2025

ABA NEWSLETTER

November Issue

About ABA

The Asian Bankers Association (ABA) began when it took the first step toward forging closer regional links when 217 representatives of 139 banks met in Taipei in May 1981 to establish the Asian Bankers Council (later known as ABA) as one of the Product and Service Councils of the Confederation of Asia-Pacific Chambers of Commerce and Industry (CACCI). The countries represented included Australia, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, the Philippines, Singapore, South Korea, the Republic of China (Taiwan) and Thailand.

The Taipei meeting was the largest gathering of bankers with Asian presence to be convened in the region at that time. CACCI sponsored the meeting with the view to exploring banking opportunities in Asia and to enhance the role of bankers in the economic development of the region.

The ABA aims to provide a forum for advancing the cause of the banking and finance industry in the region and promoting regional economic cooperation. Its primary objectives include the following:

- To serve as a venue for an exchange of views and information on banking opportunities in the Asia-Pacific region;
- To facilitate the meeting of bankers in the region in an atmosphere of fellowship and friendship;
- To encourage joint activities that would enhance the role of its members in servicing the financial needs of their respective economies and in promoting regional development; and
- To undertake projects that will encourage trade, industrial, and investment cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region.

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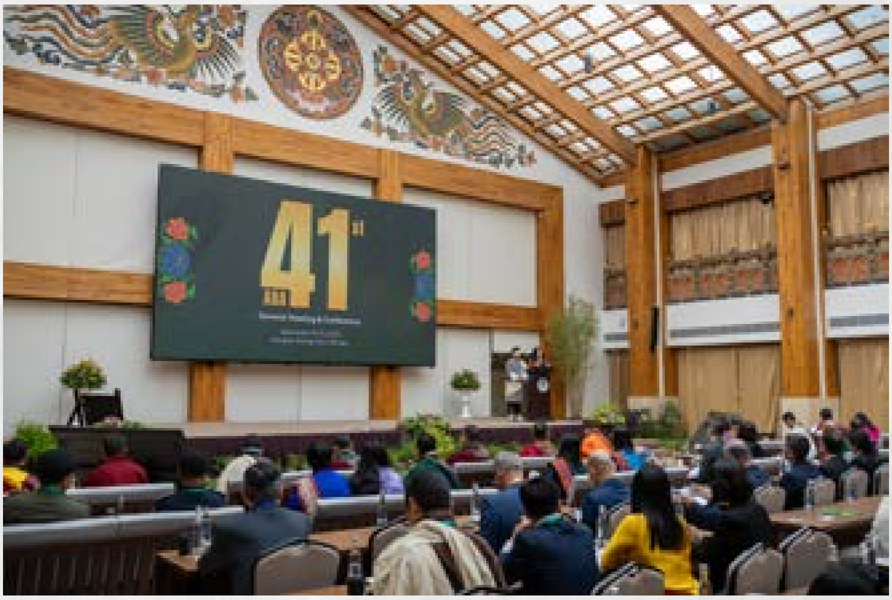
ABA News

ABA holds Successful 41st ABA General Meeting and Conference in Bhutan



Some 150 bankers from Asia-Pacific, the Middle East and other regions - composed mainly of members of the Asian Bankers Association (ABA) led by ABA Chairman Mr. Daniel Wu, Vice Chairman of CTBC Financial Holding from Taiwan gathered in Paro, Bhutan on September 15-16, 2025 for the 41st ABA General Meeting and Conference.

Held at the Dungkar Estate and hosted by Bank of Bhutan under the chairmanship of Mr. Thinley Namgyel, the 2025 ABA Conference was significant as it was the first time that the ABA conducted its annual gathering of members in Bhutan.

Focusing on the theme "Financing the Future: Banking for Sustainable Growth", the two-day event was designed to provide another valuable platform for ABA members to meet and network with each other, as well as to exchange views with invited experts on:

(a) current trends and developments in the regional and global markets that are expected to have a significant impact on the banking and financial sector of the region, and (b) how industry players can address the challenges - and take full advantage of the opportunities - presented by these developments.

The Conference was officially opened with the traditional Bhutanese lighting ceremony officiated by the special guests from the country's regulatory authorities and representatives from the ABA and the Bank of Bhutan.

In his Welcome Remarks, Bank of Bhutan Chairman Mr. Thinley Namgyel said that the ABA Conference marks the fruition of a vision laid out by His Majesty the King of Bhutan, which is "Bhutan's journey towards innovation, sustainable development and technological advancements that are crucial in defining Bhutan's future."

Mr. Thinley Namgyel, Bank of Bhutan Chairman

He cited the establishment of Gelephu Mindfulness City (GMC) – a special administrative region - as the king's recognition of the need to balance progress with sustainability., adding that the GMC was established to create a vibrant economic hub by providing a conducive business environment. "It is a Mindfulness City, encompassing conscious and sustainable businesses, inspired by Buddhist spiritual heritage, and distinguished by the uniqueness of the Bhutanese identity. Therefore, it is only fitting that Bhutan plays the host to this year's conference with the theme Financing the Future: Banking for sustainable growth.

He pointed out that banks have become the foundation needed to set up infrastructure and industry across the world, having the responsibility of driving the economic progress of the country in a sustained manner. "Your presence here is an indication of your support as well as your interest in the financing and functioning of the Future of Banking for Sustainable Growth," he told the ABA delegates.

