



# News

No. 63 | September 2023

The Newsletter of the  
Association of Former  
Employees of the Asian  
Development Bank

## People, Places, and Passages

## 2023 Annual Meeting



## Updates

## Chapter News



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## Our Cover



Upper right: Leopard in Africa.  
Center: Trying on Hanbok at the Annual Meeting.  
Below: With President and Mrs. Asakawa at the AFE–ADB Cocktails in Incheon.

## AFE–ADB News

**Publisher:** Stephen P. Groff.

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**Note:** Dates with authors/partners indicate the years of service with ADB, or the year of leaving service.

# AFE–ADB Updates

## From the President

Jill Gale de Villa (ADB 1993–2005)



Progress through May is covered in the President's Reports for our Annual Meeting in May in Incheon. Since then:

- Joy Macaisa–Viray has joined the Executive Committee (ExCom) as our new treasurer.
- The ExCom has reviewed a first draft of the guide being prepared by the **Chapter Coordinators' Manual**

**Committee** under the guidance of Günter Hecker and Gam de Armas, and made some suggestions. Further work is ongoing in this project, with additional input from coordinators. The second version will also be circulated to coordinators for comments.

- The **Bylaws Committee**, under the guidance of Bruce Murray and Eveline Fischer, is preparing a draft of recommendations on the Bylaws, to submit to the ExCom.
- Barbara and I have assisted several members with **issues pertaining to the health insurance**.
- In June, Hans and I again asked ADB to provide clearer **documents for surviving spouses** so they can more easily figure out how to continue the pension and health insurance.
- We have also again requested ADB to **clarify how the COLA is determined and whether simpler documentation of "proof of life"** is possible for continuing to receive the pension. ■

Join the AFE–ADB HQ Facebook page for up-to-date information. This page is for members and spouses/partners only.

## AFE's New Treasurer Joy Macaisa-Viray



**Changing of the Guard.** AFE–ADB's former Treasurer Nannette Guinto-Amorado has moved on to support her husband, who was elected as Mayor of Majayjay, Laguna in 2022, while continuing her consulting with the United Nations and managing households in Bicol and Majayjay, as well as trying to find time to get back to her art (see *AFE News #36*). We very much appreciate the work Nannette has done for AFE and members, including her efforts to digitize AFE's accounting to make the process faster and more efficient and the value she added to the Executive Committee.

**Transition to Joy.** We are delighted to welcome as our new Treasurer Joy Macaisa-Viray, CISA, CGEIT (CISA = Certified Information Systems Auditor; CGEIT = Certified in the Governance of Enterprise Information Technology). Joy is very well qualified to continue ensuring the proper use of AFE funds, moving AFE further into the digital age, and handling any risks involved—as is very well documented below.

In accepting her nomination as AFE treasurer, Joy noted "I accept the nomination to AFE–ADB Treasurer with deep



appreciation. I very much welcome the opportunity to serve in this capacity.... I currently live in Manila, have a flexible schedule... am enthusiastic about supporting AFE–ADB’s vision and objectives, and am looking forward to being part of the team.”

Joy’s professional experience spans 36 years, including 23 years of audit experience at ADB and 13 years of information technology (IT) experience at the United States (US) Internal Revenue Service. Joy has worked with governments, financial institutions, and the private sector in Africa, Asia, Australia, and the US.

**At ADB,** Joy was with the Office of the Auditor General (OAG), retiring as the Assistant Auditor General. During her time with ADB (1996-2019), she

- implemented the office’s risk-based audit and advisory work program, allocated resources, and maintained quality control over OAG’s work processes and outputs;
- worked with external auditors to ensure adequate audit coverage, minimize duplication of effort, and assist in their areas of concern;
- participated in the Audit Committee of the Board discussions;
- managed concurrent audit teams to conduct comprehensive audit engagements in finance and administration, information systems, and development operations; and
- supervised all phases of audit engagements, including planning, risk assessment, execution, reporting, and monitoring.

As an audit specialist, she reviewed and reported on internal controls, compliance, efficiency and effectiveness of core business activities, including payroll, staff benefits, accounts payable/receivable, fixed assets, procurement, business continuity, travel, resident mission operations, etc.

**Prior to ADB,** Joy was with the US Internal Revenue Service, where she variously

- managed budget and staffing resources for IT on a nationwide scale, spanning 17 field offices;
- rolled out several technical hardware and software solutions to field offices for systems implementation and ensured proper training of staff;
- conducted nationwide management studies, such as determining optimum staffing levels for the field offices, and streamlining operational processes; and
- served as IT manager, and held technical positions, such as network administrator, computer programmer, and systems technical support.

**Education and Training** include a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, with dual specialization in

Accounting and in Management Information Systems from California State University; she is CISA and CGEIT certified (as noted above); and she has a Harvard Publishing/ADB Leadership Program Certificate. ■

## Pension Matters

### Hans-Juergen Springer (ADB 1972–2002)



The Pension Committee meeting on 23 May 2023 (1) discussed items relating to the actuarial value of the Staff Retirement Plan (SRP) and Post-Retirement Group Medical Insurance Plan (PRGMIP) for the plan year 1 October 2021–30 September 2022 (PY2022), (2) approved cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs) and the SRP Annual Report for PY2022, and (3) was updated on the SRP and PRGMIP performance as of April 2023.

**Actuarial Valuation.** The actuarial valuation of the SRP for PY2022 showed that the SRP’s funded ratio had increased to 104.7% as of 30 September 2022 from 94.8% a year earlier. The increase took place despite a reduction of the SRP’s assets by 17.4% in PY2022. This is because the funded ratio is calculated as a 5-year average to smoothen market ups and downs. ADB’s Total Contribution Rate to the SRP remained at the same level as last year—27% of participants’ pensionable salaries.

The actuarial valuation of the PRGMIP indicated the funded ratio had increased to 154.6% from 114.0% in PY2021. In view of the high fluctuation from year to year in the PRGMIP’s medical expenses, ADB has maintained its contribution rate of 2% of ADB salaries, notwithstanding the rather high funded ratio.

**COLA.** As a result of the high inflation rates globally during PY2022, the Pension Committee approved significant COLAs for 24 of the 30 pension disbursement currencies. Supplemental COLA, over and above the 3% increase granted to those eligible for it (staff hired before 2012) ranged from 0.4% to 33.9%. The COLA for staff who joined on or after October 2012 was also approved at the meeting. The payments of COLA and supplemental COLA for PY2022 were made together with the July 2023 pension payment. For clarification pertaining to your own pension, e-mail [pension@adb.org](mailto:pension@adb.org).

**SRP Annual Report.** The Pension Committee also approved the SRP Annual Report for PY2022. The report is available on the AFE website [www.afe-adb.org](http://www.afe-adb.org) Members Only section and the ADB website [www.adbalumni.org](http://www.adbalumni.org). Printed copies may be sent to pensioners upon request.

**Recent investment performance.** The Pension Committee was also updated on the investment performance of the SRP and PRGMIP funds. After a downturn in global markets in PY2022, which was reflected also in the two ADB funds, markets improved significantly. As of 30 April 2023, the SRP fund had increased by 12.9% since October 2022 and the PRGMIP fund by 15.9%. Note that the funds' asset values generally reflect the ups and downs of the financial markets, and the funds' performance should be seen in the long term. ■

## Health Matters

Barbara Ejercito Palacios (ADB 1996–2012)  
and Jill Gale de Villa



**G**uarantees of Payment and Getting Out of Hospital. For many out-patient procedures and for hospitalization that can be planned in advance, a **guarantee of payment** (GOP) is needed from Cigna in the Philippines and the US (except, obviously, in emergency situations) and is advisable

elsewhere. (The table below and comments were provided by Bill Silverman.) This generally ONLY works with hospitals and providers that have a relationship with Cigna. For other providers, be prepared to pay cash and submit the bill later for refund. And check in advance whether a relationship with Cigna exists, as sometimes they may be terminated or they may be newly established.

Best to allow 3 days for a guarantee of payment and follow up to be sure it has been sent and that you have a copy before going in for the procedure. Cigna needs a date and cost estimate for the procedure.

Usually, GOPs state the amount of time in hospital that is covered. If the patient needs to stay longer, the hospital should apply for an extension with Cigna; if the hospital does not have a relationship with Cigna, the patient or family has to do this, to avoid delays checking out.

Even if Cigna does not have a direct billing/pay arrangement with your hospital/provider of choice, you

Country	Cigna/ADB Requirement	Hospital Requirement	Comments
Philippines	Precertification by Cigna is required	GOP is almost always required	Normally the precertification and GOP are the same transaction
US		GOP is recommended for non-Cigna hospitals	Providers normally seek approval
All others	Precertification by Cigna is strongly recommended	Most, but not all, hospitals require GOP	

should still call Cigna and provide a billing contact person at the hospital and Cigna will try to set up a direct pay with the provider for your upcoming procedure. The provider may or may not accept it. If the latter, then be prepared to pay the provider and claim reimbursement afterward.

**Getting Out of Hospital.** A few members have noted issues getting out of hospital. Do let us know about these and other issues so that we have the information needed to refer the matter to ADB. Ask the provider to give you a copy of e-mails to and from Cigna regarding billing, for your records and to share as needed.

Also, **when entering the hospital, ask how long check-out takes and what you need to do** to facilitate it (e.g., getting doctors to sign off, etc.). It is very frustrating to be sitting around waiting to leave, not knowing when you can do so—and of course leaving entails making arrangements such as transport etc.

When **preparing to check out**, be aware that the hospital has to send the bill to Cigna to have it confirm what in fact it will pay for. For example, if you have extra meals or upgrade the room, you will have to pay for that.

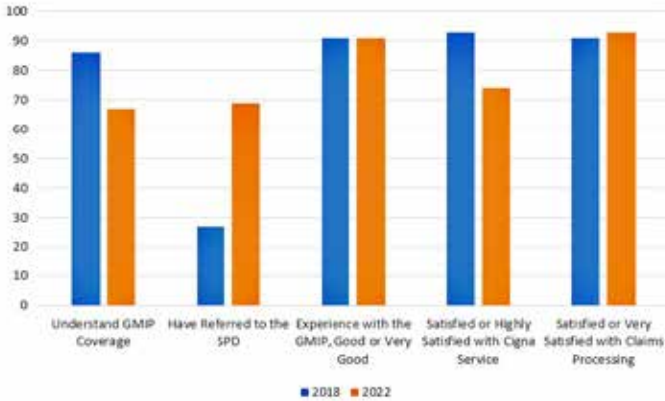
**Claim Documentation.** If your claim pertains to documentation submitted earlier, state in the claim that the documentation was provided earlier. A simple example is a claim for maintenance medicines, where the prescription was submitted with a previous claim. Sometimes a claim may pertain to lab or other tests submitted earlier. Best if you can attach the prescription/lab (etc.) tests again. This will avoid having Cigna come back and ask for these documents. In an ideal world, you shouldn't have to do this, but....

**Cigna's New Representative at ADB** is Edester Buelva. He can answer questions regarding your medical plan and give administrative support in the event of a hospital admission. He is available at ADB HQ in ground floor room GE 201

Mondays (1–5pm) and Wednesdays and Thursdays (9–12nn and 1–6pm) except holidays. To make an appointment with him (1) e-mail CignaADBHQRep@cigna.com, providing your Cigna ID number and typing “Request for consultation with Edester” in the subject line; and/or (2) call +63 919 007 4700 Mondays to Fridays 9am–6pm, and request a callback if he doesn’t answer.

**Correction.** Owing to a typographical errors, we reported members’ ratings of Cigna’s customer service as 86% in 2022. In fact, in 2022, only 74% of AFE’s Cigna clients rated their service as satisfactory, meaning that more than 1 in 5 of us were unsatisfied. We apologize for the error. And the much lower rating has been reported to ADB. ■

**Comparison of Responses to Questions on the 2018 and 2022 AFE Surveys of Health Insurance (%)**



# 2024: Georgia On My Mind

## 2024 Annual Meeting in Tbilisi



2024 will be the first time that Georgia hosts ADB’s and AFE’s annual meetings. ADB President Masa noted “Georgia is a vibrant hub for regional trade—and a crucial bridge between Asia and Europe.... The 2024



Gremi fortress and Church of the Archangels, 16th century, Georgia.

Annual Meeting will provide an important opportunity to showcase the country’s rich heritage and tremendous potential.” The theme for the 57th Annual Meeting is “Bridge to the Future.”

Georgia’s Finance Minister and ADB Governor Lasha Khutsishvili noted: “The slogan we’ve chosen for the 57th ADB Annual Meeting represents the need of synergy regionally and globally so that after Recovering, Reconnecting, and through the Reforms, we can jointly build the Bridge to the Brighter Future.”

Georgia joined ADB in 2007 and ADB is one of the country’s largest multilateral development partners. ADB has committed 82 public sector loans, grants, and technical assistance projects for Georgia, for a total of \$3.9 billion. ADB’s ongoing sovereign portfolio in Georgia includes 17 loans worth \$1.75 billion.

Do put Georgia on your travel itinerary for 2024.

Georgia has a host of interesting, beautiful, and historical sights to visit, from the cosmopolitan capital of Tbilisi with its many cafés, bars, and restaurants, historic churches, mosques, and other sites; to venturing further afield to visit a spectacular cave monastery founded 300



Georgia cultural presentation at Incheon.



Uplistsikhe cave settlement, inhabited for about 2,300 years.

years ago; an underground town started in 1000BCE and inhabited for about 2,300 years; modern wineries (Georgia produces excellent wines); Stalin's birthplace, museum, and personal train car; remote mountainous valleys and drives; and much more to suit your interests. And the food and drink are very good indeed.

