Mr Mitoji Yabunaka, Advisor, Nomura Research Institute and former Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs for Japan,
Mr Atsushi Yoshikawa, President and CEO, Nomura Asset Management,
Mr Masashi Terachi, Managing Director, Nomura Asset Management Singapore,
NUS Colleagues, Students and Alumni,

A very good afternoon to you.

I am very honoured to be here today to host our distinguished guest speaker, Mr Mitoji Yabunaka, who will be delivering the first talk under our NUS Asian Business Series, on “Global Imbalances – The Asian Equation”.

The global economy is one teeming with opportunities, yet fraught with challenges. The inflation we see in Asia, extreme weather conditions affecting food and commodities supply and prices, are just some of the factors contributing to global imbalances. With the rising economies of Asia gaining a strong foothold on the global stage, Asia can play a very important role in the global economic restructuring.

It is fitting that we have Yabunaka-san to help shed some light on Asia’s role in global rebalancing, for Yabunaka-san has had a distinguished career in the economic and political arena, having served more than 40 years as career diplomat at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. In Geneva, he was Minister of the Japanese Delegation, and took charge of the WTO Uruguay Round Negotiations in early 1990’s. He was also a Consul-General in Chicago.
Yabunaka-san was also instrumental in the Japan-US economic negotiations between 1987 and 1990 when the economic friction was most intense.

In recent years, Yabunaka was the Director General of the Asia Pacific Bureau, and the chief representative of the Japanese Government to the Six Parties Talks for the North Korea nuclear problems.

Between 2005 and 2007, Yabunaka-san was Deputy Minister for economic affairs. He successfully concluded the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) with Indonesia, Malaysia, Brunei, and Thailand. In 2008, Yabunaka-san was the Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs, and oversaw the entire Japanese foreign policy.

We are indeed very humbled to have Yabunaka-san with us. And today’s talk would not have materialized if not for Mr Atsushi Yoshikawa, President and CEO of Nomura Asset Management…and very importantly, our very own NUS MBA alumnus.

Yoshikawa-san, we are so glad to have made contact with you again at our Alumni Golf Reunion Challenge last October, as we always seek to reconnect with our alumni as much as possible. Thank you once again for offering such a distinguished speaker as Yabunaka-san for our NUS Asian Business Series. We are grateful for your contribution as our alumnus. Our thanks also go to Mr Masashi Terachi, for being the ever important link in today’s event.

A very big thank you in advance to our Nomura guests, for sharing business thought leadership with our NUS community. I look forward to further enriching our relationship with Nomura.

I would now like to invite our NUS MBA alumnus, Mr Atsushi Yoshikawa, up on stage to say a few words.

Yoshikawa-san please.