Mr. Namgyel said that the ABA Conference in Bhutan provides an opportunity for Bank of Bhutan to renew its pledge to further strengthen the position of the Bank through consistent innovation and dedication. "We, at the Bank of Bhutan believe in "Banking for sustainable growth" and will continue to contribute in Nation Building process in the future as it has done in the past. It is a commitment to the future for Bhutan to thrive and find its place in the global stage where we dare to think differently, working together for global impact."

ABA Chairman Mr. Daniel Wu in his Welcome Remarks said that holding the Conference in Bhutan marks a historic milestone since it is the very first ABA Conference held in the Kingdom. He expressed ABA's heartfelt thanks to the Bank of Bhutan, especially Chairman Mr. Thinley

Mr. Daniel Wu, ABA Chairman

Namgyel, for hosting the delegates and for their generous support and warm hospitality.

Chairman Wu also extended his deepest gratitude to the Special Guest of Honor, His Excellency Finance Minister Lyonpo Lekey Dorji, and to the Keynote Speaker Ms. Sonomi Tanaka of the ADB, for gracing the event with their presence, adding that their participation is a true testament to the importance of the gathering.

He pointed out that, different from Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) which primarily engage at the sovereign and macroeconomic level, the ABA is a unique platform—not a multilateral bank, but a peer-driven network of financial institutions. What sets the ABA apart is its focus on practical knowledge exchange and cross-border cooperation among bankers. "Our strength lies in building direct linkages and fostering collaboration that makes a tangible impact on our institutions and communities," he noted.

Chairman Wu stated that hosting the Conference in Bhutan—known for its inspiring model of Gross National Happiness—offers members more than just scenic beauty. "It gives us the chance to understand Bhutan's economic potential, its people, and its values. I hope this visit inspires more members to consider hosting future ABA gatherings as we continue building our community," he concluded.

In her Keynote Speech, Ms. Sonomi Tanaka, Country Director for the Bhutan Resident Mission of the Asian Development Bank, examined the challenges and opportunities shaping Asia-Pacific's banking evolution, and underscored the transformative role of digital innovation and ADB's strategic support initiatives. Among the critical challenges she identified included: (a) escalating digital threats demanding robust defense mechanisms and regulatory frameworks; (b) Uneven preparation across markets for emerging financial technologies and services; (c) persistent gaps in access to banking services across rural and underserved populations; and (d) urgent need for sustainable finance solutions addressing environmental challenges.

On the other hand, she pointed out transformative opportunities in various area, including: (a) digital finance which involves revolutionary payments systems and fintech solutions democratizing financial access; (b) green finance, consisting of sustainable investment vehicles driving climate-resilient economic development; and (c) regional integration, which requires deeper cross-border

Ms. Sonomi Tanaka, Country Director for the Bhutan Resident Mission of the Asian Development Bank

collaboration unlocking new pathways for inclusive growth.

Ms. Tanaka also described the ongoing digitalization program in Bhutan. The country has completed its Financial Market Development Program for 2019-2021, which involved Data Warehouse Infrastructure (advanced information storage systems enabling sophisticated management decision-making for RMA); Digital Regulatory Framework (E-money regulations, comprehensive credit information systems, and BASEL-aligned supervisory frameworks); and Green Taxonomy Development (Environmental classification system supporting sustainable finance initiatives and green investment decisions).

Bhutan has also set in place the Banking Reform Program for 2025-2028, which consists of three major components, namely: (a) Cybersecurity Guidelines, which include comprehensive security frameworks protecting digital financial infrastructure; (b) Risk-Based Supervision, which comprises advanced supervisory methodologies enhancing regulatory effectiveness; and (c) Digital Regulatory Tools, which involve innovative regulatory technology solutions streamlining oversight processes.

Ms. Tanaka concluded with a call to collaborative action to develop financial resilience and stability, expand digital inclusions, build sustainable and green finance ecosystems, and enable seamless cross-border connectivity.

His Excellency Honorable Lyonpo Lekey Dorji, Minister of Finance of Bhutan, in his Special Address noted that over the past few decades, the country's financial sector has evolved from a small, traditionally bank-centered system into a more diversified ecosystem - now encompassing banks, insurance companies, and non-bank financial institutions. He pointed out that a central focus has been financial inclusion: ensuring access to financial services not only in the country's urban centers, but also in the remote and rural communities where much of our population resides, adding that mobile banking,

His Excellency Honorable Lyonpo Lekey Dorji, Minister of Finance of Bhutan

branchless banking, and digital payment solutions have played a critical role in narrowing this gap.

The Finance Minister said that Bhutan's financial institutions are embracing digital transformation, investing in core banking upgrades, mobile applications, and digital wallets, pointing out that these innovations are designed to improve convenience for customers, increase transparency, and strengthen operational efficiency.

"Importantly, all these reforms and innovations are guided by Bhutan's unique development philosophy of Gross National Happiness (GNH). Unlike many countries where financial growth is measured purely in profit terms, Bhutan's approach places equal weight on social equity, sustainability, and long-term well-being," the Minister said.

