

Inaugural Session

Address

*by Mr. Michael Carter
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Mr. Chairman *Rangarajan*, Mr. Secretary *Gupta*, Mr. Auditor General *Kaul*, and Madam Controller General *Makhan*. It is really a great honour for me to be here today and have the opportunity to say a few words. I know this meeting comes from a wish expressed by a number of countries that are here today to get together and I think we should particularly thank the Government of India for taking the initiative to organize and host this important event.

We are certainly delighted to be associated in a supporting role. I think this is something of a ground breaking event. I gather it is the first time there has been a meeting of this kind around the Government Accounting functioning. It is perhaps surprising that this has not happened before particularly giving the emphasis on good governance as a fundamental element in the economic development process in countries all-round the world. Put another way, I think that there is growing recognition in many countries that the efficiency and impact of public expenditure is absolutely key to the longer term prospect for development including helping those in need with appropriate targeting to key objectives and efficiency being two essential yard-sticks. Of course accounting has a basic role to play-indeed accounting is an essential basis for accountability. The link between accounts and results, the theme of this Seminar cannot be achieved without transparency.

Thus, the issue is not just whether data is accurate but whether it is relevant, whether it is publicly available, whether it is properly presented and whether it is timely. As I said we are delighted to be playing a supportive role for this event. While we can bring our global experience to the table, even more important is the creativity that can come from the opportunity you have created for the exchange of views among practitioners in the region, hopefully with a strong emphasis on practical learning and breaking new ground. As a co-operative organization of which all countries here today are members, we are pleased to be a part of this process. We very much hope that today's event makes the beginning of a long term dialogue and that in the discussions that takes place over next two days there will emerge some consensus and conclusions about how to follow up this important event.

We would certainly be very happy to help in whatever way we can. Thank you.