Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. First, I would like to thank all the speakers for sharing with us their insights and experience on a wide range of corporate governance issues today.

This forum is a great beginning as we kick-start our Corporate Governance Program in Myanmar in partnership with the UMFCCI and other stakeholders that we will be engaging with.

As many of the speakers have pointed out, good corporate governance is crucial to the development of a robust and sustainable private sector in Myanmar, which will in turn fuel economic growth and benefit the people of Myanmar. Earlier, we have just heard from Prof. Aung Tun Thet on how to bring Myanmar to the next level.
• Our observation so far has revealed that many Myanmar companies are struggling with underdeveloped boards of directors, poor transparency, rudimentary control frameworks, and inadequate shareholder practices.

• We will work with the UMFCCI to help Myanmar companies address these issues by offering corporate governance training to them to help them adopt high standards of governance and disclosure.

• Many of these governance issues stem from the lack of a robust legal and regulatory framework that includes basic governance provisions and investor protections.

• So we are happy to see the Myanmar government taking steps to enhance the regulatory framework. Just last week, the new Banks and Financial Institutions Law was passed which should help improve board functioning and risk governance in banks. Efforts are also underway to update the 1914 Companies Act to impose extra requirements on director duties and shareholder rights, among other things.

• In the banking sector in particular, strong risk governance practices are needed to safeguard against under-reported nonperforming loans and manage concentrated exposures. The collapse of a single bank will not only affect that particular institution, but can have immediate effect across the entire Myanmar banking sector.
The same goes for Myanmar’s new stock market. The recently established Yangon Stock Exchange will help Myanmar companies tap new sources of capital to fuel the expansion of the country’s private sector. Yet, governance and transparency safeguards should be put in place to better protect investors.

The launch of the ASEAN Economic Community last year means that Myanmar is facing keener competition from its neighbors – most of which are more economically developed than this frontier market.

Both Myanmar’s state-owned entities and small and medium enterprises will stand to gain from reforms to enhance their governance and further improve market efficiency. This will help them gain access to capital and expand their businesses both domestically and overseas.

With our well-recognized expertise in corporate governance and environmental and social issues, we are confident that IFC can play a key role in helping Myanmar companies grow sustainably. We look forward to working with all of you to make this happen.

I again want to thank the UMFCCI and Deloitte for helping bring this event together today. Special thanks to our long-term partners – UK AID and Australia AID – for their support to our programs.

Thank you all for attending this forum today and I hope you can join us for lunch later. Have a pleasant day.