Plus, one might continue to neighboring Armenia and/or Turkey. ■

## Executive Committee

Chairman—Stephen Paul Groff  
 President—Jill Gale de Villa  
 Vice President—vacant  
 Treasurer—Joy Macaisa-Viray  
 Secretary—Teresa (Bobbie) Samson Montesa

## Chapter Coordinators

**Australia**—Keith Leonard  
**Canada**—Bruce Murray  
   **Ottawa Area**—John Rive  
   **Toronto Area**—Nida Rodrigo  
   **Vancouver Island**—Alex Jorgensen  
**China, People's Republic of**—Min Tang  
**Europe**—Richard Vokes  
**India**—Shiladitya Chatterjee  
**Indonesia**—Dimiyati Nangju  
**Japan**—Kazu Sakai  
**Korea, Republic of**—Cheolsu Kim  
**New Zealand**—Eric Gordon Fox  
**Pakistan**—Shahida Jaffrey  
**Philippines**—Gamaliel de Armas, Jr.  
   **East Group**—Marietta Domingo, Midi Diel Kawashima

**North Group**—Rosalia Baeza, Maria Luisa Baleva, Aileen Francisco, Vic Rivero  
**South Group**—Josefina Balane, Fe De Leon, Merly Mallion, Rebecca Regis  
**West Group**—Aurora Aragon, Monina de Guzman, Sally Mabaquiao  
**Singapore**—Claire Wee  
**Sri Lanka**—Sarath Lakshman Athukorala  
**Thailand**—Suganya Hutaserani  
**United States: New York–New Jersey**—Lorna del Rosario  
**United States: Southern California**—Yola Villa  
**United States: Washington, DC**—Frederick Roche

## Standing Committees

### Insurance Committee

Jill Gale de Villa—Chair	Julia Holz
Barbara Palacios—Co Chair	Fred Mesch
Francois Ausseil	Anne Sweetser
Ted Breckner	Axel Weber
Bernard Donge	Clay Wescott

### AFE Committee on Pension

Hans-Juergen Springer—Head	Jill Gale de Villa
Nick Llave	Graham Walter

### Publications Committee

Jill Gale de Villa—Head	Bobbie Montesa
Steve Banta	David Parker
Elizabeth Cabuay	Hans-Juergen Springer
Gamaliel de Armas, Jr.	Marissa Wenceslao
Guia Estabillo	Judy Yñiguez
Anna Juico	Wickie Zveglich
Joy Macaisa-Viray	

## Special Committees

### Bylaws Review Committee

Bruce Murray—Chair	Ma. Rosario O'Buckley
Eveline Fischer—Vice Chair	Elsie Louise Pfeleider
Shiladitya Chatterjee	Bruce Alan Purdue
Peter Darjes	Kazu Sakai
Ophelia Iriberri	Hans-Juergen Springer

### Chapter Coordinators' Manual Committee

Günter Hecker—Chair	Richard Keith Leonard
Gam de Armas, Jr.—Vice Chair	Bruce Murray
Peter Carroll	Dimiyati Nangju
Shiladitya Chatterjee	Kazu Sakai
Lorna del Rosario	



# Annual General Meeting 2022

ConvensiA, Songdo, Incheon, Republic of Korea

2 May 2023

After 3 years of virtual meetings, we held a hybrid meeting—in person and online—with good assistance from ADB’s Information Technology Department (ITD) and AFE’s Maricon Algara in Manila. The addresses and reports of the meetings are summarized here and available in full on our website: [www.afe-adb.org](http://www.afe-adb.org) in the Member’s Only section.

## Chapter Coordinators’ Meeting

2 May 2023, 8:30–11:00am

*Ed: The reports of the AFE president and treasurer are summarized on pp. 16–19 and are not repeated here, although they form a basis for the Chapter Coordinators Meeting discussions. The reports are provided in full on the AFE–ADB website. This article has four sections: (1) opening; (2) discussion, arranged by topic; (3) coordinators’ reports; and (4) closing.*

### Opening

The following were present:

**Executive Committee:** President Jill Gale de Villa (JGV), Treasurer Nannette G. Amorado (NGA), ExCom Secretary Teresa S. Montesa (TSM).

### Chapter Coordinators/Representatives in Person:

Günter Hecker (GH, Europe), Cheolsu Kim (CK, Republic of Korea), Dimiyati Nangju (DN, Indonesia), Kazu Sakai (KS, Japan), May Seron-Tigas (MST, US-Southern California); **by Zoom:** Gam de Armas (GA, Philippines); Shiladitya Chatterjee (SC, India); Gordon Fox (GF, New Zealand), Suganya Hutaserani (SH, Thailand); Bruce Murray (BM, Canada).

**Administrative Assistants:** Backup was provided virtually by Marilou Pasicolan (MP) and Maricon Algara (MA).

AFE President JGV opened the meeting at 8:38 am. The meeting agenda was adopted and the minutes of the 2022 Chapter Coordinators Meeting were approved. JGV summarized the president’s report, TSM summarized progress on records management and a new website, and NGA described the digitization and presented the treasurer’s report.

### Discussion

#### Chapter Coordinators Manual

**MST** noted it’s been a wonderful opportunity and great privilege for me to become a coordinator. I’m glad that you are doing this Manual/Handbook for Coordinators.

**GA, vice chair, Chapter Coordinators Manual**

Physically present at the Chapter Coordinators’ Meeting, 2 May 2023, l-r: Kazu Sakai (Japan), Cheolsu Kim (Korea), Nannette Guinto-Amorado (Treasurer), Teresa Samson Montesa (Secretary), Jill Gale de Villa (Presidente), Gunter Hecker (Europe), May Seron-Tigas (US Southern California), and Dimy Nangju (Indonesia).







AFE Treasurer Nannette Amorado, President Jill de Villa, Secretary Bobbie Montesa with Zoomed coordinators behind, clockwise from left: Gam de Armas, Suganya Hutaserani, Shilo Chatterjee.

**Committee**, noted the committee sent a memo to all coordinators asking them for input. We are taking into account the peculiarities of each chapter. This is supposed to be a “living” manual, to be modified as required. Each coordinator will have a chance to speak his or her mind before a manual comes out. **GA** confirmed that the manual will describe the reimbursement process.

**GH** noted that the Charter allows for each chapter to establish itself and there are various ways to get a coordinator. We are trying to summarize the best practices. We would call it a best practice guide. A major issue is succession. Coordinators in various places have different tasks.

**DN**: Chapters need to be informed regularly by the two committees [including the Bylaws Review Committee]. **JGV**: We will relay that request to the committee chairs.

### Reviving a Chapter

**MST** described **reviving the small chapter**, where she found social media very helpful. Remittance issues need sorting out. **JGV** noted PayPal may be used, and coordinators may consolidate and send dues.

### Starting a New Chapter

The report of **Thailand Coordinator SH** (p. 12), covers the inaugural meeting and continuing communication with both current and prospective members.

### Membership

**DN** noted the number of retirees joining AFE–ADB Indonesia has been declining, and many Indonesian retirees live outside Indonesia, so we need to know what chapter they join. **JGV**: We hope to send more timely information on retirees and potential retirees, so that



Chapter Coordinators Meeting room—with interpreters.

coordinators could contact them. **KS**: In Japan, we are also experiencing declining membership, and difficulty getting contact information on those who have left ADB. **JGV**: AFE has not been asked to speak at the retirement seminar for quite some time. It seems they haven’t been having the retirement seminars. And ADB’s retirement age has increased to 67, so fewer are retiring.

**MST:** In October we had an event and I blasted the pictures on social media. And we picked up about 4 former employees of the Bank. **Social media** has been a big help.

**GA:** There is a big need for a good and updated database of chapter members, because that is the life of the chapter.

**SH:** Thailand created a Line group chat which is very popular in Thailand. Everybody is in the chat,

**including retirees and current staff** at ADB. And this is to prepare themselves to become a retiree, and they are quite active. We have quite a tight group. **JGV:** This is a very important point—something to learn from your process of forming a new chapter and involving newer retirees.



Kazu Sakai, Japan Chapter Coordinator

they are very happy to find each other and talk about how they are doing, etc. **GA:** In the Philippines we use Facebook, Messenger, Viber, and e-mail. Our area coordinators ensure that there is a current or updated directory, so this helps a lot.

**JGV:** Regarding attracting both former international and former national staff to a chapter. The cultural aspects of this dichotomy need to be considered. It may help to have leaders for each constituency. **BM:** We have the same situation in Canada. Ottawa is completely former expat staff. Toronto is completely Filipino. Vancouver is a mix about 50:50. I send e-mails that are largely announcing a get-together. About 3 times a year I send written



May Seron-Tigas, Southern California Chapter Coordinator

summaries of developments at ADB, taken largely from the *One ADBToday*.

**DN:** I would like **younger retirees to be more active**.

**JGV:** Many of us share that concern. We need to get more “with it” in terms of IT and in terms of continuing careers, because a lot of the younger people are going on to other careers. **GA:** Our chapter has been successful through more frequent get-togethers by area groups. Now there is a balance between older and new members and attendance has increased. **GH:** Retirees who receive a pension or insurance are much more interested in AFE. **CK:** Another factor is the retirement age [where ADB has gone from 60] to 65. So, in the Korea chapter, we have not seen the new retirees for the last 2 years. **GH:** The Europe Chapter in September is hosted by Mrs. Hühne. Her husband was in ADB about 32 years ago and she’s still part of our group. Also in Deauville, the host had left ADB 20 years ago and still keeps contact. So, we should be looking for the new and caring for older members, some of whom don’t know how to deal with ADB.

**KS:** In the Japan Chapter we are not using social media, as many members do not use it, so I communicate by e-mail. But when we have a physical gathering,

summaries of developments at ADB, taken largely from the *One ADBToday*.

**DN:** I would like **younger retirees to be more active**.

**JGV:** Many of us share that concern. We need to get more “with it” in terms of IT and in terms of continuing careers, because a lot of the younger people are going on to other careers. **GA:** Our chapter has been successful through more frequent get-togethers by area groups. Now there is a balance between older and new members and attendance has increased. **GH:** Retirees who receive a pension or insurance are much more interested in AFE. **CK:** Another factor is the retirement age [where ADB has gone from 60] to 65. So, in the Korea chapter, we have not seen the new retirees for the last 2 years. **GH:** The Europe Chapter in September is hosted by Mrs. Hühne. Her husband was in ADB about 32 years ago and she’s still part of our group. Also in Deauville, the host had left ADB 20 years ago and still keeps contact. So, we should be looking for the new and caring for older members, some of whom don’t know how to deal with ADB.

### Membership Dues

**GA:** Our **membership dues** have been quite stable for a long time, are you thinking of an increase? **NGA:** There’s talk that we should increase. **BM:** The Bylaws Committee thought if the Executive Committee wants to increase it after consulting with membership it is OK.

**DN** suggested the annual association fees be paid directly to the chapter. **JGV** noted membership dues are payable directly to AFE–ADB. If a chapter chooses to request additional funding from their membership, that is up to the chapter, but it cannot be a requirement for AFE (or chapter) membership. (AFE has many expenses to pay at HQ, which benefit all chapters and those not members of a chapter.)

**MST** noted issues of remitting dues from members who are not pensioners. **JGV** suggested using PayPal or consolidating and sending several at once.

**CK:** When it comes to the time to decide to join AFE or not, does cost affect their decision? I mean, if it’s \$20, I’ll join, okay. If it’s \$50, I’m not. Does this kind of thinking affect their mind in joining AFE? It’s not, right? **JGV:** For each person, it’s a different judgment. One of the biggest issues is when you leave ADB, there’s so much to do. AFE is probably not number one priority, you’ve got to find your stapler and other things like that. So that we need to be more interactive with people and remind them. **CK:** Can we make the membership in AFE for the retirees or whoever decides to leave the ADB as mandatory. **JGV:** I don’t think ADB would go for that as the retiree has to pay for joining.

### ADB Subsidy for Chapters and Reimbursement

**MST** and **SC:** Southern California and India had long delays

and much irritation in trying to get the subsidies, the former due to bank changes and the latter because the recipient is not a pensioner and ADB's new PIM system is difficult.

**JGV:** HQ is still working on the subsidy issue pertaining to a new ADB system. **NGA:** In the case of India, the problem is that the bank merged with another bank. It was really very messy.

**CK:** Because of issues figuring out who is an AFE member, the Korea Chapter decided not to avail any more of the subsidy. **NGA:** Korea, Japan, and the People's Republic China are not availing of the subsidy. **CK:** There are a lot of retirees who served ADB for 1, 2, 3 years as a secondees and they come back to their original institutions. But they are not joining AFE. **JGV:** HQ can tell you if a person is a member. Some people prefer not to have their information in the Directory, but we can facilitate contact and inform you if the member is paid up.

### Subsidy Amount

**SC:** We have been pressing for **an increase in our subsidy** but without much success. **DN:** Some chapters about the same size as Indonesian Chapter received much larger subsidy. Indonesian Chapter has been able to maintain the expenditure, mainly because we are constrained by the subsidy. So, what is your criteria for allocating the ADB subsidy to the various chapters? **NGA:** Re. the subsidy, the breakdown for 2023 has about a 6% increase because that is we got from ADB. Historically, the subsidy has been assigned intuitively. We tried to make it more systematic, transparent, to look at the attendance, the number of members, the participation rate, the cost of living in the country. We tried to make calculations, and no formula worked.

**GA:** I think the subsidy would also depend on the activity of the particular chapter. Actually, there should be, in my view, no constraints. If you want to meet, you meet. And the subsidy contributes. But you should not restrict exactly to the amount of the subsidy or activity. **JGV:** The subsidy is for the annual meeting, and its associated expenses, but does not support or fund tour activities and things like that.

### Website

**CK** noted the need to update the website. **TSM** noted this is ongoing with the website being created and will also

be done in the current website. **KS:** To what extent is the website actually being used? I use it only when I need to get e-mail addresses. Some members even do not know the Directory is available. Maybe we need to do a campaign so that the members are aware that we have a website that they can use actively.



Dimiyati Nangju, Indonesia Chapter Coordinator

### Digital Accounting and Membership System

**GA: What is Accubooks?** How is it more efficient for us? Regarding **member relationship management**, what exactly is meant, and how they are interfacing with each other. **NGA: Accubooks** is a brand for online recording. So, I can review it even when I am in Bicol. It produces a trial balance and the financial statement and the payment history. The **member relationship management system** will show the history of your payment, your basic profile, address, etc. information that's useful for AFE. Eventually this will also help with billing, statement of accounts, which is now done manually. Members can edit the information pertaining to them, e.g., change of address.

### Surviving Spouses/Members

**JGV: KS** noted that the Europe chapter has circulated information about procedures a surviving spouse has to go through to receive their pension from ADB. Hans and I have been trying to get ADB to make the paperwork easier to understand. We will share these detailed procedures with all members when we get the new documents.

### Cost of Cocktails at the Annual Meeting

**GA:** The **cocktails today**, some say it's on the high side. Is that subsidized by the Bank? **JGV:** It's subsidized by AFE, and it's the same price per person as it was in the Yokohama in 2017, 6 years ago. By international standards it is pretty good (at \$55/person charged to AFE and \$50 to members).

### Coordinators' Reports

**JGV:** We have **11 coordinators represented either in person or virtually**. We have reports from other coordinators too.

