AIUB hosts Association of Universities of Asia and the Pacific in Dhaka

Dr. Charles C. Villanueva

THE American International University-Bangladesh was privileged to host the prestigious 25th Board Meeting and 8th General Conference of Association of Universities of Asia and the Pacific, popularly known as AUAP. It was a two-day affair held last 7-8 November 2008 at Westin Hotel, Dhaka, Bangladesh. There were 21 foreign delegates coming all the way from Iran, China, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia and Philippines, and about 30 participants coming from the host country Bangladesh composed of Vice Chancellors, Pro-Vice Chancellors, Deans, Directors of Private and Public Universities, and government officials from University Grants Commission (UGC), Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Commerce. The theme of the conference, "Government-University-Industry Partnerships for Innovation envisaged to provide a forum for knowledge exchange and sharing of valuable experiences that will serve as inputs to a concrete action in strengthening the GUI partnership.

On the first day of the AUAP Conference was a Board Meeting where the present leadership spearheaded by Prof. Iu Vai Pan and the Secretary General, Prof. Dr. Ruben Umaly reported to the august members the highlights of the major accomplishments of the term ended and the proposals to undertake laudable projects to be approved by the next Officers of the Board of which the Vice Chancellor of AIUB is privileged to be the President for a term of 2 years.

The following day, the Conference proper was inaugurated with the Advisor to the Caretaker Government, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment, Dr. Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury as the Chief Guest. In his speech, he underscored three important aspects in order for the three sectors, government, university and industry to be effective partners in pursuing innovative and development-oriented activities, these are as follows: understanding of knowledge management; re-engineering of current practices of knowledge management; the joint efforts of the stakeholders to create synergy. During the inauguration also were the two special guests, Prof. Nazrul Islam, Chairman of UGC and Prof. Iu Vai Pan, the outgoing President of AUAP and the Rector of the University of Macau. Prof. Islam emphasized on the importance of collaboration among the three sectors for the sake of the development and growth of the country while the Prof. Iu called upon the members of AUAP to join hands in pursuing the programs of the association and be active members so that AUAP can serve its purpose and a catalyst of change and new developments in the region. Dr. Ruben Umaly, the Secretary General of AUAP and Dr. Carmen Z. Lamagna both warmly welcome the participants on behalf of the association and AIUB for being the co-host of the conference. They also delivered some tactical insights on how the partnership of the government, university and industry





can be enhanced. The AUAP can closely support any individual efforts to improve the academic programs of the members of the association in various areas of institutional developments. Another highlight of the conference was the three succeeding sessions where each session focuses on a specific theme. Session 1 on University had a theme: Exploring New Horizons for Globally Competitive Professionals. The session was chaired by Prof. Dr. Anwar Hossain, Pro Vice Chancellor of AIUB. There were three distinguished speakers who shared their insights on the