

WELCOME REMARKS
HIS EXCELLENCY AMBASSADOR YOSHIHIRO NAKAYAMA

His Excellency Mr. Boboev Olimjon, Minister of Transportation and Communication, Republic of Tajikistan, Mr. Makoto Ojira, Country Director, Tajikistan Resident Mission, Asian Development Bank, dear participants. Good morning. On behalf of the Government of Japan, it is a great pleasure for me to say a few words on the occasion of the International Seminar on Road Sector Development in Tajikistan.

Firstly, I would like to congratulate His Excellency Mr. Boboev Olimjon for recently being appointed the Minister of Transportation and Communication. My country, the ADB, JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency) and other donors which are actively engaged in developing Tajikistan are looking forward to working with you. I would also like to welcome the participants from other countries to Tajikistan.

I have been for one year and 5 months here in the beautiful city of Dushanbe. As you may know, Tajikistan has had many difficulties since its independence 18 years ago. The civil war was the most difficult time for Tajikistan indeed, and then, it has faced economic difficulties. Taking these situations into account, Japan has decided to extend assistance to Tajikistan. Japan has just started the second phase of road improvement project between Pandzhi-Poyon and Dusti near the Afghanistan border which is expected to be completed by the end of next year. My country has started another road improvement project from Dusti towards Kurgan-Tyube as well. I am very happy that my country can contribute to the development of Tajikistan through these projects.

I can also see many other road projects here in Tajikistan and the ADB plays a very important role in this area. However, it still remains a lot of work to do because of economic and geographic difficulties of this country. Therefore I appreciate the ADB very much for holding this seminar in a timely manner.

Regarding roads, there are a lot of discussions going on from the convenience of users, public services and maintenance standpoints and also we would consider its impact on the environment as well. It is quite natural that there are different opinions if you think the road is one of the most important infrastructures to support the living of people. Therefore, my new government which established recently has also announced to review the road policy. I hope governmental officials, donors, academia, private sector and civil society altogether could sufficiently discuss the road policy through this seminar in order to build efficient road transportation.

I wish you a very successful seminar, and I hope through this seminar, road conditions in Tajikistan and other Central Asia countries will be further improved, which is very important to improve these countries' prosperity.

Thank you.