

## Singapore Orthopaedic Association Lecture



### **Asia's Next Transition: People, Planet, Prosperity**

#### **Noeleen Heyzer**

Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Special Adviser of the United Nations Secretary-General for Timor-Leste and former Executive Secretary of ESCAP

The 'Asian miracle' has lifted more than half a billion people out of poverty over the past two decades, with powerhouses like China and India driving the global economy. But the region is also home to approximately 950 million people who live in extreme poverty. Around 1.7 billion people are without basic sanitation, and three million children die every year before their fifth birthday. There is clearly an unfinished development agenda, and the region is in a race against time to close its development gaps to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. Asia's continued rise is not pre-ordained. Its future will depend on how we address the challenges of sustaining Asia's prosperity in a changed global and social context marked by rising inequalities, social exclusion and the 'new normal' of uncertainty. Coupled with the threat of climate change and the increasing pressure on the planet's ecosystems, Asia's next transition cannot follow its current development script of 'grow first and clean up later'. This keynote address proposes a five-point agenda for building shared prosperity founded on inclusive and sustainable development, based on the creativity of people, valuing the gifts of our planet.