He also informed the delegates that regulatory bodies such as the Royal Monetary Authority (RMA) have taken proactive steps to modernize financial regulations, encouraging innovation while safeguarding stability. Initiatives like the Druk Nguldrel Lamtoen - 2030 (A Roadmap for a Progressive, Agile, and Resilient Central Bank Enabling Bhutan's Economic Transformation) and the push towards a cashless economy highlight Bhutan's forward-looking policy environment, he stressed.

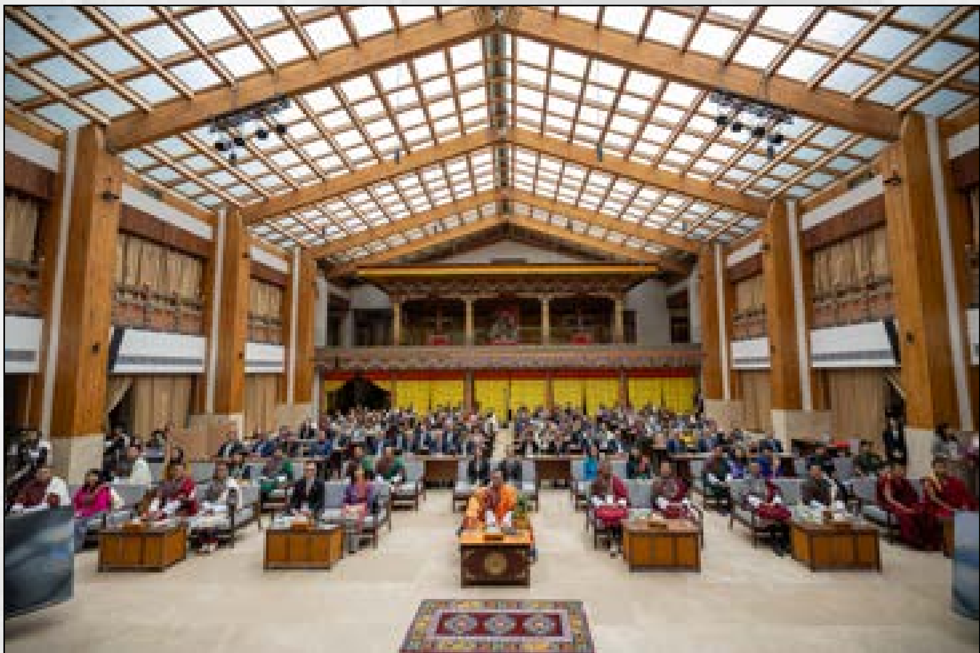
"Of course, challenges remain: building digital literacy, ensuring cybersecurity, and addressing the skills gap in advanced technologies. Yet, these challenges are also opportunities for collaboration and innovation—especially with regional partners through platforms like the ABA," the Minister said.

To achieve truly sustainable banking, regional and international cooperation is vital. Climate change and sustainability challenges do not respect borders, he pointed out, stating that Bhutan, through its policies and partnerships, stands ready to contribute to and learn from such collaboration.

The Minister urged the banking sector to align business practices with national sustainability goals, including building capacity to manage climate and environmental risks. He said that banking and finance are not only about numbers and balance sheets - they are about the kind of future we envision for the next generation. "Together, with policymakers, regulators, financial institutions, and the private sector, we can ensure responsible banking—a future that is greener, fairer, and more resilient," he remarked.

"This conference is more than a gathering; it is a catalyst. By bringing together thought leaders and innovators from across Asia, it offers Bhutanese institutions the chance to learn, to connect, and to co-create. For Bhutan, membership in the Asian Bankers Association is more than symbolic. It gives us access to a community of innovators, best practices, and collaborative opportunities that directly support our 10x strategy—from building digital capacity to forging new cross-border partnerships. In many ways, the ABA is a catalyst that can help Bhutan leapfrog traditional barriers and position our financial sector for exponential growth," the Minister concluded.

The full report of the 41st ABA General Meeting and Conference can be downloaded via the ABA website.



ABA Policy Advocacy Committee Approves Four Policy Papers

Mr. Austin Chiang
ABA Policy Advocacy Chairman

The ABA Policy Advocacy Meeting chaired by CTBC Bank Executive Vice President Mr. Austin Chiang, considered position papers prepared and presented by representatives of ABA member banks and knowledge partners on policy issues of current concern to the banking sector.

Ms. Rachael Kao, President, CTBC Financial Holding Co., Ltd., presented a summary of a paper sharing the Bank's experience, practices and insights, along with other relevant information, on "Ethical Banking and Corporate Governance".

In her paper, Ms. Kao noted that customer trust in banks has been declining, particularly among younger and digitally native customers who expect banks to act with fairness, fee transparency, customer care, and social responsibility. In addition, from an investors' perspective, ethical banking is increasingly seen as a critical factor in risk management and long-term value creation. Lastly, from a regulatory perspective, authorities are tightening corporate governance and ethical banking standards to prevent financial misconduct, enhance industry stability and customer protection, through elevated reporting requirements, accountability requirement on board and management team.

To help ABA members address these issues, Ms. Kao shared CTBC's experience and practices in the following areas: (a) Strengthening customer trust through stronger ethical banking principles and governance reform; (b) Balancing shareholder value with social responsibility, financial inclusion, and ESG principles; and (c) strengthening board accountability and corporate governance to prevent misconduct and strengthen ethical banking practices.

