

Review of: "Organizing the Asian Development Bank: Radical Transformation or Degenerative Irrelevance?"

Jayantha Perera

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

The paper addresses comprehensively the central question that it has raised at the outset - how to optimize the organizational structure of ADB to deliver on commitment made in the Strategy 2030 Framework? But one key point is missing, that is, the role of the Board of Directors of ADB in initiating and implementing institutional reforms at ADB. My long experience at ADB has convinced me that the Board does not sufficiently focus on the commitment most of the time as its members bring narrow country or regional interests to influence ADB's development strategy and proposed organizational structural reforms. Diverse and strong country interests (as represented by individual Board members) sometimes clash with proposed radical reforms and paradigm shift encouraging 'incremental' and 'episodic' reforms at ADB. Therefore, without radically reforming the Board of Directors - its constitution, powers, and accountability, it is difficult to adopt and implement a new paradigm for development banking. The Board needs to be reformulated by severing its dependence on capital cities; otherwise, country interests will prevail on relative strengths of different (unequal) political power mechanisms at the Board.