**Australia's Coordinator Keith Leonard** reports business more or less, as usual, has been resumed for the



Gordon Fox, New Zealand Chapter Coordinator



Australia Chapter with a very successful reunion in Dubbo, New South Wales in October. The full program included a welcome dinner, an interesting talk by an aboriginal elder, optional tours, and the standard golf meeting.



Shilo Chatterjee, India Chapter Coordinator

**India’s Coordinator Shilo Chatterjee** noted they have about 120 retirees in India, and 80 are active chapter members. The 27th annual meeting of the chapter was held in New Delhi in October, was very well attended, and was followed by a 7-day tour of Punjab. The next annual meeting will be in Puri, Odisha.

Major issues are delay and receipt of pensions; problems for those receiving pensions through foreign banks; health insurance: Indian wants more Cigna providers; and delays in using the Cigna cards with providers who want to upfront payment.

**Indonesia’s Coordinator Dimiyati Nangju** reported the history of the chapter and the turnover of the coordination from Putu Kamayana to himself; collection of annual dues; a lunch meeting and outing in Yogyakarta in mid-June; an early year-end meeting in December, and an outing to the proposed new capital of Indonesia.

**Europe’s Coordinator Richard Vokes** noted that the chapter restarted activities with an annual meeting in Belfast in September with 57 participants, 9 of which were



Günter Hecker, Chair, Chapter Coordinators Manual and representing Europe

from other chapters. The 2023 reunion is scheduled in Baden-Baden in Germany, in September, and preparations are in full swing. Coordination has been turned over from Günter Hecker to Richard Vokes and Sandro Pio, taking 2 years each.

Issues and actions include

- the difficulty surviving spouses have receiving pensions and signing up for Cigna;
- the chapter encouraging retirees to “twin up” to help each other with health, pension, or tax issues;
- Cigna issues with pre-authorizations;
- some difficulty obtaining reimbursement from Cigna, since hospitals are used to billing services based on predetermined lump sums;
- automating the process of securing pension income certifications from ADB—World Bank, has automated these, so why can’t we?
- explaining the method used to calculate the cost of living for the euro area?
- need for a report from the AFE representatives on the Pension Committee; and
- an open Zoom Meeting between AFE pensioners representatives and pensioners who would like clarification after the reports have been issued.

**New Zealand’s Coordinator Gordon Fox** noted that a reunion was held in Christchurch in September, and the 2023 reunion will be a dinner at the Wellington Club in June. The informal Support Group for Chapter Spouses has continued its activities under the leadership of Rosemary Fox. Other chapters might like to offer a support group of spouses.

**Pakistan’s Coordinator Shahida Jaffrey** reported that in Pakistan, the 3 major cities are quite far apart, so, generally they organize three events. Last year, one in spring, another in autumn at Islamabad. Members drove from Lahore, and had a nice time. They frequently meet privately at lunches and dinners. They have a vibrant WhatsApp group that allows them to remain in touch.

**Philippines’ Coordinator Gam de Armas** noted that the chapter has new area coordinators. All four area groups have held successful meetings plus a big turnout at the year-end Christmas



Gam de Armas, Philippines Chapter Coordinator



Suganya Hutaserani, Thailand Chapter Coordinator

lunch buffet with food, dancing, and games. They have summer outings and a Christmas get-together planned for 2023.

#### **Thailand's Coordinator Suganya Hutaserani**

reported that the chapter was formed late in 2022, 19 participants attended the meeting, 22 other people expressed interest but the inability to attend, and AFE President Jill de Villa attended. The

inaugural meeting included a historical boat trip down the Chao Phraya River. They have created a Line chat group for members to share information and are creating a Facebook page to share information and pictures. They've had quite good interaction with the country director of the Thailand Resident Mission. They had an update dinner in March, have meetings with local government and nongovernment officials on visa issues, and once a quarter they want to meet and have coordination meetings, including a golf outing and a study tour to a member's organic farm with medical Thai herbs in November.

**Republic of Korea Coordinator Cheolsu Kim** reported the Korea Chapter is very active, with two former VPs—VP Shin and VP Lee. We've been gathering every month for the last 25 something years, in the second week of the month at a restaurant in Zadong. In December we have an annual meeting and elections, and the report of the treasurer, who is acting as a secretary too. During the last 3 years because of COVID, participation was a very low, the restaurant closed for about 1 year, so we used Zoom. We pay the membership dues every year, about \$50. And for the year-end and the party we collect about \$50, so we have some leftover money.

**NGA, for the NY/NJ Chapter:** This report came from the chapter coordinator, Lorna del Rosario. In 2022, the chapter held its annual reunion in November with multiple activities in one day and just 14 participants (see pp. 26–27).

For this year, Lorna is hoping the chapter can revive the traditional ballroom event. She also fully supports the goal of coming up with structured guidelines for easy reference of the chapter coordinators. The NY/NU chapter does not have any pensioners, and their objective is to have good participation from chapter members and from neighboring areas as well.

**Canada Coordinator Bruce Murray** noted that with the ending of COVID we started our get-togethers again. In Toronto, the theme was Abbania, because it was dinner in a place playing Abba music. Everybody had a very good time. We also had one in Vancouver, a get-together dinner. I gave a little business speech to start, and we also had a couple of John Cole memorial quizzes, which are always great fun.

In terms of issues, the problem in Canada is the succession plan for the AFE Canadian Coordinator and subcoordinators in Toronto and Ottawa. I haven't heard any big problems on health insurance from Canada. I send 2–3 written reports, bringing people up to date on developments in AFE and ADB throughout the year. I also encourage

Canadian members to write articles for the AFE Magazine. People are doing all sorts of interesting things, so I would encourage all my fellow coordinators to encourage their members to write something, send lots of



Cheolsu Kim, Korea Chapter Coordinator

pictures and send them off to Jill. And I give a lot of advice to Canadian AFE members on taxation, particularly the tax-free status of the ADB Pension in Canada. We're very fortunate in that. We would hope that we would have a get-together in 2023.

#### **US–Southern California Coordinator May Cesron-Tigas:**

In 2022 we had one year-end a picnic with games and some gifts. Even though we only had \$500 budgeted, it was very successful. In October we had our UN get-together, with a little bit of dancing and lots of picture taking. I'm happy to say that we've increased participants from 18 to 22. In Southern California if anyone is sick, we try to visit them at home. We keep in contact pretty much every day by Facebook messenger.

#### **Adjournment**

**JGV adjourned the meeting at 10:59 am** and thanked all present for very fruitful discussions and exchanges of information. ■

# 36<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting

2 May 2023, 4:30–6:00pm

## Chairman’s Opening Address

I am very pleased to be able to welcome members who are present physically at AFE’s 37th Annual Meeting, and the first annual meeting we have had in person in 3 years.

Before I continue, let us observe a minute of silence for AFE members who have passed away in the last year.

As you know, this past year has been one of enormous challenges and changes. I will list a few of them here. The president’s and treasurers’ reports will provide more details.

- Alfredo Pascual resigned as AFE’s president, to join the cabinet of the then new Philippine president.
- Jill Gale de Villa was elected to replace Fred.
- In December 2022, our new Thailand Chapter had its inaugural meeting.
- Our Executive Committee comprising myself, Jill, Treasurer Nannette Guinto-Amorado, and Secretary

- Teresa Samson Montesa, meets every 2 weeks to consider matters at hand. Hans Springer and Barbara Palacios also attend the ExCom meetings, for pension and health insurance matters, respectively.
- Work on digitalizing the accounting and membership system is progressing to completion under Nannette’s guidance.
- Bobbie Montesa is redesigning our filing system and our website.
- Jill heads the communications and insurance committees.
- We formed two temporary committees: one to review the Bylaws (headed by Bruce Murray and Eveline Fischer) and another to create a chapter coordinator’s advisory manual (led by Günter Hecker and Gam de Armas).
- Hans Springer continues to represent AFE on ADB’s pension committees.
- Along with Jill, Barbara Palacios represents AFE to ADB and Cigna on health insurance matters.
- The new AFE office has been redesigned to better serve our needs.
- Malou Pasicolan, who heads our office staff and especially handles our financial matters, has been very busy with the digitalization project and keeping track of our finances. She also handles much of the turnover when ADB changes the contractual staff person they have assigned to us.

AFE Executive Committee, l-r: Treasurer Nannette Guinto-Amorado, Chairman Stephen Paul Groff, President Jill Gale de Villa, Secretary Teresa Samson Montesa, with IT assistance from Marvic Robledo.





- Maricon Algara, who joined us just after the last annual meeting, has been learning our needs and has been a great help especially with technology.

So, a lot of work continues for and on behalf of the AFE membership. It is important to have presence at the head office because, we all know the risk of “out of sight, out of mind.” This truism has been reinforced by our post-COVID experience of needing to rebuild contacts and recent relationships.

I especially want to take this opportunity to thank all those just mentioned for the work they have done and continue to do for AFE’s membership. Note that none of the elective or appointed positions are remunerated, and this is according to our Bylaws.

Many thanks are also due to our chapter coordinators, who have managed to keep their groups together throughout this very awkward period of pandemic, lockdowns, and difficulty or inability to get together.

And last but not least, we thank ADB for its continued support for AFE. ADB provides us with office space, printing and mailing, one office assistant, and the all-important subsidy, among other things.

Topping the list of thanks to ADB is of course our member and ADB’s President Masa Asakawa. And the many staff who assist us to accomplish our mission, including

- BPMSD, including DG Watanabe and DDG Jia for our subsidy, the pension unit headed by Rawnak ul-Islam, and the insurance and other benefits unit headed by Matt Drage;
- The Secretary Ehsan Khan and the many people in the Office of the Secretary who work very hard to overcome the often unforeseeable obstacles such as visas for our Philippine attendees—the staff include but are not limited to David Garrigos-Soliva, Jungsun Lee, Cynthia Martinez, Rino Paez—and we note this is the first time that ADB has had to provide notes verbale and facilitate visas to get some of our members access to the annual meeting;
- the Corporate Services Department, headed by DG Lakshmi Menon and with special thanks to Director Ameen Joudah and his staff;
- the IT Department, headed by DG Stephanie King Chung Hung; and
- many more ADB staff members, consultants, and contractors.

Now I am very pleased and honored to turn the floor over to my predecessor, former ADB Vice President and AFE Chair Bong-Suh Lee, to welcome us to his country. He served as vice president of ADB during 1993–1998 and was the chairman of AFE during 2009–2021.



AFE Chair Stephen Paul Groff and AFE President Jill Gale de Villa.

### Address of Former AFE Chairman Bong-Suh Lee

Hi, everybody! So nice to see you here. Well, before I came here, I knew that this meeting is going to be pressured for time. I thought the best way I can help you out is to make the speech as short as possible.

The agenda says that I’m to give a welcome address at this meeting. However, the proper word would be a farewell.

As you know, last year, after serving three consecutive terms over 12 years as chairperson of AFE–ADB, I decided not to sit for a fourth term. Because of COVID, the annual meeting at Incheon was deferred to this year. Hence, I had to wait until now to say a word of appreciation to everybody concerned.

I take this opportunity to thank first of all, Chairperson Groff, for giving me this opportunity to give farewell remarks. And then to all AFE–ADB members for electing me as chairperson for three terms. It was indeed a great honor and pleasure to serve. I’m grateful to many of you who gave strong support in various activities undertaken at the AFE Head Quarters as well as the regional chapters. My thanks also go to the Management of the Bank for its effort at improving the welfare of our members whenever possible. And last but not least, my thanks to officers and to staff members of AFE–ADB for their highest efficiency in carrying out their responsibilities. That Jill Gale de Villa, who is currently the longest serving elected member of the office, was chosen for president unopposed is a living proof of our appreciation of their efficiency. And special mention to Marilou Pasicolan, who has been efficiently handling our finances, training the other staff and the officers when they join AFE, and assisting members in any way possible, and has been working with AFE–ADB for 19 years. Well, in conclusion, Mr. Chairperson Groff, you are a very lucky man and I wish you all the best.

Thank you!



Former AFE Chair Bong-Suh Lee addressing the assembly.

## Report of the President

Good afternoon everybody.

We apologize for the brevity of this annual meeting. The day is full of “Korea Day” activities and we were requested to make space for some of their events. In addition to the thanks provided by our chairman, I thank ADB’s IT Department very much for their support, including Chen Zhao, Marvic Robledo, Chito Royeras, and others; as well as our Korean assistant “Donny” who has greatly facilitated our work.

This report (1) introduces ADB’s organizational change to meet the challenges of our changing world, (2) summarizes some of the challenges faced by AFE at Headquarters and in its chapters; and (3) provides brief reports on pension, health insurance, the digitalization project, communications and publications, and two new

committees to help AFE move with the times. Those in charge of various aspects of our operations will report briefly on their areas of responsibility.

Let’s especially celebrate the successful inauguration, in December, of the new Thailand Chapter, headed by Suganya Hutaserani and a team including Jean-Pierre Verbiest and Bob Dawson. Congratulations for your hard work, and for a well-planned 2023.

## ADB’s Reorganization

**ADB’s New Operating Model.** On October 31st last year, ADB announced it will adopt a new operating model (<https://www.adb.org/news/adb-adopts-new-operating-model-meet-rapidly-changing-needs-asia-and-pacific>) “... to (1) increase its capacity as the region’s climate bank; (2) strengthen its work to develop the private sector and mobilize private investments in the region; (3) provide a larger range of high-quality development solutions for its DMCs; and (3) modernize ways of working to make it more responsive, agile, and closer to clients.

“This aims to help ADB deliver on the ambitious development goals of its corporate strategy, Strategy 2030....

“... ADB’s five regional departments ... will become a single window for all ADB products and services, both sovereign and nonsovereign. Staff and expertise from the sectors, themes, and other specializations in which ADB operates will be consolidated, with increased deployment to regions and countries to offer a better range and quality of solutions, resulting in more staff working in the field, closer to clients. ...”

[See p. 15 of AFE News #62 for more information.]

**HQ Building.** Partly in response to the reorganization, ADB is refitting the Headquarters building, which involves moving whole blocks of people while the work is ongoing.



AFE Members at the AFE Annual Meeting in ConvensiA.



BPMSD, for example, has been moved to the second floor of the new atrium, and is likely to be there for about a year.

## AFE

**AFE's Office.** Our office is now on the ground floor, close to the West Core entrance. The office is usually staffed Monday–Friday; individual staff work from home 2 days a week.

Our office space now has (1) an area for members to enjoy when visiting and transacting with AFE staff, (2) a working space for members of the Executive Committee or others, (3) a small meeting room for 6–8 people, and (4) the former VP office that is now the president's office. We are grateful to Corporate Services for designing and implementing this, especially to Ameen Joudah, Oto Williams, Christian Bederico, and their staff.