Mr. Reginaldo Cariaso, President and CEO of Rizal Commercial Banking Corporation (RCBC) presented a paper sharing the experience and best practice of his organization on "Open Banking and Customer Data Privacy Protection".

Mr. Cariaso's paper outlines RCBC's open banking strategy and the role of Application Programming Activities (APIs) as key enablers alongside the bank's data governance structure to ensure data security. It stresses the importance of expanding comprehensive governance and operational models, guided by transparency, explicit 10 consent, and a multi-layered security architecture. As the industry moves forward, maintaining the delicate balance between digital innovation and ensuring the utmost protection of the bank's customers' most sensitive date will be the key to success in this new environment, the paper concludes.

Mr. Shirish Pathak, Managing Director of Fintelekt Advisory Services, presented a paper sharing his organization's experience and insights, along with other relevant information on "Money Mule Account Issue in Banking". The paper essentially discussed strategies to reduce vulnerabilities, strengthen defenses, and enhance regional cooperation against money mule activities.

Mr. Pathak's paper also explored the key trends and the compliance tools available with banks. It maintained that the fight against money mule accounts in Asia will require not just technological sophistication but harmonious efforts among banks, regulators, and law enforcement agencies. By aligning detection strategies and technology, regulatory frameworks, and public awareness campaigns, the region can significantly reduce the operational space for mule networks, reinforcing trust in its rapidly evolving banking ecosystem.

Committee Chairman Chiang presented a summary of the Paper on "Financing the future: Cyber Protection – The essential risk management tool" prepared by Mr. Chris Baker, Regional Head of Cyber Asia for Munich Re, considered a global leader in Cyber (re)insurance. Among the highlights of the paper as presented by Mr. Austin are the following:

- Cybercrime is one of the most disruptive risks of the digital era;
- It is estimated that the global cost of cybercrime will reach US$10.5 trillion in 2025
- Financial services remain one of the most attractive targets for cybercriminals
- Ransomware, phishing, and supply chain attacks continue to dominate
- The financial sector remains particularly attractive to cyber criminals for several reasons: (a) direct access to money; (b) vast

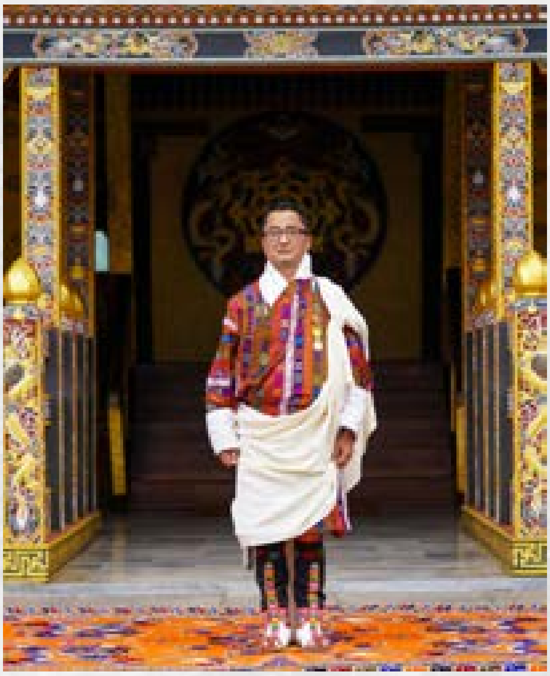
personal data; (c) complex, interconnected systems; (d) high transaction volumes; (e) reputation at stake; (f) regulatory pressure

- Cyber insurance has evolved beyond being a simple risk transfer tool; it now plays an increasingly strategic role in banking
- Coverage spans breach response, regulatory fines, business interruption, and third-party liability.
- While cyber insurance cannot eliminate risk, it offers essential protection through financial support, expert resources, and regulatory coverage
- Extending cyber covers to SMEs and individuals also creates unique opportunities to differentiate services and strengthen customer trust

Mr. Chiang also mentioned that Munich Re is offering interested ABA member banks to take advantage of its underwriting and cyber analytics capabilities, helping their businesses and customers safeguard their digital environment.

The Committee further exchanged views on possible issues for future policy advocacy work of the Association, followed by a consideration of a short-list of policy issues to be pursued from among those suggested by the Committee.

Bank of Bhutan Chairman Thinley Namgyel Elected as ABA Chairman



The Asian Bankers Association (ABA) is pleased to announce that Mr. Thinley Namgyel, Chairman of the Bank of Bhutan, has been elected Chairman ABA for the 2026–2027 term.

Mr. Namgyel is a distinguished public sector leader with extensive experience across Bhutan's key national institutions. He currently serves as the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Bank of Bhutan, a position he assumed in June 2025. His leadership is guided by a deep commitment to national development, good governance, and the principles of Gross National Happiness.

Mr. Namgyel is the Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock, Royal Government of Bhutan, a role he has held since September 2021. Prior to this, he served as Secretary of the Gross National Happiness Commission (2016–2021), where he played an instrumental role in shaping Bhutan's strategic planning and development priorities. His earlier tenure as Director of the Commission (2014–2016) further underscores his impactful contributions to the country's socio-economic planning landscape.

