

**TCDPAP Conference**  
**Day 3 - March 13, 2009**

## **Closing Ceremony**

### **Welcome Address and Conference Summary: Dr. Sunil Abrol, Secretary General/TCDPAP**

Distinguished Delegates and invitees, it is an honor for me to propose welcome to all of you for this closing ceremony. Many of us have been here for the last two and a half days to be precise. This event of TCDPAP, which is an annual event, brings together consulting community and the clients of this part of the world, the Asia Pacific region, together in terms of networking, learning from each other and trying to understand the requirements of the region. This conference, with the theme: Making Globalization Work – the Role of Consultants, began in the morning of 11th March, with an inaugural ceremony which was high powered in terms of the presence of the Prime Minister of the country, the Finance Minister and the Minister of Physical Planning and Works. The representation of the government with the presence of three top political bosses in the inaugural ceremony gave us the impression of support the government of Nepal is giving to the event and the consulting community in Nepal as well. We heard from the high authorities the trust, the priority, and the opportunities that exist in Nepal and the kind of initiatives the government of Nepal is taking towards promoting the consulting profession. The very fact that the government of Nepal has initiated a dialogue and set up a group for formulating an act towards promotion and development of Consulting Industry is very remarkable. We, in SCAEF and other consulting community in this part of the world, are looking forward to this document as a benchmark which can really be useful for all of the countries in Asia and the Pacific region.

As I mentioned in the inaugural ceremony, we will be happy to support for the formulation of this document. Some of the member countries including India came out with various forms of such legislations including the procedures of selection of consultants, accreditation, grading, and ranking of consultants. Other important guidelines were related to dispute resolutions, and contractual arrangements between consultants and clients, which I am sure will be a part of this Act as well. So, we will be very happy to contribute to this effort and make it a very comprehensive document so that it really becomes a model document for all countries in Asia and the Pacific region.

Starting with the inaugural ceremony on March 11<sup>th</sup>, we moved on to the technical sessions, as Mr. Boyd mentioned earlier, were divided into three segments. In the first segment, country papers were presented by the delegates from 9 countries, namely Bangladesh, China, India, Malaysia, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Uzbekistan. These countries made presentations about their initiatives, progress made by these countries towards promotion and development of the consultancy profession, the sectors where the consultants were engaged, and about the support the governments were extending to the consultancy profession. I would not like to get into specifications here because we did spend one full session on talking about each country support in terms of what they are looking at. But what really come out as a

common recommendation was that there is a felt need for consultancy profession to grow. There is a large number of opportunities for the consultants in the Asia Pacific Region because of the kind of growth that is happening here.

In most of the countries, we found that the initiatives have been taken by the governments for supporting the growth of the consultancy profession in this part of the world. Just the day before yesterday, we were the evidence when the government of Nepal indicated its aggressive support to us with the presence of very high level authorities.

Most of the projects in India, Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh and other countries are primarily invested by the governments. Therefore, there is greater roles for consultants to play in the projects. What also came out of the country papers is the issue of need for collaboration between major entities engaged in the promotion of consultancy profession for developing greater synergy.

The second session dealt with another set of papers which is basically focused on the opportunities for consultants in Nepal. There were 7 papers presented by senior officials from various ministries and experts from the Private Sector. The papers primarily focused on infrastructure development as hydropower, roads and highways, expressways. Rural transportation is yet another area of concern of the government for improving the transport infrastructure that will serve almost 30% of the country side. Therefore, there is a need for greater transportation systems that will minimize accidents. Other areas like agriculture, low cost housing with consideration of disaster resistance. Employment generation is yet another concern where consultants can play roles in terms of developing schemes, plans and projects. The need for use of local materials and local manpower in implementation of projects was very precisely emphasized including the need for creating public private partnership models which will not only have greater accountability, faster delivery but also some financial contribution coming in from private sector and reduce burden on the government.

The last segment of the conference was focused on theme papers. There were altogether 16 theme papers, 10 came from foreign speakers, and 6 from local speakers. The papers focused on following points:

- 1) There are greater opportunities for consultants, whether it is in terms of Sri Lankan experience talking about removing sandbars, or clearing the canals or whether it is an opportunity in Japan where there is a large contingent of older generation of consultants and very few young people available to them. There are large number of opportunities for consultants across sectors, across disciplines, and across several applications.
- 2) WTO has brought yet another set of challenges for consultants and we need to tune ourselves in respect to requirements of WTO. The question is how best the consultants can provide services within the WTO regime and be more productive. It was recommended that consultants need to be innovative, creative and come out with ideas and solutions which will really meet the requirements of clients for faster, cost effective and state-of-the-art solutions appropriate to the local requirements and relevant to Asia and the Pacific context. Our conditions are different from that of western countries since we have extreme temperatures, -20 to +55 degrees, a lot of dust, high humidity, and many conditions which are not there in Western countries. Therefore

technologies and solutions that work in Western countries are not appropriate for Asia and the Pacific countries. Therefore consultants in Asia Pacific Region need to be more specific in terms of solutions that are appropriate to the local requirements. Finally, two recommendations came from the group through the theme papers:

- a. Consultants need to be more professional in their approach.
- b. We need to have recognition and support from government,
- c. Finally, consultants need to have greater social responsibilities.

With these remarks, on behalf of TCDPAP, SCAFF and the organizers, I would like to close the session and thank all chairpersons, speakers, co-chairpersons and all participants for making this event a grand success.