus on the issues of common concern, exchanging experiences and discussing ways to prevent and fight against corruption. By doing so, I believe, it will further promote the anti-corruption drive in the region and exchanges and cooperation in the area of combating corruption.

As a member of the large Asia-Pacific family, China has always been pursuing peace, development and cooperation, concentrating all its efforts on construction and development. Since we adopted the policy of reform and opening up, China’s economy has been growing in a fast and sustainable way, the overall national strength enhancing, and people’s living standard improving. The development of China has also created new development opportunities for other countries, and made positive contributions to the peace and development of the region and even the world.

While focusing on reform, opening and economic construction, the Chinese government attaches great importance to promoting administrative restructuring and government building. We have been working hard to build a law-based, accountable, clean and service-oriented government through transferring government functions, instituting scientific and democratic decision-making, innovating new managing methods, opening government affairs and intensifying administrative supervision. We have made big efforts on building a clean and diligent government and combating corruption, continuously increasing our endeavour to prevent corruption and exploring ways to prevent and address problems at the source. We adhered to and perfected the leadership structure and work mechanisms of anti-corruption to form a joint force against corruption. Focus has also been given to those outstanding problems that infringed on public rights and interests and efforts have been made to address those malpractices that harmed public rights and interests. We persist in conducting government administration according to law, managing government affairs strictly and severely deal with the cases of breaking laws and disciplines. We use reform as a tool to address deep-rooted problems that lead to corruption and perfect and create new structures, mechanisms and systems. China, after years of great endeavour, has scored and continues to score outstanding achievements in countering corruption, which has ensured China’s economic growth, promoted democratic and legal development and social justice.

China is now at a critical juncture of reform and development. While pushing forward the reform, opening up and modernization drive, we will strive to deepen the campaign against corruption and the building of a clean government. We will continue to follow the strategic approach of tackling both the symptoms and the root
causes, taking comprehensive measures, combining punishment and prevention with emphasis on the latter. We will build and perfect a system for punishing and preventing corruption with equal emphasis on education, institution and supervision, which is in conformity with China’s socialist market economy. After some years of work we will complete a long-term effective mechanism for ideological and ethical education, an institutional system of anti-corruption and government integrity, and mechanisms for the control of power operations.

Against a backdrop of growing economic globalization and regionalization, increased international cooperation in the fight against corruption is urgently needed. The Chinese government has always attached importance to international anti-corruption cooperation, to the exchange of successful experiences and effective practices. The Chinese government has politically signed the UN Convention Against Corruption, actively explored with many countries the ways to combat transnational and transregional corruption and strengthen law enforcement cooperation. The Ministry of Supervision of P.R. China has conducted fruitful cooperation with the UN Development Program (UNDP) on the program of “Integrity in Government in China”. We would like to strengthen cooperation with all the other countries of the world, including those in the Asia region, in the fight against corruption. Here, I would like to propose the following suggestions for promoting anti-corruption cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region.

First, respect of sovereignty, equality and mutual benefit. All countries should respect the sovereignty of each other and choose their own anti-corruption structures, mechanisms and systems, as well as specific strategies and measures. On that basis, we conduct mutually beneficial cooperation.

Second, respect of differences and share of resulted achievements. The differences between countries in state conditions and political and legal systems in particular, as well as the inherent characteristics of anti-corruption work should be recognized and respected. Countries should exchange and learn from each other useful experiences and effective practices, and share information and results of anti-corruption.

Third, follow a step-by-step approach and be pragmatic. Attention should be paid not only to the need but also to the feasibility of cooperation with focus on effectiveness. Priorities should be identified in cooperation scope, content and method and developed in a step-by-step manner. At the current stage, priorities could be given to capacity building, corruption prosecution, seizure, confiscation and recovery of corrupt proceeds with an aim to achieve concrete results.

The Asia-Pacific region is our common home. It is our common aspiration to create a corruption free region. Let’s all join in hands to deep cooperation and exchange, prevent and fight corruption, and work together for the social and economic development and common progress of the Asia and Pacific region.

I wish the conference a complete success.