Throughout his career, Mr. Namgyel has also held several significant board positions across major national institutions. His past board memberships include Druk Holding and Investments, the Royal Monetary Authority, State Mining Corporation Limited, Bhutan Health Trust Fund, and the Bhutan Trust Fund for Environment Conservation, among others. He has also served as Chairman of MSPCL and is presently on the board of RENEW.

Mr. Namgyel holds a Master of Business Administration from the University of Canberra, Australia, and a Bachelor of Commerce from Sherubtse College, Kanglung. His vast experience, strategic vision, and dedication to public service continue to make him an influential figure in Bhutan's governance and financial sectors.

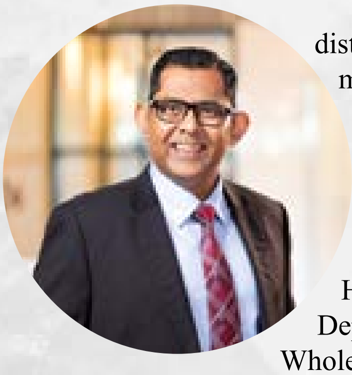
ABA Elects Two New Vice Chairmen for 2026-2027

The ABA has two new Vice Chairmen in the persons of Mr. Mohamed Shareef, CEO of Bank of Maldives, and Mr. Damith Pallewatte, Managing Director and CEO of Hatton National Bank. Mr. Shareef and Mr. Pallewatte were elected to the position by the newly-elected Board Members during the 65th ABA Board of Directors' Meeting held on 16 September 2025 in Bhutan in conjunction with the 41st ABA General Meeting and Conference.

The two new Vice Chairmen were elected on the basis of their active participation in ABA activities in the past years and therefore reflect their Bank's strong commitment to the Association, and whose credentials and work experience indicate a high level of expertise and leadership in the field of banking.

Mr. Shareef was named to his current position at Bank of Maldives in 2024. He has over 25 years of experience at the Bank, including over seven ye ars in executive management. He played a key role in modernizing the bank and his leadership contributed to significant improvements in financial performance, service delivery, and digital transformation.

Mr. Shareef holds an MBA from the University of Manchester, a program designed specifically for financial specialists and managers, and completed the Senior Executive Programme at London Business School, tailored for CEOs and senior executives worldwide.

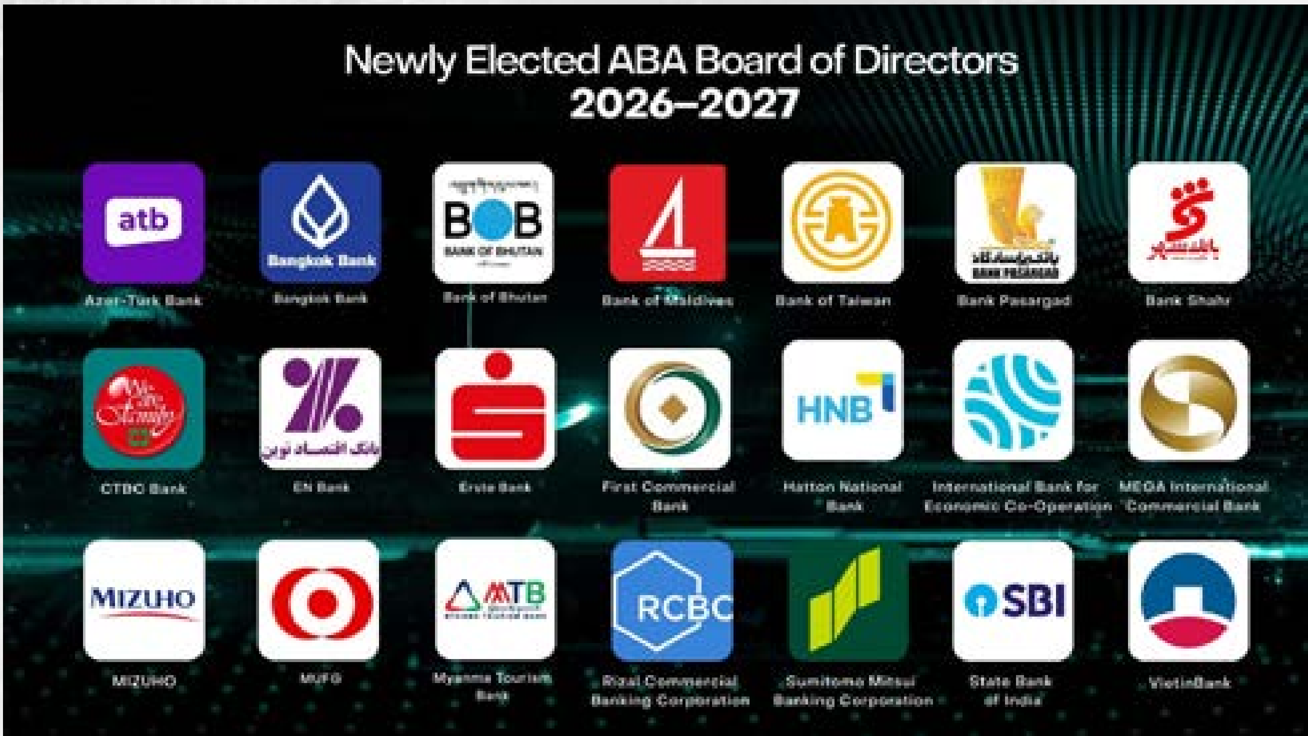


Mr. Pallewatte is a distinguished banking and risk management professional with 30 years of experience in the banking industry. Over the course of his career, he has held several key leadership roles at HNB, including Acting CEO, Deputy General Manager – Wholesale Banking Group, Chief Risk Officer (CRO) and Chief Information Security Officer. Before joining HNB, he served as the CRO of Nations Trust Bank PLC.

