

**10th Annual Meeting of the OECD Network of
Parliamentary Budget Officials and Independent Fiscal Institutions (PBO)**

Seoul, Korea
3-4 July 2018

WELCOME REMARKS

Robert Chote

Chairman, Office for Budget Responsibility, United Kingdom

Chair, OECD PBO Network

Thank you very much. Like Luiz, let me begin by expressing my gratitude to NABO and to the National Assembly for hosting this year's meeting of the OECD Network. We are very grateful for the work that you and your colleagues have put into the preparation for this event and for the warmth and generosity of your welcome. NABO embodies the rigour, transparency and independence to which we all aspire and we look forward to getting to know you better here at your home in Seoul.

As the Network reaches its 10th anniversary, it is very appropriate that we meet in Asia for the first time. Independent fiscal institutions are already and increasingly a global phenomenon, present in every continent where democracies are found. IFIs have certainly flourished in Europe in recent years, thanks to the evolving requirements of eurozone membership, but we are now seeing particular growth and interest in Latin America and I hope that NABO's example will encourage more countries to tread the same successful path here in Asia. Almost a year ago I also had the pleasure of attending the African PBO Network in Cape Town and was struck – as always – by the common spirit and goals that we share as institutions despite operating in very different economic, political and constitutional environments.

These network meetings are a wonderful opportunity to share experiences, learn lessons and steal good ideas. This year's meeting will be no exception, judging

from the planned keynotes and discussions that Luiz has already described. But of course the informal opportunities for engagement and fellowship are just as important and just as valuable. I was reminded watching the video how much we have learned and shared as a group already. As I look around the room I see many familiar faces still attending from the early years, all looking a little wiser and more experienced but otherwise wholly unmarked by the passage of time. Welcome to you, as well as to our more recent arrivals and to those of you for whom this is your first meeting.

As Luiz mentioned, I have the honour of having been asked to serve as chair of the network over the next three years, which I am delighted to do. During the course of the meeting I am very keen to hear any suggestions you may have for ways in which the network could be more effective or imaginative in helping you fulfil your mandates, both at these gatherings and all year round. I have three areas in mind:

- First, promoting the exchange and dissemination of best practice, informally and through peer review. Encouraging and helping our members to share news of their developments and innovations, highlighting both positive successes and pitfalls to avoid.
- Second, helping young institutions to establish themselves and providing support to parliaments and governments who are keen to establish them. I know that many of us provide this sort of assistance bilaterally already, as of course does the OECD secretariat and other institutions like the EU, IMF and the development banks. But we may be able to do more.
- Third, supporting those institutions who find that their independence or existence comes under threat or who face formal or informal barriers to fulfilling their mandates effectively. The OECD principles are a hugely valuable tool here and we as a community stand ready to help our fellow institutions when they are prevented or hindered from adhering to them.

In all this work, the members of the network are of course indebted to Jon, Lisa, Scherie, Helene, Lyora and their colleagues at the OECD headquarters, without

whom these meetings simply would not happen. We offer them too our thanks and best wishes as we get under way and enjoy the latest fruits of their labours.

Thank you very much.