

**CUSTOMS COOPERATION COMMITTEE  
FORUM ON PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP FOR CUSTOMS  
MODERNIZATION**

Mr. Noy Siachachanh, Governance, Finance and Trade Division of the Asian Development Bank; Fellow Customs Officers from the East and Central Asia and Delegates to this Forum on Public-Private Partnership for Customs Modernization, Our Private Sector Partner in the Philippines, Guests, Welcome and Good Morning.

It is not everyday that we, the Philippine Bureau of Customs is given an opportunity to host Regional/International Meetings such as this Forum. Hence, when my good friend, Jeffrey Liang, presented the idea of co-hosting this Forum, I readily accepted it. For me, it is not only an opportunity to meet our fellow customs officers from the East and Central Asia, who in view of geographical locations, our interactions with them are indeed very rare. But more importantly, I see it as an opportunity and an honor, to be able to share our learnings and experiences when we started with customs modernization about ten years ago. As will be presented by our Resource persons, the process of modernization of the Bureau of Customs did not come overnight nor was it the work of a single hand. It entailed careful planning, contemporary and progressive strategies and collaboration and cooperation of partners, especially of our clients/customers. It will be a revelation as well, that while the Bureau of Customs has started modernizing years ago, we are still far from being a truly world class customs service as we hope to be. As will also be presented and testified to by some of our partners such as Unisys and the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, we've suffered not only birth pains but many more growing-up pains in our desire to implement international customs best practices and be at par with the world's best customs administrations.

It is my hope that this Forum will bring enlightenment, motivation and encouragement to our colleagues in the East and Central Asia Customs Administration to thread the difficult but rewarding path of modernization.

While you are in the City of Manila, and as I realize that many if not all of you are first timers in our country, I do hope that you can find the time to see our sights and hear our sounds and especially experience nightlife of Manila.

Again, welcome and Mabuhay.