Since ADB HQ reopened, the importance of officers being there in person (in addition to working from home) has become increasingly apparent, to liaise with ADB staff and achieve what we need for our members. Reestablishing and recementing relationships has included a round of courtesy meetings with some members of ADB Management. More of these visits are in the offing.

**ADB HQ Access.** ADB retirees have access to ADB's ground, first, and second floors. Do upgrade your IDs to the new format to facilitate access. Spouses and former staff without a pension may call the AFE office and request registration for entering ADB—at least 2 days in advance, please.



AFE Office.

Parking for retirees is at the UPark next to the Podium weekdays. Self-driven retirees may park in ADB during weekends and ADB holidays. Since February 2023, retirees and staff who are being driven to ADB are required to enter through the main gates on ADB Avenue. Those with mobility issues can request wheelchair assistance.

**Membership and Renewal.** In the last 2 years, while the absolute number of members has increased, the number of members joining AFE has declined at least partly because (1) the retirement age at ADB has increased, and (2) the pandemic has affected enrollment in AFE as well as in all the retiree groups of comparable organizations. As pandemic effects have left many people feeling isolated, we, including our chapters, need to reconnect with current members and reach out to prospective members.



AFE Members at the AFE Annual Meeting in Convensia



**Records Management: Teresa (Bobbie) S. Montesa.**

After the AFE office moved, the paper records were reorganized to comply with a new filing system that can apply to electronic records as well. Minutes of meetings are properly recorded and reformatted for easier monitoring of assigned tasks.



AFE Secretary Teresa Samson Montesa.

**Pension: Hans-Juergen Springer.**

The pensioners are represented on the two pension committees, one for the new Defined Contribution plan and one for the Staff Retirement Plan (SRP).

- **SRP.** The SRP is running very well overall. Although the last pension year was not very good in terms of investments, the pension and the funding as a percentage has increased because all previous years were pretty good. So, our pension is in very reasonable shape.
- **Cost-of-living adjustment (COLA).** We are all experiencing high inflation, and members have asked about receiving the COLA. Our supplemental COLA increases are only paid out about 9–10 months after the end of the previous pension year. The last pension



Hans-Juergen Springer discussing pension.

year that was reported [2021] had a fairly low price increase. Only in September–October 2021 did prices shoot up. This period will be reflected in the pension year that the Pension Committee will look at on 23 May. So, most of us can expect a supplemental COLA.

- The documentation surviving spouses need to provide for the pension to continue after the member dies needs clarifying. We are working with BPMSD on this.

**Health Insurance.** In 2022, Barbara Palacios, temporary member of the Executive Committee for health insurance, guided the design and implementation of a survey of members’ understanding of the insurance and opinions of the provider. The survey results are on AFE’s website.

- Compared to the 2018 survey,
- we had about 5% more respondents in 2022 than in 2018;
  - satisfaction with the Group Medical Insurance plan was 89% in both years;
  - satisfaction with Cigna’s customer service dropped from 91% in 2018 to 86% in 2022;
  - satisfaction with the claims processing remained comparable at 91% in 2018 and 92% in 2022; and
  - there were issues with turn-around-times for guarantees of payment and requests for resubmission of information already provided.

In summary, most members who have the insurance are satisfied with it, while there are some issues that need work. Barbara and I represent you on the GMIP Consultative Forum for policy matters, and take these and other issues up with both BPMSD and Cigna.

**Digitalization: Nannette Guinto-Amorado.** AFE’s digitalization project was initiated in 2020. The accounting side is now fully implemented. The member relationship management system is scheduled for the second quarter of 2023. The system, once fully implemented, will enable AFE to operate more efficiently as most of the manual administrative work will be automated.

**Communications and Publications.** AFE’s primary methods of communication with members are e-mail, postal mail, the AFE HQ Facebook page, dissemination of *OneADB Today*, the full-color *AFE News*, and the AFE website. The *OneADB Today* we are currently circulating is easy to read, as quality of the file ADB provides has greatly improved.

**Web redesign: Bobbie Montesa.** The AFE website is being updated and redesigned. It will interface with the Membership and Accounting System for easier access to the members-only pages. We request chapters to submit

current activities and photos for uploading. While the new website is being constructed, the old one will continue to function and be updated.

**Committees.** To supplement the Executive Committee, AFE has three standing committees (on communications, insurance, and pension) and two temporary committees. [Members are listed in Updates.]

- **The Bylaws Review Committee** is headed by Bruce Murray with Eveline Fischer as vice chair. The committee's final recommendations will go to the Executive Committee for further consideration, then to the membership for approval, as required by the Bylaws.
- **A Chapter Coordinators' Manual/Guide** is being prepared by a committee comprising current and past chapter coordinators and headed by Günter Hecker (chair) and Gam de Armas (vice chair) The purpose is to share information and knowledge about running chapters among coordinators and with new coordinators.

**Conclusion.** In a nutshell, during 2022–2023, AFE has

- opened the new Thailand Chapter;
- reoccupied and redesigned its office;
- continued to represent and assist retirees on pension and insurance committees and matters;
- continued work on digitalizing the accounting and membership systems, redesigning the website, and revamping the filing system;
- met and worked with relevant ADB officers on office, insurance, pension, access, and other matters; and
- continued to provide chapters with their subsidies, assist former staff members with access to ADB, assist members with a wide variety of needs and requests, and work to keep members connected to ADB and each other.

Undoubtedly, more could be done, which requires more members volunteering time and energy as AFE officers and committee members.

## Report of the Treasurer: Nannette Guinto-Amorado

The report covers four topics: our continuing healthy financial situation, the shift to digital accounting and further digitalization, full utilization of the ADB subsidy, and how we will move forward on the financial side.

First, our accounts were audited by Villaruz, Villaruz & Co., which gave us an unqualified audit opinion, so that's very good. At the end of 2022 we continued to have excess of receipts over expenses, although 10% lower than last year as we resumed more normal operations and paying



AFE Treasurer Nannette Guinto-Amorado.

the subscription fee for our digital accounting system. The ADB subsidy is being audited by ADB's external auditors because it is part of ADB's expenses.

Second, we've fully implemented the new accounting system [as noted earlier].

Third, in 2022, the subsidy was fully utilized. We exceptionally

approved additional requests from three chapters, reallocating from chapters unable to have their annual meetings. We also used part of the subsidy for the digitalization project, Malou's professional fee, and the website consultant.

For 2023, we thank ADB for a 6% increase. We are anticipating more chapter activities. For 2023, the budget is quite tight. We will closely monitor expenses.

## BPMMSD's Statements

Available on the AFE website.

## Discussion

**Ulf Freiwald:** Thanked JGV and HJS for their work. Asked about AFE filling the vice president position. Noted that at the 2022 annual meeting, Erkki Jappinen commented on the pension and the need to be aware of the market and to diversify investments, and asked about BPMMSD's statements.

**SPG:** Work is under way to identify candidates for VP. **JGV:** The statement from BPMMSD was sent to members.

**Member:** Given the ongoing work at ADB are we trying to increase our funding by increasing dues or asking ADB for more money? **JGV:** Our budget, about \$60,000 a year, pays for airfare and hotel only; no per diem or food allowance. Some chapters want us to attend their meetings because it helps to cement the organization together. When we go to one of these meetings we pay a lot of our own expenses. I don't foresee that we would get a big increase from ADB, so we have to live within our resources. We have not increased dues for 23 years. We will think about that a little bit more. **Ulf Freiwald:** AFE used to get more money from ADB. **HJS:** ADB stopped subsidizing rent when Ikramullah Khan's term ended.

**Erkki Jappinen** had requested for a substantive change in the previous year’s minutes. **SPG** noted the change was made and the minutes resent.

**May Seron–Tigas:** Can former staff who are not retirees get IDs to enter ADB? **HJS:** ADB stated it is against their policy, and gave no other reason. **Y Chie Primo:** Can those without IDs enter the bank? **JGV:** Call AFE in advance to arrange entry.

**Member:** How can a member volunteer to work at the AFE Office. **JGV**—Please ask us, we are happy for assistance.

**Craig Stephenson:** How will China’s graduation and that of other middle-income countries affect the Bank? **SPG:** Important question, but AFE doesn’t have the expertise to answer it now. The matter is under discussion at ADB.

**Betty Wilkinson:** Is there scope to adjust the COLA in line with World Bank’s timing? **A:** We are asking BPMSSD to look into this.

**Ashraf Mohammad:** Could retirees have health checks under the PRGMIP? This is available to retirees of other organizations. **JGV:** The benefits we get depend not on Cigna, but on the plan to which ADB signs up. We can get coverage for tests that are diagnostic but not preventive.

**2024.** Next year’s meeting will be in Tblisi, Georgia, and we hope many members can attend.

## Adjournment

Chairman SPG adjourned the meeting at 5:52 pm. ■

# AGM 2023 Participants

### Austria

Ulf Freiwald

### Egypt

Loida Julieta Sehgal

### France

Loida Julieta Sehgal

### Germany

Thomas and Liza Bieling  
Günter Hecker  
Ursula Schaefer-Preuss

Hans-Juergen Springer and  
Elizabeth Reyes

### India

Arvind Mathur

### Indonesia

Dimiyati Nangju and Siti Nur  
Aisyiyah  
Rochana and Juanita  
Soerakoesoemah

### Italy

Noemi Nazario

### Japan

Seiji Kojima  
Kazu Sakai

### Korea

Woo Chull Chung  
Cheolsu Kim  
Bong-Suh Lee

### Philippines

Arnold and William Patrick  
Aguila  
Cecille and Ronilo Alcantara  
Zenaida Alcantara  
Nannette and Romeo  
Amorado  
Lourdes Apagalang and Eva  
Andesa  
Reginald Baleva  
Maria Luisa Baleva  
Eduardo and Veminda  
Bernardo  
Ernesto and Ma. Luisa  
Bondoc  
Honorina Borja  
Teodora and Medardo  
Catura  
Marcela Leonila De La  
Merced  
Jeanette De La Paz  
Marissa and Geraldine  
Del Castillo  
Ma. Helen Eborá  
Elvira Estavillo and  
Lynda Geraldez  
Geraldine Evangelista  
Warren and Au Evans  
Lourdes Flores  
Luz and Eugenio Garcia  
Gregg and Lanie Garcia  
Violeta Guño  
Virginia Herrera  
Rossana and Quintin  
Lafuente  
Lydia Lerum  
Geraldine Ligeralde and  
Melanie Biales  
Nerissa Loria  
Magdalena Cruz  
Victoria Fe Mariano  
Robert and Cecilia May  
Natividad Medina

Teresa Montesa and TJ  
Ronald Amorado  
Elizabeth and Daniel  
Montiel  
Carolina Navarro  
Ma. Teresita Pangilinan  
Socorro and Michel  
Panis  
Evelyn Pascual  
Evangelista and Raoul  
Joseph Relato  
Belen Rosario  
Ki Hee Ryu  
Erwin Salaveria  
Conchita Salvador  
Gil and Edil Soria  
Ofelia and Jack Sta. Ana  
Ma. Dolores Tejada  
Eulogio and Queenie  
Elaine Tiamson  
Luz Tolarbas  
Jocelyn Tubadeza  
Dolores Vicente  
Jill Gale de Villa  
Marissa and Paul Wenceslao  
Teresa Yabut

### United States

Nelia Abarientos  
Carmelita Aquilizan  
Maridol Bicara  
Nerissa and Ray Anthony  
Cortes  
Rosario Francisco  
Stephen Paul Groff  
Pura Gutierrez  
Precinia Lizarondo  
Flordeliza Marcial and  
Joviette Marcial-Yao  
Y-Chie Primo and Lourdes  
Flores  
May Seron-Tigas  
Eunice Tusalem

### Online via Zoom

Shiladitya Chatterjee  
George Chou  
Ross Clendon  
Gam De Armas  
Michel De Ruffi De Ponteves  
Susan Ellison-McGee  
Martin Endelman  
Mergita Enriquez  
Eric Gordon Fox



Gaudencio Hernandez  
 Ophelia Iriberr  
 Wilhelmina Jacinto  
 Erkki Jappinen  
 Cecile L. H. Gregory  
 Werner Liepach  
 Agie Garces Ludovico  
 Modesto Modesto  
 Ashraf Mohammed  
 Chatiya Nantham  
 Soonam Oh

Rita O’Sullivan  
 Carmen Perez  
 James Rockett  
 Arun Kumar Saha  
 Craig Steffensen  
 Ana Villarama  
 Richard Vokes  
 Robert Wihtol  
 Betty Wilkinson  
 Juzhong Zhuang



Trying on Hanbok.

## Other AGM Activities



In front of the AFE office at ConvensiA.

**A**FE’s office was well located and adequate, but maps of the area were not readily available, so not all members found it. AFE’s activities were greatly facilitated by Dong Hee Lee (Donnie), who was assigned to assist us and was a major help.

The ADB Annual Meeting was overflowing with seminars, information sessions, and other interesting events. And more. The Opening Ceremonies and Korea presentations were spectacular, with superb use of technology for choreographing a wide range of cultural presentations, including very popular KPop bands—and the auditorium was packed.

Some “extracurricular” activities were available at the event venue—making a

keychain from plastic waste, photo ops wearing Korean costumes (Hanbok, with its distinctive costumes for ladies and men), a sensor that told your health by scanning your face, Korean delicacies to sample, a four-footed robot to examine, and more.

A few tours were provided by the host country, each for a limited number of guests. The most popular was a tour to Seoul that included the National Palace Museum (Gyeongbokgung Palace), lunch at a traditional restaurant (delicious food), and experiences at neighborhoods with traditional Korean architecture—“Hanok villages.” A Hanok house has a wooden framework and thatch, tile, or shingle roof. A few Hanok villages, which once were falling into disrepair,



Tour group in front of Gyeongyeongjeon Hall, central building of the National Palace Museum.





Ikseong-Dong Hanok Village street lined with Hanok houses.

have become tourism sites and wealthier Koreans who appreciate the heritage are redoing the houses in traditional style as their homes.

**Gyeongbokgung Palace**, now the National Palace Museum, was first constructed in 1395, early in the Joseon Dynasty. Gyeongbokgung was the main palace of the capital city and the largest of the Five Grand Palaces in Seoul. In 1592 the palace was destroyed by fire during a Japanese invasion, and then was abandoned for almost 300 years. The palace was reconstructed in 1867, once again making it an icon of Seoul. On 8 October 1895, Empress Myeongseong, the wife of Emperor Gojong, was assassinated by the Japanese. Gojong and the royal family never returned to the palace. Only a few buildings from the 19th century survived both the Japanese occupation

and the Korean War, including Geunjeongjeon Hall. Two museums are on the grounds of the palace—the National Folk Museum of Korea and the National Palace Museum of Korea.