Mr. Pallewatte holds an MBA from the Postgraduate Institute of Management, University of Sri Jayewardenepura, and a BSc (Hons) in Management from the London School of Economics, University of London.

The election of a second Vice Chairman was earlier decided by the Board during its meeting in Taipei in November 2024 to further help the Chairman undertake his important role of leading the Association towards achieving its objectives of promoting the interest of members.

Newly Elected ABA Board of Directors for 2026-2027



HNB CEO Meets with ABA Secretariat Executives

ABA Vice Chairman and Managing Director/ CEO of Hatton National Bank (HNB) Mr. Damith Pallewatte met with ABA Secretary-Treasurer Dr. Darson Chiu at the HNB headquarters in Colombo, Sri Lanka on November 12.

Dr. Chu was accompanied by ABA Deputy Secretary Mr. Amador Honrado at the meeting, which took place during their recent visit to Colombo to attend the 39th Conference of the Confederation of Asia-Pacific Chambers of Commerce and Industry (CACCI), the parent organization on ABA. The Conference was hosted by the Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry of Sri Lanka (FCCISL).

During the meeting, Dr. Chiu briefed Mr. Pallewatte on upcoming activities of the ABA, particularly the preparations for the 42nd ABA General Meeting and Conference to held in Maldives in the latter part of 2026, with the Bank of Maldives as host organization. They also exchanged ideas on possible activities that can be jointly organized by ABA and HNB next year designed for the mutual benefit of HNB and ABA member banks.

Mr. Pallewatte also expressed interest in participating in the proposed meeting of the ABA Policy Advocacy Committee scheduled early next year to discuss preparations for the 42nd ABA General Meeting and Conference to be hosted by Bank of Maldives in the latter part of 2026. He further reiterated HNB’s offer to host the ABA annual gathering in 2027 and informed the visiting ABA Secretariat executives that he has already organized a team from the Bank that will be responsible for making the necessary preparations in coordination with the ABA Secretariat.

ABA Board Member from Erste Bank Visits ABA Secretariat in Taipei

Mr. Oliver Hoffman, Managing Director, Head of Asia, Erste Group Bank AG, Hong Kong Branch and Member of the ABA Board of Directors, on November 21 met with ABA Secretariat executives led by Secretary-Treasurer Dr. Darson Chiu at the Secretariat headquarters in Taipei, Taiwan. Mr. Hoffmann was accompanied by his colleague Mr. Adrian Yuen, Director, Home Markets Desk. Also joining the meeting was ABA Deputy Secretary Mr. Amador Honrado Jr.

During the meeting, Mr. Hoffmann informed Dr. Chiu that they were visiting Taipei to follow up on collaboration activities of Erste Bank with a number of Taiwanese banks – some of which are also ABA members – particularly those that have plans of setting up operations in Austria and other neighboring countries in Eastern Europe.

For his part, Dr. Chiu proposed to Mr. Hoffmann the possibility of Erste Bank hosting a Short-Term Visiting Program for ABA members who may be eyeing the Eastern European market and interested to learn how Erste Bank may be able to help them in this regard. He also took the opportunity to invite Mr. Hoffmann and Mr. Yuen to participate in next year’s ABA Conference to be held in Maldives.

EN Bank Invites members to the 2nd International Kish Expo & Summit

EN Bank, Asian Banker's Association (ABA)'s member wishes to invite members and friends to the 2nd International Kish Expo & Summit.

The Summit's theme "Strategic Economic Cooperation and Investment Development" will be held from December 9-14, 2025, at the Kish International Exhibition Center.

This event, focusing on introducing investment opportunities, global trade, and expanding international cooperation, provides an ideal platform for exchanging ideas, forging economic partnerships, and strengthening trade relations between Iran and the world.

The expo revolves around five key pillars:

- Joint investments in production and infrastructure development
- Strategic economic collaborations between Iran and the global community
- Expanding global trade and access to Iranian and foreign markets
- Creating and enhancing shared value chains between Iran and international partners
- Joint investments in modern technologies and knowledge-based industries.

It offers unique opportunities to showcase Iran's capabilities and engage with key players in the global economy.

The second Kish Expo features widespread participation of leading companies and organizations across various sectors, including manufacturing, services, and knowledge-based industries. It creates a distinctive environment for introducing innovative achievements and services. By bringing together a diverse range of Iranian and international companies, the expo facilitates valuable opportunities for developing business partnerships, exchanging technologies, and fostering sustainable collaborations.

Visitors to this event will gain insight into the latest advancements in fields such as modern technologies, renewable energies, knowledge-based industries, international supply chains, and economic infrastructure development. Furthermore, the expo plays a significant role in showcasing Iran's capacities in investment, technology, tourism, and creative industries.

