

# **Jonathan Alles Inaugurated The 37th Asian Bankers Association Conference**



*Jonathan Alles, MD/CEO, HNB.*

Jonathan Alles, Managing Director, and CEO, HNB, in his capacity as the Chairman of the Asian Bankers Association (ABA), the premier platform for Asian banks, inaugurated the ABA's 37th General Meeting and Conference.

This year's event took place virtually on the theme: 'Asian Banks: Achieving Sustainable Growth in the New Normal' and was attended by some of the most critical figures in banking across the Asian region.

Addressing the virtual gathering, Alles highlighted the critical role banks have played in supporting economic recovery post-COVID-19.

"Today, banks across the globe are working as a de facto delivery system, delivering cash for that in need. However, with no clear end in sight and the virus still rampant, banks are acutely aware that how they respond to the crisis now will determine how they will rebuild for the future. Providing support to governments and customers is crucial during this crisis, but this will require banks to deploy the tools they have developed since the 2008 Global Financial Crisis to lead a coherent and extensive response to uncharted territory. One thing is certain: a strong banking sector will be fundamental to a strong recovery."

Alles also emphasized the importance of innovation and technological improvements in the sector in addressing the broader market needs and tapping into the 'new normal' opportunities.

"We need to break new ground in innovation-driven development jointly. After years of fairly fast growth, Asian countries now face the challenge of shifting from old drivers of growth to new ones, and we must rely on innovation to foster this transition. As the new round of global technological revolution and industrial transformation unfolds, we must seize opportunities to tap into our advantages in human capital and market potential, to intensify cooperation on innovation and accelerate the upgrading of the banking sector."

Dilshan Rodrigo, Executive Director and Chief Operation Officer, HNB served as session chair for the 'Regulator Roundtable' session on current banking trends and their implications on regulatory policies, which also featured Dharmasri Kumaratunge, Director Payments and Settlements of the Central Bank of Sri Lanka (CBSL). In addition, Jonathan Alles served as a panelist at the CEO roundtable on

‘navigating the new world order. The other sessions were ‘responding to challenges and disruptions in a changing global ecosystem’ and ‘the role of technology in sustainable growth.’