Mr. Chairman,
Mr. President,
Distinguished Governors and Delegates

On behalf of Switzerland, I would like to extend my gratitude to the Government of Cote d’Ivoire and the Authorities of Abidjan for their hospitality and their warm welcome.

Last year, the ADB’s Annual Meetings took place in the midst of an unprecedented global financial and economic crisis. Today, the situation has improved, but considerable global regional and national risks remain which need to be dealt with.

In this difficult context, the African Development Bank has delivered rapid and flexible assistance to its regional member countries and we commend Management, Staff and the Boards for the resulting achievements.

However, the process of recovering from the fallout of the crisis is ongoing. Bank Management and shareholders must draw lessons from these experiences. These include: (i) pursuing reforms that make the Bank stronger and fitter to effectively assist its client countries; and (ii) supporting countries to address their structural challenges to foster inclusive and sustainable development.

The just completed GCI negotiations are the proof that shareholders are committed to have not just a bigger Bank, but also a stronger one putting the focus on quality, sustainability and the achievement of development results.

In this connection, we would like to mention five issues which need to be pursued with high priority.

First, we urge the Bank to further develop the existing, medium-term strategy into a long-term one that takes into account the post-crisis realities and long-term global and regional challenges.

Second, we support the work on a bank wide results framework highlighting the Bank’s commitment to achieve high quality results including the promotion of civil society participation and gender equality.

Third, we encourage the Bank to further develop its risk management framework. The rapid expansion of private sector operations in challenging environments makes this imperative in order to preserve the financial integrity and AAA-rating of the Bank at all times.
Fourth – we encourage the Bank to elaborate a new energy strategy aiming at reducing climate change effects by effectively advocating for a shift towards low-carbon economies and by fostering renewable energy and energy efficiency projects.

Fifth – the best policies, rules and regulations need to be sustained by adequate human resources. We wish the Bank to continue promoting a merit based working environment that rewards initiatives, focus on results and inter-team cooperation.

Let me conclude with some comments on the capital and concessional financing proposals: In supporting the GCI package, we concur with the modalities of implementation, which include a review of GCI-related reforms to assess progress made over time.

In addition to the GCI, the successful completion of the ADF-12 negotiations is essential for the Bank to be able to fulfil its mandate vis-à-vis low income countries and fragile states. To complement the concessional financing, we expect that due to the large GCI the net income transfers from the Bank to the Fund can be reinforced and that internally generated resources can be enhanced in order to make the financing framework stronger and more sustainable.

The Swiss Government will have to submit as a package to its Parliament the proposals for capital increases at all the MDBs and the various replenishments of concessional funds. We need all the support, also by the ADB, to make a convincing case to our parliamentarians. They will approve these funds only if they are convinced of the delivery capacity of the Bank ensuring high effectiveness on the ground to fight poverty.

President Kaberuka’s leadership continues to be essential to reach our common goals. I would like to thank him and his staff for their hard work during this extraordinary period. Although still subject to confirmation later today, we are pleased that President Kaberuka stays at the helm of the Bank in the next years and we congratulate him for his re-election.