

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

First of all, I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to the Government of Kuwait, especially to His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, the Amir of the State of Kuwait, and His Excellency Minister Hani Hussain, for their excellent hospitality in hosting this important event.

This Ministerial is the first one since the successful 20th anniversary Special Meeting hosted by Saudi Arabia last year. It is high time for us to reflect upon the past achievements, and think big about the future.

Throughout yesterday and today, we have been hearing a lot praises about JODI. This has been in fact a single most-important and -successful achievement of IEF.

We believe that Japan has been contributing to IEF and JODI in its finance and human resource aspects. We are

also happy to find Mr. Torikata, a Japanese staff in the IEF Secretariat, acting as a guardian of JODI. We strongly hope that, with the cooperation of all consumers and producers, JODI-Gas will get ahead and fly high, and thus make him work harder! We are willing to support this effort.

So, where the IEF will be headed beyond JODI? In the spirit of inter-activeness and dialogue, we would like to pick up a few ideas expressed by previous speakers as well as our own.

- The 1st is a practical suggestion by Mr. Graham White of the 4-year period of planning. We find this interesting and worth looking into. We have seen in many institutions mid-term strategies, broadly guiding the work programs of those institutions.
- The 2nd is a strengthened role of the private sector in the IEF in order to deepen the private-public

partnership.

- The 3rd is about regional dialogues: There exists in our region the Asian consumer-producer dialogue. Given further growth potential of the region, this dialogue could become very important. This kind of regional dialogues should take place in other regions with the strong participation of the private sector. The regional discussions could be featured in among the IEF Ministerial meeting sessions in the future.

These are my food for thought to this Session, though we have already finished lunch! We are looking forward to further discussion.