

**Welcome Address by ADB Vice President Ingrid van Wees
at the 2nd Asia Finance Forum FinTech and Sustainable Development
on November 9, 2017 in ADB Manila**

Good morning to our distinguished participants.

It is an honor to welcome you to day 2 of the 2nd Asia Finance Forum on FinTech and Sustainable Development, a topic you will all agree is crucial for policymakers and regulators in Asia and the Pacific and for the emerging FinTech sector.

As we all heard on the first day, FinTech holds many opportunities as well as challenges.

Today's sessions cover several building blocks that are important for better enabling and harnessing FinTech.

As I prepared this welcome address, I thought about what FINTECH means to me:

F for Financial,
I for Innovations,
N for New,
T for Technology-based,
E for Enable,
C for Can-do, and
H for Hope

We see clear prospects for these **F**inancial **I**nnovations that bring **N**ew **T**echnology-based solutions which **E**nable the financial system, providing a **C**an-do approach that provides the **H**ope for a more efficient, effective, and inclusive financial sector.

At the same time, FinTech offers solutions that support countries as they work toward the Sustainable Development Goals, especially those covering economic growth, ending poverty, improving access to education, water, and energy and to help us move toward sustainable cities and communities.

TOGETHER WE CAN DELIVER

ADB and governments in our developing member countries are working together to deliver a favorable, enabling environment for developing Fintech while ensuring its safety and soundness.

In Cambodia, Lao PDR, Viet Nam, and Myanmar, for example, the ADB Mekong Business Initiative is working with both the emerging FinTech sector, and regulators and policymakers to address FinTech regulatory policies.

In Mongolia, ADB is helping modernize the interbank payment system that supports the clearing and settlement of all interbank and payment service provider transactions. We are working with the Bank of Mongolia to upgrade the retail payments infrastructure and support systems, and with the government to establish the legal and regulatory framework necessary for a more inclusive economy.

In the Philippines, ADB is supporting the Mindanao-based Cantilan Bank to become the first in the country to use a cloud-based solution to facilitate a **Financial Innovation** that is a **New Technology**-based solution and a real **Enabler**. This will provide a small bank with a **Can-do** tool that provides **Hope** in the countryside.

However, ADB cannot do this alone. Partnerships like the one we signed yesterday with Alliance for Financial Inclusion—ably represented by our keynote speaker this morning, AFI's Executive Director Dr. Alfred Hannig—are so vital.

Today's important topics include the challenges around meeting various preconditions for FinTech, especially providing the infrastructure needed to better harness its power. As part of these infrastructure issues, we will also focus on new innovative approaches to policy and regulation such as the test and learn approach, regulatory sandboxes, and the use of regulatory technology (RegTech) tools and discuss why identification systems are so important.

Of course, challenges and risks accompany the many opportunities for a more inclusive digital economy. We will therefore discuss how

policymakers, in dialogue with the private sector, are balancing innovation with consumer protection, financial literacy, anti-money laundering and combating the financing of terrorism measures, data protection, privacy, and cyber-crime risks.

The good news is that we can learn a lot from one another about how to harness FinTech while addressing these risks. That is why knowledge sharing events like this one are so important.

These are exciting times. We at the ADB are adjusting our assistance strategies to better work with policymakers and regulators to develop appropriate risk-based enabling environments to support new financial innovations.

At the same time, we are investing in **Financial Innovations** that bring **New Technology-based solutions** to **Enable** the financial system, providing a **Can-do** approach that provides **Hope** for a more inclusive society.

Progress is already substantial.

Naturally, I would be pleased, ladies and gentlemen, to discuss with you how ADB can help to better enable the necessary pre-conditions for inclusive digital economies while investing in promising FinTech solutions.

With this, ladies and gentlemen, I will close by wishing you fruitful discussions on all of these issues.

Thank you!