At **Bukchong Hanok Village** we ascended a narrow street to experience either creating an enamel decoration for a keychain or painting a traditional Korean doll. After our labors, we left with our very own do-it-yourself souvenirs. Then it was off to **Ikseong-Dong**, another Hanok Village with steep walks past attractive traditional houses and, at the start, shops where one could fill the need to acquire gifts and souvenirs.

This whirlwind tour whetted the appetite for a more in-depth experience, and many AFE-ADB members went on to enjoy more of the country. ■

Mixed group of participants in one of the Seoul tours.





# AFE Cocktails









# Chapter News

## Japan

Kazu Sakai (ADB 1987–2014)



While the Japan Chapter had not had a full-fledged gathering since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, some groups in Japan started to meet.

On 3 February 2023, members of the **Barrio Fiesta Group** had the 40th reunion. This group of retirees were with ADB during the time of President Yoshida (the third President of ADB).

President Yoshida left ADB in 1981 and the group had its first gathering in 1982. Since then, the group met every year, even after the passing of President and Mrs. Yoshida, until COVID-19 forced them to suspend this practice. The gathering this time was the first since the start of the pandemic and was attended by 37 retirees and spouses. Their long-lasting friendship comes from shared professional satisfaction in serving the noble mission of ADB and happy memories of the life in Manila.

However, members have now reached advanced ages and some face health issues or difficulties traveling a long distance. So, the group decided to discontinue the annual



Mio Ishida, Mrs. Kumiko and President Haruhiko Kuroda, Makiko Sakai.

full gathering. Instead, they will continue to meet in smaller groups linked through closer friendships, same hobbies, or proximities of their residences.

On 2 June 2023, former staff members who worked under President Kuroda had a **reunion with President and Mrs. Kuroda. President Kuroda**, who had left ADB in 2013 to become Governor of the Bank of Japan (the central bank of Japan), completed his second 5-year term as the Governor in April and stepped down. So, together with the relaxation of protection measures against the COVID-19 contagion that came about in May, it was good timing to resume the annual reunion that had been suspended since 2020.

Defying torrential rain caused by a typhoon on that day, 59 persons attended the gathering. Along with former



Barrio Fiesta Group.





Gathering with President and Mrs. Kumiko Kuroda in the center of the first row.

staff members and their spouses, a couple of active staff members who happened to be in Tokyo on that day were present. We were all curious about President Kuroda’s next steps and learned from him that he had just been appointed a professor of the National Graduate Institute for Policy

Studies and had been invited by Columbia University and Kyoto University to teach. So, he will spend a few months a year in New York City. He said, in giving a speech recently in Hitotsubashi University, where he was a professor before becoming ADB’s President, he was stunned to realize that today’s university students had been small children at the time of the Lehman shock in 2008 and did not remember at all the severity of the global financial and economic crisis that it provoked. He was happy with the opportunities for sharing his knowledge and experiences with younger generations. ■



Toshio Oya, Masahiro Kawai, President Haruhiko Kuroda, Kazu Sakai, Yasushi Kanzaki, Kazuki Fukunaga.



Tsukasa Maekawa, Mio Oka, Megumi Araki.

## New York/New Jersey

Lorna del Rosario (ADB 1994–2000)



It was another first for the AFE–ADB New York/New Jersey annual reunion. The event was held in November 2022 as 14 participants gathered for a full day of fun and laughter with multiple activities. The participants seemed not to have enough of each other’s company, from an early start in the morning to late at night.

First stop was Rockland Bakery, which prides itself as the premium bakery of the Northeast and offers a diverse line of freshly baked products. The sight and scent of rolls and bagels moving along the conveyor and shelves full of loaves and artisan rolls brought excitement to everyone. Next





With bakery goods from Rockland Bakehouse, l-r: Margie Baccay, Liz Juan, Lorna del Rosario.

stop was Woodbury Commons Outlet for an hour of shopping galore!

With hungry stomachs growling again, we proceeded to Mt. Fuji Japanese Steakhouse at Hillburn, New York which is an architectural splendor situated on a 45-acre private mountain and has served as New York's and New Jersey's premier destination for Japanese Hibachi cuisine.

The place offers

many picturesque spots for photo shoots, including of the foliage. Everyone enjoyed the dining experience as the skilled master chefs performed personalized flaming presentations of hibachi artistry at tableside while preparing delicious and flavorful meals and even entertained us throughout the course of dinner with their singing! Before calling it a night, we went to Palisades Center Mall for coffee and more catching up with each other and reminiscing about the good old days at HQ. ■



At Mt. Fuji Japanese Steakhouse, l-r: Nena Villena-Tañedo, Margie Baccay, Chat Cortes, Lorna del Rosario, Liz Juan, Emma Dumalag, Nnet Amorado, Mila Simolde, Mary Anne Domingo, Chona Casimiro, Tito Molina.

## Canada

### Bruce Murray (ADB 1980–2007)



As of the end of July, the AFE Canada Chapter had held no get-togethers, but four are planned later in the year, by the Ottawa/Montreal, Toronto, Vancouver, and Vancouver Island groups.

John Rive has played a stellar subcoordinator role for the past 2 decades of organizing annual

dinner for the Ottawa/Montreal group. The group deeply appreciates his sustained efforts and choice of restaurants featuring Asian food. John recently passed the baton to Marilyn Collette and Farrokh Kapadia to continue the tradition of the annual get-togethers in Ottawa.

I circulated an update on developments at ADB and AFE during the first half of 2023 to all members of the Canadian chapter. The updates covered, among other things, economic developments in the Asia and Pacific Region, ADB's lending and operational activities in 2022, the 2023 annual meeting in Incheon, ADB's ongoing reorganization, the COLA adjustment for pensions, and a report of members and spouses who have passed away in 2023. ■



Enjoying Indian food and reminiscences (l-r) Chris Wensley, Lew Hayashi, Bill Fraser, John Kuiper, and Bruce Murray.

# People, Places, and Passages

## A Journey Home

Richard Bolt (ADB 2000–2018)

*Ed: Several of Richard’s remarkable wildlife photographs are at the end of the article to give them the space they (and wildlife in general) deserve.*



Richard and his ride.

**H**ome to Africa. A trip back to Africa, family roots, and past endeavors had long been planned, long delayed, and finally happened as post pandemic travel became possible. Five years ago, after retiring, the plan was to return to Tanzania and Kenya where my wife Masami and I have

past family and work ties, but COVID-19 had impacted our friend’s safari company, my dream of a motorcycle ride from Nairobi to Cape Town had evaporated, and we started looking at a Plan B.

Focus turned to Zimbabwe where I was born, Botswana and Namibia where we had long wanted to visit while working in Zambia and Malawi in the 1980s, and South Africa where family had lived. When we last lived and worked in the region, it was a difficult time with major political upheavals going on and economies were challenged,



Richard’s mother at Kaliba Dam, 1956.



Richard at Kaliba Dam, 67 years later.

STOPS NOTED IN TEXT (other stops indicated by dots)

- 1 Kariba Dam
- 2 Victoria Falls
- 3 Machaba Camp
- 4 Tau Pan Camp
- 5 Windhoek
- 6 Sossusvlei
- 7 Swakopmund
- 8 Cape Town
- 9 Port Saint Johns
- 10 Piggs Peak
- 11 Kruger Game Reserve
- 12 Kasane



so we felt some trepidation—how do things function today? The inflection point was that an alternative motorcycle adventure through familiar country was still possible.

**My Dad’s Dam.** We set off for Zimbabwe after a few days in Cape Town for final logistics. Our first stop was Kariba. Sixty-eight years ago, my father was assigned as part of the Kariba Dam consulting engineers team, a dam that still provides Zimbabwe (and Zambia) with 70% of its power, and the lake is an important source of economic activity. We last visited the dam with my parents in the 1980s. Moving across or near borders back then was challenging given the tensions throughout the region as the apartheid

system in South Africa was in its final throes. This visit was different—we were warmly welcomed and the appreciation of the role of the dam constructors was well expressed in a special tour of the dam. It was by far my dad’s favorite project;



to see how it has endured, albeit with new challenges, is a development practitioner's aspiration. A highlight was finding the same spot where a photo was taken of my mother the day the dam's floodgates were opened and repeating the photo 67 years on.

### Anniversary Stop.

From Kariba we flew by bush plane to Victoria Falls, which continues to be a favorite, always living up its wonder-of-the-world reputation. Masami and I celebrated our 38th wedding anniversary overlooking the awe of the Zambezi. We met in Malawi 40 years ago, both working as volunteers, and the setting back in Africa for celebrating our life journey together was special. Zimbabwe, once known as the breadbasket of southern Africa, has been through a very difficult period, but everyday folks want to move on from past tensions and blaming, make a huge effort to be educated, work hard, and have that reputation in the region. Tourism destinations are generally well managed as are Zimbabwe's parks. The politics are less self-destructive than before, and there are many signs of hope in my "motherland."



Masami Bolt at Victoria Falls.



Cuddly lions.

### Into the Wild.

Crossing the border post into Botswana was an easy 10-minute process, and we headed to

an Okavango conservancy camp near the Moremi Game Reserve. The Okavango delta is something of an oasis in southern Africa, surrounded by desert and semi-arid landscapes. The nature viewing was up-close and spectacular. Our tracker could hear a leopard cough a kilometer away and figure out the direction, and his skill enabled me to experience my closest-ever big cat viewing in the wild. Elephants and hippos

thrive on the lush vegetation. Most wildlife struggles are over territory and breeding rights. Camps and lodges in Botswana have a social tradition of asking guests to eat together for dinner at the same long table as a way of honoring and respecting one another. We had some long evenings toasting and respecting each other.

**The Deserts.** Following the Okavango watershed to the south, we headed into the Kalahari and Tau Pan, in part inspired by the Laurens Van Der Post novels on the Kalahari and the San people. I was expecting a harsh desert environment, but unseasonal rains had turned the bush remarkably green. Oryx and springbok, both well adapted to desert conditions, grazed lazily in large numbers on vast plains, and lions and leopards looked well fed. We were even treated to a rare Kalahari rainbow. Our San tracker showed us the array of plant species used for food, drink, medicine, tools, and housing traditionally needed to survive in the Kalahari's semi-arid environment.

We continued west to Namibia with a self-drive from Windhoek to Sossusvlei in the Namib Desert. Geologically, it is the world's oldest desert and stretches for most of the coastal area of Namibia. I had always thought that striking photographs of the salt and clay pans and red dunes were heavily edited, but that is exactly how they look if you get up at 5am to be in the desert to see the sunrise casting light and creating shadows on the mountainous dunes. The landscape is even more dramatic from the air by hot air balloon but requires a 4am start to avoid an unmanageable balloon being buffeted by desert thermals. The pattern was clear: even on vacation, life in Africa starts at 5am, latest.



Sossusvlei salt pan dune at sunrise.



Dedvlei 900-year-old trees.



Sossusvlei salt pan dune at sunrise.





The Atlantic Ocean meets the desert, Namibia.

From Sossusvlei we headed up the 300-kilometer (km) on the desert road to Swakopmund. Hot and sometimes barely visible as a road, its sharp quartz stones shredded a tire. Fortunately, the car was equipped with two spares, and I had checked the tire change gear before setting out. The last time I changed a tire was in Africa more than 30 years ago, so it was either sit in the 40°C heat and wait for a passing vehicle to ask for help or change it. And thank goodness I did, as apparently the Namibians take a dim view of anyone not able to change a tire even on a car hire. Important skills remembered on an African road trip!

**The Atlantic.** Even though we lived in East and Southern Africa for a decade, this was the first time we had seen the continent’s Atlantic coastline. Coming out of the dunes to see the Atlantic meet the desert and watch the evening fog rolling in is a wonder in itself (and happens for the same reason as mist appears when you open a cold fridge in a hot room). The beach and dune drive 100 km south along the coast from Walvis Bay was not only remarkable because of the skill of the 4x4 guide being able to navigate towering dunes and the narrow strip of drivable beach between ocean waves and dunes, but also to see the life generated by the ocean–dune interactions, including wetlands that are home to flocks of flamingos and Cape seals either lazing on the beach or feeding off the rich fisheries along the coastline. This harsh but beautiful country attracted settlers because of the Atlantic fisheries, diamonds, and its natural beauty.

**The Return North.** Three weeks of travel between Zimbabwe and Namibia was good orientation for the second part of the return-to-Southern Africa trip—a 4,440-km motorcycle tour from Cape Town to Victoria Falls. Even though my motorcycle habit began in Africa over 40 years ago, I was wondering if I was up for this. While I had been touring in Japan in the early part of the pandemic, I will now admit I had a fall from my bike (a front brake failure which resulted in a recall, so not my fault!) 18 months previously. The resulting damage needed to be repaired by two operations and a year of rehab. But I had recovered

well, worked hard on regaining fitness, and had longed to do this before advancing age takes over. It was now or never. Masami supported the effort but went home, not least because she had had her fill of hundreds of kilometers a day by car on roads while working in Africa.

And so, our group of five and two guides left Cape Town early one morning on BMWs ranging from 850cc to 1200cc. We were complete strangers whose only connection was our passion for long distance biking and an understanding for good preparation and managing risky situations.

The first day took us along coastal roads to Cape L’Agulhas, the southern-most tip of Africa and the point where the Indian and Atlantic Oceans meet. Stunningly beautiful with endless vineyards and rugged coast, it was important to stop for viewing, as it was easy to miss a blind corner. For the next 3 days the road continued through Western Cape Province to the borders of the Karoo drylands, then back to the picturesque resort town of Knysna for a rest day.

For the first 900 km, I was getting used to a heavy BMW 850 GS. The rest of the group were long-time BMW riders and the switchover from the make I’m used to, KTM, was not overnight for me. The big BMWs are heavy, powerful machines on two wheels and understanding their response in split second decisions matters a great deal. I tended to lag behind, uncertain of the make’s corner lean tolerance, especially over the mountain passes. But bikers, while not fearless, know commitment and so onwards it was.