Kish Expo serves as a bridge connecting national and global economies, offering countries and companies seeking to expand their economic relations and strategic cooperation with Iran an unparalleled opportunity. This international exhibition contributes to deepening trade relations, enhancing multilateral collaborations, and presenting a renewed image of Iran's economic and cultural potential.

For those who are interested in the Summit, you may visit www.kishexpo.com and access Summit Catalog for more information.

ABA Training

ABA & Temenos to hold webinar on Banking on Artificial Intelligence

The Asian Bankers Association (ABA) and Temenos, an ABA Associate Member, would like to invite members and friends to join the webinar on Banking on Artificial Intelligence to be held on 4 December 2025 at 2PM Taipei time.

The 60-minute webinar will show that while Artificial Intelligence is currently the top priority in the mind of banking leaders, most banks have yet to start establishing the AI framework in their operations. Indeed, they are very far from AI implementation. Thus, Temenos considers that this is the right time to invite ABA members and friends to this new webinar part of the Forward Insights series to help bankers properly conceive the proper integration of AI technologies in their banks to enhance efficiency and customer experience.

The webinar will also discuss real-world applications of AI in productivity, customer experience, and risk management. Another important point of discussion is AI Governance to manage the regulatory and ethical considerations surrounding AI implementation in banking. The webinar will be moderated by Chee

Kiat Loy, Principal Business Consultant, Temenos and feature 3 speakers - Frankie Wai, BSG Director APAC, Temenos, Michael Araneta, Lead, ASEAN Banking GTM, AWS, and Arvind Swami, Senior Director, Financial Services, Asia Pacific, Red Hat.

The webinar will discuss the following 3 themes:

- AI Market Trends: Discover how banks are integrating AI technologies to enhance efficiency and customer experience
- AI Use Cases in Banking: Learn about real-world applications of AI in productivity, customer experience, risk management, and more
- AI Governance: Understand the regulatory and ethical considerations surrounding AI implementation in banking

Please contact ABA Secretariat at aba@aba.org.tw for more details and register here for the webinar.

Temenos is a trusted technology partner to financial institutions across the world. With 950 core banking and over 600 digital banking clients across 150 countries, it powers a world of banking that creates opportunities for everyone.

ABA invites Members to join Fintelekt Certified AML/CFT Professional (FCAP) training programme

The Asian Bankers Association (ABA) is pleased to invite members and friends to participate in the upcoming Fintelekt Certified AML/CFT Professional (FCAP) training programme to be held in person on 22-23 January 2026 at the Hotel Aloft Bangkok Sukhumvit 11 in Bangkok, Thailand.

FCAP is a two-day comprehensive and practical masterclass designed to provide participants the opportunity to learn and stay updated with latest tools, techniques and developments in anti-money laundering (AML) and combating terrorist financing (CFT).

Fintelekt's training initiatives are reviewed and supported by regulators in many countries and are known for their quality and relevance to AML/CFT compliance. Over the years, employees from a large number of banks, non-banking finance companies, insurance companies, mutual funds, money services businesses, casinos, and remittance houses have successfully undergone FCAP.

Participants who attend all sessions and pass the assessments are entitled to receive the Fintelekt Certified AML/CFT Professional (FCAP) certificate. FCAP members earn the right to use "FCAP" as part of their credentials, signifying specialist knowledge, industry leadership and commitment to AML/CFT compliance.

The programme will cover the following topics:

- International AML/CFT framework
- AML governance and risk-based approach
- National framework and national risk assessment
- Enterprise risk assessment
- Correspondent banking risks
- Sanctions and screening
- Trade-based money laundering
- Terrorist financing & proliferation financing
- Ultimate beneficial ownership
- Cryptocurrency risks
- Evolving risks in the digital age
- Risks from new payment systems
- Technology developments
- Transaction monitoring
- Quality of reporting
- Expectations of FIUs/LEAs
- Regulatory/ LEA interactions
- Co-ordination within the AML/CFT ecosystem
- Preventive measures

ABA is pleased to offer a 30% Early Bird discount - valid until December 9, 2025. For more information and registration, please contact oliver@fintelekt.com and aba@aba.org.tw.

ABA, Qorus and VNBA to Organize Vietnam Learning Expedition (VLEX)

The Asian Bankers Association (ABA) and Qorus, an ABA Knowledge Partner, in cooperation with the Vietnam Banks Association (VNBA), an ABA Associate Member, would like to invite ABA members and friends to join a Vietnam Learning Expedition (VLEX) on 22-25 March 2026 to visit the cities of Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City, where important meetings with high-ranking Government officials, regulators, major local banks' ranking officers, innovation centers and other key banking related organizations will be held. The VLEX aims to provide deep insights into Vietnam's financial market, and will help facilitate decisions to expand operations in Vietnam and allocate capital on emerging opportunities in fintech.

The 2 key objectives are the following:

- Establish direct communication with leaders of the largest Vietnamese banks, policy makers, fintech and banking application producers
- Understand first-hand the current financial and banking conditions of the Vietnam market (US$4,282.09 per capita income) and the opportunities arising from banking operations and banking technology.

