

ADB Strategy 2020: Selling Asia to the Private Sector

The 41st Annual Governors Meeting (AGM) of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) is taking place in Madrid, Spain from May 3 to 6, 2008. One of the main agenda of this meeting is the ADB's strategy for the next years for what it describes as a 'New Asia.' The ADB calls it "Strategy 2020" and is contained in the paper called the "Long Term Strategic Framework (LTSF)."

According to ADB President Haruhiko Kuroda, this new strategy "reshapes, redirects, repositions ADB for a more innovative and effective development role in our rapidly changing region and within the international aid architecture."

For forty years we have been witness to ADB's support for the private sector and advocacy of free market policies, and the consequent harmful impacts on services, livelihoods, food security and the environment.

It has been a major driver of privatization of services in the region, along with the World Bank. It has been involved in the privatization of water services in Indonesia, India, Pakistan, South Korea, Nepal and Srilanka. It financed power privatization-related projects in the Philippines, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Thailand, Indonesia, India and others.

The privatization of these services has led to huge and continuous increases in rates, much diminished access of poor households and communities to these services, the monopoly of natural resources by private businesses, massive dislocations of communities, and environmental damage.

ADB has also actively provided support for private (as well as public) investments in fossil-fuel projects particularly coal, thus contributing to harmful and climate change-causing technologies.

In facilitating private investment in public infrastructure programs, it has supported and promoted public guarantees of private risks, liabilities and profits in these investments.

ADB's drive for privatization not only contributed to increasing the burden of public debts, it has led to the further accumulation of illegitimate debts. Illegitimate debts include ADB loans that financed projects and policies that have caused grievous harm to communities and the environment.

With its Strategy 2020 and LTSF – the ADB will be much, much more unabashed and aggressive in its support for the private sector.

Arguing yet again that economic growth has been the driving force for reducing poverty in the region, the new strategy calls for a big leap in its funding for private sector development and private sector operations. From 12% in 2007, by the year 2020 50% of its operations will be for the private sector.

We can only expect that ADB greater support for 'stronger private sector involvement in development' would mean subjecting Asia to even more relentless pursuit of unregulated risk-free and publicly- guaranteed profits by big business.

We say to the ADB – Our future, our rights are not for sale!

Signatories:

**Campaign Network on the Peoples Right to Essential Services and Natural Resources
Jubilee South – Asia/Pacific Movement on Debt and Development**

Freedom from Debt Coalition (FDC) - Philippines
Least Developed Country Watch - Nepal
Rural Reconstruction Nepal
South Asia Alliance for Poverty Eradication (SAAPE)
Indian Social Action Forum (INSAF) - India
KRUHA - Indonesia
GARPU - Indonesia
NADI - Indonesia
Nadi Ghati Morcha - India
River Basin Friends - India
Joint Action against Water Privatisation in Korea
Korean Federation of Public Services and Transportation Worker's Unions
The Public Services Committee of HKCTU - HongKong
Solidarity of Filipino Workers (BMP) - Philippines
Makabayan Pilipinas
Sanlakas - Philippines
Kalayaan! - Philippines
Union of Filipino Socialists (BISIG)
Center for Popular Empowerment (CPE) - Philippines
Monitoring Sustainability of Globalisation (MSN) - Malaysia
Koalisi Anti Utang (KAU) - Indonesia
Jubilee Kyushu on World Debt and Poverty Japan
ATTAC Japan
International NGO Forum on Indonesian Development (INFID) - Indonesia
National Confederation of Officers' Associations India
Jatiyo Sramik Jote (Trade Union Alliance) - Bangladesh
CREED Alliance - Pakistan
Sindh Democratic Forum - Pakistan
Pakistan FisherFolk - Pakistan
Migrant Forum in Asia
Focus on the Global South
Public Services International
Alternatives Asia
WomanHealth - Philippines
Welga ng Kababaihan - Philippines
Women's Crisis Center - Philippines
Anibang ng Manggagawa sa Agrikultura (AMA) - Philippines
Kongreso ng Pinagkaisang Maralitang Tagalunsod (KPML) - Philippines
KAKAMMPI - Philippines
Jubilee Kansai Network Japan
Kansai Action Center on Philippine Human Rights Issues - Japan
Community Development Library - Bangladesh
11.11.11 - Belgium
BIND - Philippines