On day 4 we continued along the Garden Route, the beautiful coastline along southeastern South Africa. It had rained heavily on and off throughout the day, with strong crosswinds. The Cape region is infamous for its winter storms, and riding a bike at speed in such a storm gives one an appreciation of what coastal dwellers experienced. At least we weren’t cold, as has often been the case on bike

rides in the Canadian Pacific northwest. As the guide said, “lean the bike into the wind and keep the throttle open, it won’t fall, it’s too heavy and momentum is your friend!” The next day was to be our longest ride day, 475 km to Port St. Johns in the Transkei’s Wild Coast, an even stormier coastal region with a long history of shipwrecks. But it also marked the beginning



Our BMWs near the southernmost tip of South Africa.

of why I chose this route—a trip through family history and down memory lane.

**Early Development Experience.** The Transkei is where at the ripe old age of 19 I started a year out from university and arranged work placements in South Africa and Kenya to try to understand what relevance academic agricultural economics had to the real world. I worked on an irrigation scheme being set up under a public investment program. While it was a helpful technical experience, I was also unwittingly exposed to the dark under belly of the apartheid system that this former Homeland was supposed to be isolated from. One shocking experience led me to realize firsthand why discriminatory systems are so damaging and development focused on less advantaged people is so important. The second part of the year out as an intern working on farming systems research in Kenya consolidated my conviction of the value of work to support smallholder farm families, and so it was back to studying with renewed purpose. The Transkei and a survey on the slopes of Mt. Kenya had determined the direction of my life's work.

**Zulus 1, British 0.** From the Wild Coast, we headed inland toward the Drakensburg Mountains, passing close to where my mother and her family lived in the 1930s (almost 100 years ago now) prior to their move to Kenya. It's easy to see why British colonists chose Natal as a place to settle, the land is fertile, the mountain backdrop spectacular, and access to a safer port weatherwise in Durban. But they had also taken on the Zulu nation under Shaka Zulu. We continued north for another gruelling day's ride, as I got separated from the group in more bad weather. After I found the group again, we stopped at a lodge at Isandlwana, the site of battle that saw the British retreat and barely survive at Rourke's Drift. Between battles with the Zulus and the Boers, the region arguably saw the limits of the British empire, as word of their defeats from overreach spread. Stunning, sweeping planes with a chilling history.

**Back to South Africa.** From Isandlwana we continued at an unrelenting pace to eSwatini (formerly Swaziland). After a few hours on the worst roads of the whole ride, we stopped at the rather surreal resort of Pigg's Peak. The significance for me was its close proximity to Barberton in South Africa where my grandfather lived out his days. His grit and determination impressed me deeply. We didn't have time to visit Barberton, but I now know how to get there for future visits. From eSwatini we headed back to South Africa and onto Kruger Park, the 3,000-km mark of the ride and finally a rest day after 6 days of nonstop riding. Kruger Park is Africa's first wildlife management reserve and an iconic example of how cross-border cooperation

with Zimbabwe and Mozambique can prevent hunting to extinction and save millennia of wildlife migration routes.

**At Ease on the Bike.** Rested, we headed northeast through Limpopo Province, back over the Drakensberg mountains and back into Botswana and the final 2 days of riding north through the eastern side of the Kalahari to the Chobe River near the Zambia border. I had finally "found my groove" on the BMW, and got the nod from one of the guides as "riding like a pro." In tight, effortless formation with the ride lead we were covering 300 km in a morning. I had learned much from the guides and fellow riders in the art of long-distance biking. Riding requires huge concentration for hours in a day, a trust in the capabilities of the machine, a good deal of prior saddle time (practice), commitment to reaching the day's goals whatever the conditions, and "fit" and compromise with your fellow riders—a huge team effort.

Exactly 4,441 km and 18 days after leaving Cape Town, we arrived in Kasane and enjoyed a wonderful sunset cruise on the Chobe River, part of the Okavango Delta I had visited with Masami 6 weeks earlier. To avoid another round of customs procedures with bikes, we left them in Kasane and took a bus the last 90 km to Livingstone, Zambia and Victoria Falls. But, compared to the 1980s, the border crossing was smooth.

**A Return Home.** I had one last task. Shortly after retiring, my mother passed away in the United Kingdom. I had promised to take some of her ashes back to Africa to be closer to her father and a continent she understood well and had huge affinity for. Like myself, she had moved away from Africa for various reasons, but it was always her "motherland." She had been in my bike's tank bag for the duration of the trip and I'm sure she enjoyed every kilometer of her ride home, probably eyebrows raised at the speeds sometimes (I only topped 150 kph on an as-needed basis), but only wishing for a safe and successful ride. I spread her ashes above Victoria Falls. You can take the child out of Africa, but you can never take Africa out of the person. We were home. ■



Sunset over the Chobe River, Botswana.





Being watched in the Okavango Delta.



Replete and relaxed in the Okavango.



Hippo.





Hyena.



Kalahari springbok.





Elephant walking.



Zebra family, Zimbabwe.





A Kruger elephant warning we are getting too close.

# Quick Trip to Göbekli Tepe

Naomi Chakwin (ADB 1995–2015)



Embarking on a trip to the World Heritage site at Göbekli Tepe had always been on my radar, and when an earthquake struck nearby Syria, I felt a sense of urgency to go. The site remained undamaged, and just 2 weeks after reopening, I seized the opportunity on 22–25 April 2023. As someone obsessed with human history, I have explored sites in Egypt, the Indus Valley, the People’s Republic of China,

Greece, Rome, and the Americas. However, it’s the truly ancient sites that ignite a special fascination for me.

Göbekli Tepe, located in southeastern Turkey, is an active archaeological site that has reshaped our understanding of our planet’s past. It is nearly 12,000 years old, placing it within Earth’s Last Ice Age. Discovered in 1963 by a local farmer, Göbekli Tepe has become one of the most significant archaeological finds of our time. What sets it apart is its staggering age, predating Stonehenge, the Egyptian pyramids, and virtually everything else by thousands of years. Göbekli Tepe stands at the crossroads of human civilization, challenging our comprehension of early societies and reshaping our perception of prehistoric human capabilities.

**Monumental Structures.** Walking around the carefully arranged ramps provided for viewing, I experienced the magnitude of the monumental structures firsthand. Towering between 14 and 20 feet in height, the colossal T-shaped stone pillars weigh around 14–20 tons. Archaeologists believe these circles formed communal ceremonial areas. Adorned with intricate carvings of animals, mythical creatures, and humanoid figures, the pillars reveal ancient craftsmanship and remarkable sophistication. Observing the intricacies, I couldn’t help but wonder about the “hows” of their construction. How were these structures built in a harsh, frigid terrain? How did ancient people accomplish such feats without the tools we take for granted today? And how did they manage such large-scale projects?



Stone pillars of Göbekli Tepe, showing relief carvings.

**Unraveling the Enigma.** Göbekli Tepe is shrouded in mysteries that continue to elude us. Among the most captivating enigmas is the purpose behind these monumental structures. Who were the people responsible for their construction, and what inspired them to embark on such monumental projects? The absence of evidence for settled communities in the region during that era only deepens the puzzle. Was Göbekli Tepe the birthplace of organized civilization, a gathering point for nomadic tribes, or perhaps a sacred sanctuary?

**Guardians of History.** Archaeologists and researchers have dedicated their lives to unraveling the secrets of





Göbekli Tepe, contributing to our understanding of prehistoric societies. Previously, the narrative of human civilization suggested that the development of agriculture acted as a catalyst for settled societies. However, Göbekli Tepe challenges this established

view, demonstrating that agriculture came after the construction of this site. It compels us to refine our comprehension of the evolution of complex societies, raising questions about the motivations and dynamics that drove early human communities. We now recognize that even hunter-gatherer societies possessed the capacity for intricate belief systems, complex social organization, and monumental construction long before the advent of agriculture.

Furthermore, the pictures we usually see only capture a fraction of the vast city that lies beneath our feet at Göbekli Tepe. Stretching across an area equivalent to 10–12 football fields, most of this expanse remains unexcavated, and is believed to comprise living areas, while the excavated portion reveals the ceremonial spaces. Witnessing the sheer scale of Göbekli Tepe left me in awe. Additionally, I had the privilege of meeting someone involved in the site’s research, who treated me to a special visit to Karan Tepe, another site located about 60 kilometers away, which is just beginning excavation.

Göbekli Tepe is not an isolated phenomenon; it is a testament to the vast potential for uncovering hidden knowledge beneath the ground we walk on every day. Special recognition must be given to Professor Klaus Schmidt, who passionately pursued the work at this site until the end of his life. Today, under the guidance of Dr. Lee Clare, Göbekli Tepe continues to reveal its secrets. I mention their names because there is a lot of misinformation circulating about Göbekli Tepe, and it is important to seek reliable sources of information for further learning.

**Tips.** For those considering a visit to Göbekli Tepe, getting there is remarkably easy! A flight to Istanbul seamlessly connects to a flight to Sanliurfa. Upon arriving at Sanliurfa airport, a bus conveniently awaits outside the door, ready to transport visitors to the city center about 20 kilometers away. The bus dropped me within walking distance of my accommodation in the old part of the city. The following day, I took a local bus to Göbekli Tepe.

Track down Frugal Nomads for more information. Notably, unlike in my home country of Germany, electronic payments were accepted everywhere, eliminating the need to manage the fluctuating Turkish lira. The trip held no downsides; it was safe, clean, and easy to arrange, and the surrounding area abounds with historical richness. And the food in Turkey was delicious as usual! ■



My hotel: door to my room.

## Moving Along

Wesam Mostadi (ADB 2011–2018)



Starting life anew in a different city can be both daunting and exciting. Still, taking that leap of faith is what adds zest to our adventure. We also do it for different reasons—to join family, have a change of scenery, or chase the dream.

My journey may sound familiar to many, but each story always has its own twist. It all started with a desire to explore what it would be like to live and work outside of my

hometown of Manila. For most Filipinos, the process involves either family or employer sponsorship. Without one, my chances looked slim.

**How to Get to Canada.** It wasn't until I googled "how to emigrate to Canada" that I learned about the express entry program. It was an immigration system launched by the Canadian Government in January 2015 to select skilled applicants for permanent residency.

Requirements were pretty standard: create a profile and submit the application form, certificate of employment, diploma, transcript, bank statement, education credential evaluation, English language exam, and medical test results. It took me 2 years to complete the requirements because, as expected, there were many hurdles along the way.

Finally, in February 2017, I put in my application online; it was approved after 6 months. When asked where I wanted to settle, I learned that Vancouver had the warmest winter of all Canadian cities. Growing up in a tropical country, that became the selling point for me. What followed was a very quick wrap up of my many years of living in Manila.



With a friend at the Legislative Assembly, British Columbia Parliament Buildings, Victoria.

**Landing on My Feet.** In the middle of winter 2018, I landed in Vancouver. To call it a huge adjustment is an understatement. I had to get accustomed to the culture, the laws, and the labor market. Regardless though, I was focused on getting settled. Part of my preparation was online job hunting even while I was still in Manila, which allowed me to secure interviews in my first week here.

With a background in accounting, I was able to experience a variety of finance roles and in different industries before eventually working as a finance lead in 2019 at the University of British Columbia (UBC), one of the province's top employers and one of Canada's top universities.

I have been with UBC for 4 years now and I am privileged to have such a supportive employer. As a Certified Public Accountant in the Philippines, I was enticed to become a Chartered Professional Accountant (CPA) in Canada (one of the most in-demand professions in the country). This job complemented my studies and provided financial support to finish the course.



Jersey shirt day at work: A day in Canada when sports shirts are worn in remembrance of athletes who died in a traffic accident in 2018.

Though challenging, I learned a lot from the CPA program, especially how to be a modern-day accountant that adds value to the finance aspect of any industry.

I studied and worked for 3 years before finally taking and passing the CPA exams in May 2022. It was the same year that I acquired my Canadian citizenship.



**Fitting In.** While going through this journey, I had to balance being focused with being open to learning about my new city and the way of life here. I quickly noticed that Vancouver is very immigrant friendly, as I've been invited to numerous festivals that celebrate various cultures. These events happen all year round, but mostly during the warmer months.

Despite its an urban landscape, this coastal town is also a nature lover's paradise because it is surrounded by mountains and lush greenery. Hiking (and skiing during the winter) are very common activities. Vancouver is also known as "Hollywood North," so star spotting can be quite a thing.



There is an unofficial saying going around, that "In Vancouver, it's who you know." Hence, my once shy persona had to take a 360-degree turn to immerse myself in networking activities. I became an active board member in the Philippine Institute of Certified Public Accountants, Vancouver chapter, joined and attend the AFE-ADB Vancouver chapter annual get together, participated in CPA Canada led events, and am a member of the Association of Filipino-Canadian Accountants and the UBC Bike Club.



Joining these groups allowed me to connect with other professionals and learn from their journeys, while some of them have also helped me in my career. It also gives me a sense of community as a newcomer.

To pay it forward, I have mentored CPA students and young migrants who want to better understand how to navigate the system. I enjoy volunteering in soup kitchens, shelters, and youth support groups.

Five years on and I'm still learning about my new city. I'm more curious about exploring what else it has to offer. Undertaking such a diverse mix of activities doesn't just make me a well rounded professional, but a more grounded person with knowledge, time, and lessons to share.

Regardless of what our story is, one thing we must never forget is where we came from. As a metropolis, Vancouver's beauty is unrivaled and I am proud to call it my city. But, as the saying goes, you can take the girl out of Manila, but you can't take Manila out of the girl.

If you have a similar story and would like to learn more, let's connect at <https://www.linkedin.com/in/wesam-t-mostadi>. ■

Join AFE-ADB HQ Facebook page for up-to-date information. This page is for members and spouses/partners only.

## Visita Iglesia Pampanga

Lydia Lerum (ADB 1982-2013)



The Visita Iglesia group at Sta. Ana Pampanga church (l-r): Eva Candeza (Lulu Apagalang's sister), Lulu Apagalang, Lydia Lerum, Ester Vergel de Dios, Dolor Tejada, Oscar Domingo, Mayette Domingo, Luz Tolarbas and Chona Murakami.

Visita Iglesia is a Filipino Christian devotees' tradition to visit landmark churches in the country during Holy Week. The tradition started during the Spanish colonial period when the Augustinian missionaries spread the practice in the 1560s. Manila became the center of pilgrimage because Intramuros has seven historic baroque churches. The essence of Holy Week is commemorating Jesus Christ's sufferings. Some devotees visit at least seven churches because it represents the seven last words of Jesus Christ. Other devotees travel to 14 churches to represent the 14 Stations of the Cross.

On 25 March 2023, the Philippine Chapter East Group held a Visita Iglesia to ancient churches in Pampanga. Group members were Lulu Apagalang and her sister, Mayette and Oscar Domingo, Ester Vergel de Dios, Chona Murakami, Luz Telarbas, Dolor Tejada, and myself.