Vietnam is experiencing an economic transformation following the migration of the supply chain's operation from China to Vietnam. Economic growth in 2024 was 7.09%, and projected to be 6.8% in 2025 and 6.5% in 2026 (World Bank figures), powered by a rebound in technology exports and strong investment. International and regional banks running syndicate and international trade operations should observe, understand and establish solid contacts in Vietnam as the country will be a main beneficiary of changes in the emerging international trade scheme.

The VLEX will focus on Vietnam's two key markets, namely, Hanoi, where national policy is created, and where meetings will be arranged with all major Vietnamese banks and Central Bank Government Officials, and Ho Chi Min City, where a dynamic ecosystem of banking application companies are developing banking solutions that range from ID systems, cybersecurity, software development, to digitalization. Vietnam is home to top students in the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics fields (STEM), attracting investment from foreign banks in developing technology for use, not only in Vietnam but, across ASEAN.

Good things are happening in Vietnam and it is a market that needs focused attention.

The registration fee covers cost for cocktails, dinners, lunch, coffee breaks, translators, and transportation. All delegates shall cover their own airfare, hotel stay and miscellaneous expenses. The registration fee, including Early Bird are as follows:

Early Bird until January 31, 2026

- (a) ABA members and Qorus Members - US$1,500 per delegate
- (b) Non-ABA & Non-Qorus members - US$2,000 per delegate

Regular price after February 1, 2026

- (a) ABA members and Qorus Members - US$2,500 per delegate
- (b) Non-ABA & Non-Qorus members - US$3,000 per delegate

Please click HERE to register in a Google form. We will contact you directly to proceed with payment.

For further information please contact Mig Moreno at mig.moreno@aba.org.tw at the ABA secretariat.

ABA Invites members to join Trueventus' Credit Risk Conference

The Asian Bankers Association (ABA) invites members and friends to participate in the Credit Risk Conference being organized by Trueventus on 20-21 May 2026 at the Aloft Singapore Novena, Singapore.

The credit environment of Asia-Pacific (APAC) has entered a transitional phase. With the default rate for speculative-grade corporates in APAC projected to rise from 1.5% to 2% by March 2026, financial institutions must enhance their risk frameworks to future-proof portfolios. While non-financial corporate debt issuance surged 27% year on year, reaching USD 38.1 billion in Q3 2024, bank credit remains dominant at 143% of GDP far above the global average of 96%.

Singapore's banking sector is preparing for tougher headwinds. In Q1 2025, OCBC raised S$212 million in credit allowances (a 25% increase) in anticipation of economic and trade policy uncertainties. At the same time, Asia's private credit market is expected to balloon to USD 2.6 trillion by 2029, up from USD 1.5 trillion in 2024 signalling a seismic shift in credit provision strategies across the region.

With nearly one-fifth of APAC corporate debt tied to interest coverage ratios below 2, compared to a 15% global benchmark, and corporate bond spreads trending upward in early 2025, Singapore serves as the ideal location for risk professionals to explore evolving credit dynamics blending regulatory strength with regional relevance.

Designed for risk managers, financial institutions, regulators, fintech disruptors, and corporate treasury leaders, this special gathering will uncover forward-thinking strategies for navigating credit growth, rising defaults, and the expanding role of private credit.

The conference will discussed the following themes:

- Stay ahead of credit risk trends amid rising speculative-grade defaults in APAC
- Understand evolving regulatory expectations and compliance pressures
- Learn how private credit expansion is reshaping credit risk paradigms in Asia
- Benchmark risk modelling frameworks across diverse sectors and economies
- Explore early warning systems and credit analytics powered by AI and alternative data
- Gain insights into stress testing practices for volatile market conditions

For more details about the Conference, please download the informational brochure or write to jacey@trueventus.com.

Participating ABA members will benefit from a 10% discount off the listed price shown in the application form included in the brochure.

Trueventus is a Kuala Lumpur based organization that aims to transform businesses through an established channel in the professional meetings, incentives, conferences, exhibitions industry. Its events are normally held in major capitals of South East Asia, depending on the targeted audience. Its professional events emphasize distinctive characteristics featuring luminaries of each targeted industry.

ABA hosts successful FCAP Programme in Bangkok

The Asian Bankers Association (ABA), in partnership with Fintelekt, successfully hosted the Fintelekt Certified AML/CFT Professional (FCAP) Programme on 9–10 October 2025 at Hotel Aloft in Bangkok. The two-day training brought together 20 delegates from financial institutions and regulatory bodies across Brunei, Mongolia, Lao PDR, the Philippines, and Sri Lanka.

Participants represented a wide mix of organizations—including central banks, commercial and savings banks, payment service providers, and casino/gaming operators—reflecting the region's broad commitment to strengthening AML/CFT capacity.

The programme delivered a comprehensive curriculum covering:

- AML/CFT foundations and the risk-based approach
- Customer due diligence, beneficial ownership and PEP management
- Sanctions compliance and screening
- Emerging risks such as virtual assets, crypto transactions, and digital payment fraud
- Trade-based money laundering typologies
- Transaction monitoring, red-flag indicators, and practical case assessments

The lively discussions and hands-on exercises helped deepen participants' understanding of evolving financial crime threats, while also strengthening cross-border knowledge exchange among compliance professionals in the region.

With growing regulatory expectations and rapid shifts in financial crime risk, the FCAP Programme continues to serve as a valuable platform for upskilling AML/CFT practitioners across Asia.