We took this pilgrimage as an opportunity for sightseeing as well as a religious devotion, meditating on the 14 Stations of the Cross. Among the Pampanga churches visited are (1) Sta. Ana Parish Church in Sta. Ana (established in 1756); (2) Sta. Catalina de Alexandria in Arayat (parish established in 1600, renaissance church built in 1753, restored 1858-1892); (3) San Bartolome



In front of the altar and retablo of Sta. Catalina de Alejandria Church, Arayat, Pampanga. Built in 1753, it has been extensively restored.

Parish in Magalang (parish established in 1605, baroque 19th century church built circa 1866–1890); (4) Archdiocese Shrine of Christ, Our Lord of the Holy Sepulcher in Angeles City (2012); (5) Holy Rosary Parish Church in Angeles City (a national historical site, built 1877–1896); and (6) the Metropolitan Cathedral in San Fernando (built 1788–1808). Our pilgrimage culminated at the Holy Land Subic and Biblical Theme Park, where we were lucky to attend healing masses for the sick.

For lunch, the group headed to Bale Capampangan for a sumptuous buffet of Pampanga delicacies.

Our 2023 1st quarter activity gave us an enriching and memorable religious experience with quality time spent in pleasant company that keeps us united and happy! ■



Enjoying good company and delicious Pampangueño food at Bale Pampanga in Sta. Rita.

## Reaching Out

Mayette S. Domingo (ADB 1979–2012)



**J**osefheim Foundation for the Elderly. On Saturday 20 May 2023, AFE–ADB Philippines East Group retirees visited the Josefheim Foundation in Pililla, Rizal, the home of 25 people who are abandoned, homeless, elderly and have

nowhere to go. A team of volunteer/full time caregivers, physicians, and medical workers takes care of the health and spiritual needs of the residents. The home was put up by Fr. Dari Dioquino with the support of many civic-minded individuals and corporations.

A total of 47 retirees responded to our call for donations (monetary and in kind), including those who donated the equivalent of our share of the ADB subsidy for the group's get together in December 2022. Three vehicles with 18 retirees joined the trip. Logee Tiamson led the retirees in entertaining the elderly. Some of the *lolas* sang and others danced.

As requested, we brought them lunch—their favorite Jollibee burger steak and spaghetti—and *bibingka* for *merienda*. The group donated requested items such as medicines, diapers/underpads, 2 sacks of rice, boxes of canned goods, pasta/noodles, dishwashing liquid, fabric conditioner, and laundry soap. The donations for food, medicines, groceries, and cash totaled Php47,210.84.

Thank you once again to our donors for their generosity and overwhelming support for this endeavour. It was indeed a huge success! Till our next outreach!





**Sights and Tastes of Rizal.** Of course, what would a trip be without the usual picture taking! When we left Josefheim Foundation, we made a short stop for group photos at the nearby Pililla windmills.

For lunch, the group headed to Kainan sa Taging Lawa in Tanay, where we enjoyed a hearty meal of pork sinigang, fried chicken, *pancit*, shrimp, fried *plapla* (large tilapia), and *leche flan*. Because of the scenic view of Laguna de Bay, native interiors, and delicious food, this is the second time the group had lunch here.

After our sumptuous lunch, we then proceeded to Mangantila Cafe, in Baras, Rizal, with its famous local version of Korea Nami Island trees, for more selfies and group photos. And to beat the sweltering heat and satisfy our sweet teeth we ordered their famous *halo-halo*, oh so yummy! On our way home, we stopped by Baras Church and Morong Church for more group photos. ■



## The Art of Life

### Maarten van der Schaft (ADB 1973–1978)



Maarten van der Schaft was recently knighted as a member of the Order of Orange-Nassau (**Ridder in the Orde of Oranje Nassau**) by King Willem Alexander of the Netherlands. The distinction is granted for special merit to the Dutch society. Maarten received his royal distinction for his service for two Dutch church foundations. He contributed to building up an art museum in Westland, his place

of birth. The museum enlarged and refined its collection. He has written a book on the art of The Hague School and organized exhibitions. Maarten presently enjoys his retirement living at The Hague.

**Work and Art.** During my stay with ADB from 1973 to 1978 I started collecting landscape paintings, which were abundantly available from the Mabini Street artists. The work of one of them, Victor Loyola, is comparable with that of the famous Filipino painter Ferdinando Amorsolo. Years later, one Loyola painting sold well at a Christies auction at Singapore; two of them still decorate the wall of my study.

At the Hague, where I helped as projects director, building up the Netherlands Development Finance Company (FMO), I continued selecting paintings. My focus was then on the impressionist art of the Hague School, with Dutch nature painters such as Maris, Mesdag, and Weissenbruch. During a luncheon break in 1994, at a Hague auction, I was attracted to a Westland scene. I was born in the Westland; it was a picturesque area of orchards, ditches, small bridges and fruit-and-vegetable transport boats. Now it is a world-renowned technological horticulture area. This was the first painting I had seen of the Westland. And it showed my grandparents' farm building and boats transporting grapes and other fruit to market.

This led me to discover more. By involving the regional Westlands Museum and local collectors, I was able to author and publish the book *Schilders van het Westland—Painters of the Westland*. The book provides historical views that earmark where the area's development started. More than 200 paintings were selected, including by Vincent van Gogh and Johan Barthold Jongkind. A well-visited exhibition was held at Delft in 2010. Another book followed, on the New Waterway that connects Rotterdam



and the European hinterland with the Northsea. My last publication, in 2021, was a booklet on the expressionist Leendert Scheltema, pupil of the well-known symbolist painter, Jan Toorop, who was born in Indonesia. One of his early paintings, a watermill in Westland, was acquired for the Museum.

**Retiring and More Art.** On retiring at 55, I felt it was my duty to be active for society. As treasurer of a church-related foundation, I became active in organizing lectures and concerts including speakers from political, religious, art, and socioeconomic fields, aiming to enlighten people on the nonmaterial sides of life. One speaker, a former member of the Club of Rome (1980), noted how the planet is deteriorating rapidly by focusing on economic growth at any price. The famous economist Adam Smith never talked about growth but focused on progress. I think this was also the philosophy of ADB in the 1970s as advocated by the reflective Mr. Inoue and dynamic Mr. Krishna Moorthi. Great and inspiring people indeed.

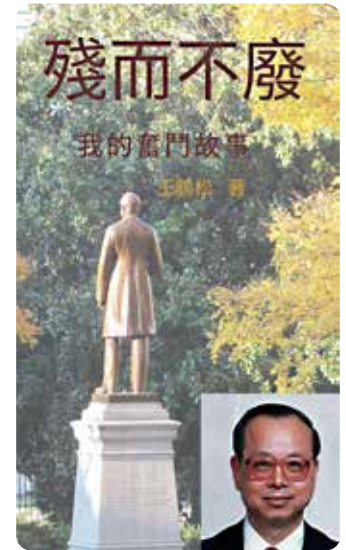
**Scholarships on Sumba.** I also became treasurer of the Juynboll Foundation, started in 1831, which provides for scholarships and publications. In 1997 I traveled to Sumba and was impressed by the pioneering work of a Dutch missionary during 1904–1920. The Reverend Douwe K. Wielinga combined missionary and medical work, honored local culture and practices, wrote novels on the wonderful courageous life of a Sumba village head, and collected Sumba art. Our Juynboll foundation provides scholarships for needy students to attend the theological university of Lewa, and has financed the translation in Bahasa Indonesia of one of Wielinga's books.

**An ADB Foundation.** I treasure the positive merits of my life at ADB. With good steering from two capable bosses—Herbert Hühne and Engelbert (Frank) Tacke—I was given a free hand at developing agricultural credit, starting with Bangladesh Krishi Bank in 1973. We contributed to developing fertilizer and cotton storage facilities in then peaceful Afghanistan and shaped the Tonga Development Bank. With humour, the pleasant working situation with Filipino staff, and practical insight, I received a profound education for my later work in international business in Holland. I proudly remember being the only Dutchman as a subject of an article in *Over a Cup of Coffee* by Theodore Valencia in the *Manila Times*. Paintings by Cesar Buenaventura, Victor Loyola, Elias Laxa, and Miguel Galvez draw me still to the pleasant side of Philippine life. My family also cherish their stay in Asia. ■

## Second Act

Heh-Song Wang (ADB 1971–1995)

**M**y autobiography will be published this coming July. The book recalls wonderful memories of my time at ADB and life in Manila; teaching experiences at University of Santo Tomas and the Asian Institute of Management; advisory work at the Ministry of Finance in Taipei; delivering speeches at Harvard University, in Kunming, and Beijing. In the intervening years, I have authored six other books, including *Economic and Financial Analyses of Projects*, *Financial Crisis and Financial Reform*, and *Current Economic and Monetary Issues and Policies*. I'm grateful to have experienced such fulfilling work and colorful adventures over the decades. ■





## New Members

**A**FE–ADB extends a warm welcome to the following new members of the Association (country of residence is indicated in parentheses):

### January 2023

Gagnon, Eric Georges (Canada)  
Vargas, Flordeliza A. (Philippines)

### February 2023

Bonoan, Tina M. (Philippines)  
Francis, Jennifer (Malaysia)  
Kroll, Martin (Germany)  
Mariano, Elsa (Philippines)  
Pantaleon, Ma. Victoria Isabel G. (Philippines)

### March 2023

Bhandari, Sharad (Thailand)  
Cruz-Ramos, Elenita (Philippines)  
Cuison, Rebecca D. (United States)  
Edès, Bart W. (Canada)  
Lane, Karen (Canada)  
Lubis, Rusdian (Indonesia)  
Nazal, Suzanne M. (Philippines)  
Panth, Brajesh P. (Nepal)  
Rhor, Celita J. (United Kingdom)  
Susantono, Bambang (Indonesia)

### April 2023

Bonilla, Michael Brian R. (Philippines)  
Gin, Mary Antonette G. (New Zealand)  
Kalingo, Cynthia S. (Philippines)  
Ludovico, Maria Aurora G. (Philippines)  
Mohammed, Ashraf (United Kingdom)

### May 2023

Alegado, Ferdinand V. (Philippines)  
Bhatta, Gambhir D. (New Zealand)  
Capati, Teresita S. (Philippines)  
Harder, Ma. Victoria C. (Philippines)  
Landicho, Ma. Cecilia D. (Canada)  
Raquipiso, Lyle N. (Philippines)  
Sotelo, Dalisay D. (Philippines)  
Sumulong, Lea Benita R. (Philippines)  
Uehara, Yuriko (Belgium)  
Verian, Hazel G. (Philippines)

### June 2023

Ganguly, Nirmal (Philippines)  
Hari, Veronica Gladys L. (Philippines)  
Hayashi, Tadateru (Japan)  
Jain, Anupma (United States)  
Mendoza, Carlo Maximo S. (Philippines)  
Paterno, Leinor Janet E. (Philippines)

### June 2023—continued

Reyes, Arnel F. (Philippines)  
Hasnie, Sohail (Australia)  
Relato, Evangelista (Philippines)  
Tusalem, Eunice (United States)

### July 2023

Barbin, Suzanne Garcia (Philippines)  
Kim, Chai Sun (United States)  
Mina, Marie Vic Esta (Philippines)  
Wangdi, Kinzang (Bhutan)

## Senior Appointments at ADB

**O**wing to the reorganization, there is a lot of staff movement (physically as well as in terms of organizational position). Further, many of the abbreviations have changed. Abbreviations repeated below are CCRE = Climate Change, at the Climate Change, Resilience, and Environment Cluster; CCSD = Climate Change and Sustainable Development Department; CWRD = Central and West Asia Department; EARD = East Asia Department; ERDI = Economic Research and Development Impact Department; PARD = Pacific Department; SARD = South Asia Department; SERD = Southeast Asia Department; SG = Sectors Group; SG-AFNR = Agriculture, Food, Nature and Rural Development Sector Office; SG-ENE = Energy Sector Office; SG-FIN = Finance Sector Office; SG-HSD = Human and Social Development; SG-OD = Office of the Director General; SG-PSMG = Public Sector Management and Governance Sector Office; SG-TRA = Transport Sector Office; SG-WUD = Water and Urban Development; VRM = Viet Nam Resident Mission. All appointments were effective 30 June 2023 unless otherwise indicated.

**Takafumi Kadono**—Country Director, Sri Lanka Resident Mission, South Asia Department (SARD), assumed office on 3 July 2023.

**Stefania Dina**—Country Director, Timor-Leste Resident Mission, Southeast Asia Department (SERD), assumed office on 3 July 2023.

**Thomas Abell**—Director, Digital Technology for Development Division, Climate Change, and Sustainable Development Department (CCSD).

**Balabhaskara Reddy Bathula**—Regional Head, Operations Coordination Unit, East Asia Department (EARD).

- Bruno Carrasco**—Director General, CCSD.
- Chen Chen**—Director, Transport Sector Office (SG-TRA), Sectors Group (SG).
- Bruce Dunn**—Director, Safeguards, Office of Safeguards (OSFG).
- Christine Engstrom**—Senior Director, Finance Sector Office (SG-FIN), SG.
- Xiaoqin Fan**—Director, SG-FIN, SG.
- Yolanda Fernandez Lommen**—Advisor, CCSD.
- Sujata Gupta**—Director, Energy Sector Office (SG-ENE), SG.
- Leah Gutierrez**—Director General, Pacific Department (PARD).
- Pratish Halady**—Regional Head, Private Sector Development, Office of the Director General, SERD.
- Rana Hasan**—Regional Lead Economist (assigned to SARD), Economic Research and Development Impact Department (ERDI).
- Jingmin Huang**—Director, Water and Urban Development (SG-WUD), SG.
- Samantha Hung**—Director, Gender Division (CCGE), CCSD.
- Joonho Hwang**—Director, SG-ENE, SG.
- Ayako Inagaki**—Senior Director, Human and Social Development (SG-HSD), SG.
- Rustam Ishenaliyev**—Regional Head, Operations Coordination, Office of the Director General (PAOD), PARD.
- Satoshi Ishii**—Director, SG-WUD, SG.
- Mukhtor Khamudkhanov**—Director, SG-ENE, SG.
- Haroun Khawaja**—Regional Head, Private Sector Development, Office of the Director General (PAOD), PARD.
- M. Teresa Kho**—Director General, EARD, assumed office on 30 June 2023.
- Takeo Koike**—Regional Head, Private Sector Development, Office of the Director General, SARD.
- Toru Kubo**—Senior Director, Climate Change, Resilience, and Environment, CCSD.
- James Leather**—Director, SG-TRA, SG.
- Dong Kyu Lee**—Director, SG-TRA, SG.
- Junkyu Lee**—Director, SG-FIN, SG.
- Sabyasachi Mitra**—Director, Public Sector Management and Governance Sector Office (SG-PSMG), SG.
- Keiju Mitsuhashi**—Director, SG-ENE, SG; concurrently, Deputy Country Director, Viet Nam Resident Mission (VNRM).
- Mohd Sani Mohd Ismail**—Director, SG-FIN, SG.
- Marzia Mongiorgi-Lorenzo**—Regional Head, Operations Coordination Unit, SERD.
- Hiranya Mukhopadhyay**—Director, SG-PSMG, SG.
- Kanzo Nakai**—Director, SG-TRA, SG.
- Thiam Hee Ng**—Regional Head, Regional Cooperation and Integration Unit, SARD.
- Tariq Niazi**—Senior Director, SG-PSMG, SG.
- Patricia Noelle O'Brien**—Director, Climate Change, at the Climate Change, Resilience, and Environment Cluster (CCRE), CCSD.
- Mio Oka**—Director, Agriculture, Food, Nature and Rural Development Sector Office (SG-AFNR), SG.
- Patrick Osewe**—Director, SG-HSD, SG.
- Thomas Panella**—Director, SG-AFNR, SG.
- Cyn-Young Park**—Director, Regional Cooperation and Integration and Trade Division, and Trade, CCSD.
- Alfredo Perdiguero**—Regional Head, Regional Cooperation and Integration, SERD.
- Jesper K. Petersen**—Regional Head, Operations Coordination Unit, Central and West Asia Department (CWRD).
- Enrico Pinali**—Regional Head, Private Sector Development, CWRD.
- Neeta Pokhrel**—Director, SG-WUD, SG.
- Sungsup Ra**—Deputy Director General and Deputy Group Chief, Office of the Director General (SG-OD), SG.
- Markus Roesner**—Director, SG-TRA, SG.
- Lyaziza Sabyrova**—Regional Head, Regional Cooperation and Integration Unit, CWRD.
- Norio Saito**—Senior Director, SG-WUD, SG.
- Srinivas Sampath**—Director, SG-WUD, SG.
- Karin Schelzig**—Director, SG-HSD, SG, effective 10 July 2023.
- Young Seo**—Head, SG-OD, SG.
- Manoj Sharma**—Director, SG-WUD, SG.
- Yasmin Siddiqi**—Director, SG-AFNR, SG, effective on assumption of office.
- Gi Soon Song**—Director, SG-HSD, SG.
- Jacob Sorensen**—Director, Partner Funds, CCSD.
- Ramesh Subramaniam**—Director General and Group Chief, SG-OD, SG.
- Jose Antonio R. Tan III**—Director, SG-PSMG, SG.
- Kiyoshi Taniguchi**—Regional Lead Economist, ERDI (assigned to CWRD).
- Pradeep Tharakan**—Director, SG-ENE, SG.
- Samuel Tumiwa**—Director, Fragility and Engagement, CCSD.
- Emma Veve**—Deputy Director General, SERD.
- James Villafuerte**—Regional Lead Economist, ERDI (assigned to SERD).
- Wendy Walker**—Director, SG-HSD, SG.
- Priyantha Cabral Wijayatunga**—Senior Director, SG-ENE, SG.



**Eleonora Windisch**—Regional Head, Operations Coordination, Operations Coordination Unit, SARD.

**Hiroaki Yamaguchi**—Senior Director, SG-TRA, SG.

**Kenichi Yokoyama**—Director General, SARD, assumed office on 30 June 2023.

**Jiangfeng Zhang**—Director, SG-AFNR, SG.

**Nianshan Zhang**—Head, Office of Safeguards (OSFG).

**Qingfeng Zhang**—Senior Director, SG-AFNR, SG.

**Yevgeniy Zhukov**—Director General, CWRD.

**Said Zaidansyah**—Country Director, Papua New Guinea Resident Mission, PARD, effective upon assumption of office.

**Shantanu Chakraborty**—Country Director, VRM, SERD, effective upon assumption of office.

**Yoko Watanabe**—Director, Environment, CCSD, effective 28 August 2023.

**Jackie Surtani**—Regional Director, ADB Singapore Office, Private Sector Operations Department (PSOD) and SERD, assumed office 21 June 2023.

**Kelly Bird**—Advisor, EARD, assumed office on 19 June 2023.

**Ron Slangen**—Deputy Country Director, VRM, SERD, effective upon assumption of office.

**Pavit Ramachandran**—Country Director, Philippine Country Office (PHCO), SERD, assumed office 9 June 2023.

**Naoto Yamamoto**—Deputy Director General, Information Technology Department (ITD), effective 1 June 2023.

**Mark Gibb**—Director, Organization Resilience and Security Division, Corporate Services Department (CSD), assumed office 29 May 2023.

**Asif Cheema**—Director, Private Sector Financial Institutions Division, PSOD, effective on assumption of office.

**Kanokpan Lao-Araya**—Country Director, Uzbekistan Resident Mission, CWRD, effective on assumption of office.

**Don Lambert**—Country Director, Armenia Resident Mission, CWRD, effective on assumption of office.

**Winfried Wicklein**—Director General, SERD, assumed office 3 May 2023.

**Chiawen Kiew**—Advisor, Office of the Head, Office of Anticorruption and Integrity (OAI), assumed office on 17 April 2023.

**Helen Hall**—Controller, Controller’s Department (CTL), effective 4 May 2023.

**Aiming Zhou**—Deputy Country Director, People’s Republic of China Resident Mission, EARD, assumed office 10 April 2023.

**Robert Schoellhammer**—Advisor, Office of the Director General, Strategy, Policy, and Partnerships Department (SPD), assumed office 19 April 2023.

**Hideaki Iwasaki**—Deputy Director General, PARD, assumed office 20 April 2023.

**Emma Veve**—Senior Advisor, SERD, assumed office 14 April 2023.

**Yumiko Tamura**—Representative, Japan Representative Office, SPD, assumed office 7 April.

**Aman Trana**—Director General, Procurement, Portfolio, and Financial Management Department (PPFD), effective 20 April.

**Shane Rosenthal**—Regional Director, Pacific Liaison and Coordination Office (PLCO), PARD, assumed office 31 March 2023.

**Michiko Suga**—Representative, European Representative Office, SPD, effective on assumption of office.

**Sunil Mitra**—Country Director, Myanmar Resident Mission, SERD, effective on assumption of office.

**Renadi Budiman**—Deputy Country Director, Indonesia Resident Mission, SERD, effective on assumption of office. ■

For information on membership contact  
afe-adb@adb.org

## Obituaries

With deep regret and sorrow we announce the death of the following AFE members. Our heartfelt and sincere condolences to their families.

**Rafaelita Nuñez**, former Secretary, passed away on 5 January 2023 at the age of 79. Condolences may be sent to her sister Socorro Joven at nsjoven@gmail.com.

**Veerendra Raj Mehta**, former Senior Evaluation Specialist, passed away on 13 March 2023. Condolences may be sent to his son Shailendra at shailendramehta1@gmail.com.

**Sujata Godbole**, wife of Madhav Godbole, passed away on 14 March 2023. Condolences may be sent to her daughter Meera Krishnamurthy at meera.krishnamurthy@gmail.com and son Rahul Godbole rahulgodbole@gmail.com.

**Damien Wigny**, former Alternate Director, passed away in April 2023 at the age of 80. Condolences may be sent to his son Jérôme Wigny at jeromewigny@elvingerhoss.lu.

**Othman Jusoh**, former Executive Director, passed away on 19 April 2023 in the age of 75. Condolences may be sent to his wife Zaiton Mohamed at farimi\_83@yahoo.com.

**Carlito Barrientos**, former Training Assistant, passed away on 6 May 2023 at the age of 79. Condolence may be sent to his wife Leni T. Barrientos at joey\_bir@yahoo.com.ph.

**Hatsuya Azumi**, former Manager, passed away on 16 May 2023 at the age of 84. Condolences may be sent to his wife Nadia Azumi at nadiaazumi@gmail.com.

**Marina Galura**, former Senior Administrative Assistant, passed away on 22 June 2023 at the age of 85. Condolences may be sent to her son Gilbert Galura at +63915 781 4616.

**Frank Holz**, spouse of Julia Holz, passed away on 29 June 2023 at the age of 84. Condolences may be sent to her wife at 2002juliaholz@gmail.com.

**Seetha Sundara Rajan**, spouse of former ADB Staff, Mohan Sundara Rajan, passed away on 5 July 2023. Condolences may be sent to her husband at babu1993@hotmail.com or her sons Dr. Lalith Sekhar at lalithsekhar@hotmail.com and Ram Mohan at rmohan@iwu.edu.

**Peter McCawley**, former Executive Director of ADB 1992–1996 and Dean of ADBI 2003–2007. Condolences may be sent to his wife Anne Willoughby at mccawill7@gmail.com.

**Christian Etienne Perez**, former director Office of Information Systems and Technology, died on 18 July 2023 at the age of 73. Condolences may be sent to his daughter Daniele at danieleperez@gmail.com.

**Ron Hamilton**, former Alternate Executive Director, died on 8 August 2023 at the age of 85. He had for many years and until his death, been Secretary of the AFE New Zealand Chapter. Condolences may be sent to Ron's wife Leith at leithalix@xtra.co.nz. ■

### Health Insurance Contacts for Urgent Matters and Queries

BPMSD: insurance@adb.org  
call +632-8632-4444 and ask for local 7800  
Alona Saludo: +632-8632-4480  
Geraldine de los Reyes: +632-8632-4523

Cigna: adb@Cigna.com and Sharon Tan at +323-217-6824

Toll-free numbers:

- From ADB: ext. 7800
- From the Philippines: +800 9687-4647  
632-8632-4444 local 7800
- From the US: +855 882-5267

For additional information, guarantee of payment, and precertification, go to <https://www.cignahealthbenefits.com/en/planmembers> log in, go to "Contacts"

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- (1) Articles and images may be accepted for inclusion if, in the opinion of the AFE-ADB Publications Committee, they are germane to AFE-ADB activities and membership; are of interest to a significant portion of the membership; and do not contain material that promotes a political or religious stance or is potentially inflammatory or offensive to the readership.
- (2) Articles that are accepted will be edited for language, content, and length that the Publications Committee deems appropriate for the readership. Articles will preferably be 250–1,000 words. Articles for publication should be sent in MS Word as e-mail attachments to afe-adb@adb.org.
- (3) Images must be of print quality (minimum 280kb file size or 600 dpi). Please send each image in a separate file.
- (4) Any photograph that was not taken by the sender should be sent with the photographer's permission for AFE-ADB to publish it. Please include captions for all photographs that include identifying all people shown.
- (5) Authors and photographers will be acknowledged and retain ownership of the material submitted for publication.

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Articles for publication should be sent in MS Word as e-mail attachments to afe-adb@adb.org.

Comments that will help improve *AFE-ADB News* are most welcome.

## Acknowledgements

Josephine C. Jacinto, AFE-ADB's able former assistant, and Angelika Trisha J. Aquino, provided invaluable help, including typesetting and layout. Beth Cabuay, David Parker, and Jill de Villa edited and proofread. AFE sincerely appreciates ADB's Department of Communications and Knowledge Management and the Printing Unit for assistance with finalizing the magazine.



# Announcements

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## ADB's Annual Meetings

### 2024 Annual Meetings of AFE-ADB and the ADB Board of Governors

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) will hold its 57th Annual Meeting of the Board of Governors in Tbilisi, Georgia, on 2–5 May 2024.

## Chapter Events

**The Canada Chapter's** Vancouver Island group will get together during the third quarter and the Ottawa, Toronto, and Vancouver groups will hold get-togethers during the fourth quarter. Contact Bruce Murray at [bmurray.xadb@gmail.com](mailto:bmurray.xadb@gmail.com) for information.

**The Sri Lanka Chapter** will have a dinner meeting during 2023. Contact Lakshman Athukorala at [slathukorala@gmail.com](mailto:slathukorala@gmail.com) for information.

**The Europe Chapter** Reunion will be in Baden-Baden Germany on 21–25 September 2023. Activities will be in Baden-Baden, a day trip to the Black Forest, a business meeting, and a number of dinners, including a Gala Dinner. Contact Richard Vokes at [richard.vokes@icloud.com](mailto:richard.vokes@icloud.com) for details.

**The New York/New Jersey Chapter** will revive its traditional ballroom event for its annual reunion on 24 September 2023 at the Castle Royale in Yonkers, New York. Contact Lorna del Rosario at [delrosario@un.org](mailto:delrosario@un.org) and Emma Dumlaga at [dumalagg@gmail.com](mailto:dumalagg@gmail.com) for information.

**The Thailand Chapter** will hold its Annual Meeting in October and a study tour to an organic farm of medical Thai herbs, owned by an ADB former employee, in November 2023. Contact Suganya Hutaserani at [shutaserani@gmail.com](mailto:shutaserani@gmail.com) for information.

**The India Chapter** Annual Meeting and Reunion Tour in Odisha state will be on 9–19 October 2023. Contact Shilo Chatterjee at [shilochatterjee@gmail.com](mailto:shilochatterjee@gmail.com) for details.

**The Australia Chapter** Reunion will be held in Lorne on the Great Ocean Road in the state of Victoria on 16–19 October 2023. For more information and a copy of the program, contact Keith Leonard at [keith.leonard@gmail.com](mailto:keith.leonard@gmail.com).

**The Philippine Chapter** will have a year-end get-together on 16 November 2023. Contact Gam de Armas at [gamdearmas@yahoo.com](mailto:gamdearmas@yahoo.com).

**The Indonesia Chapter** plans to hold its End-of-Year Lunch Party in early December 2023 in Jakarta (the date will be announced later), hosted by Chapter Coordinator Dimyati Nangju. Contact him at [dimynangju@yahoo.com](mailto:dimynangju@yahoo.com) for details.

## AFE-ADB News No. 64 (March 2024)

Please send, by January 2024, articles, photos, updates, or comments for publication in our next newsletter. For guidance, please refer to the inside back cover of this newsletter.

## Annual Association Dues

Members who have not yet settled their annual dues are requested to do so.

## Keep Your Address Updated with AFE-ADB

Please keep us informed about any change in your address, telephone numbers, and e-mail address. We don't want to lose touch with you. Also, if you know of any member whose address and other contact details are not listed in the directory, or are incomplete or wrong, please inform us.

## AFE-ADB

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