

-Statement of Thailand-

By H.E. Mr. Don Paramudwinai, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand,
at the opening session of the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development 2016,
3 April 2016, 9.15-9.20 hrs, UNESCAP, CR2

Honorable Siaosi Sovaleni (ซื่ออาโอะซึ โสวาเลนึ), Deputy Prime Minister of Tonga,
Excellencies,
Madam Executive Secretary,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. I just arrived back from Washington DC from the NSS (Nuclear Security Summit) this morning and would not miss the opportunity to officially welcome you all to Thailand. The nuclear security is one of the megatrends, which contributes to safe and secure life for people. Sustainable development is just vital and also a megatrend to help us secure life.

2. This APFSD is particularly important as it is the first regional forum to discuss the way forward in turning vision into action of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

3. While the Asia-Pacific region can be proud of our achievements in reducing poverty, in enhancing access to health and education, access to water, etc., there remains many daunting challenges and we must work together to leave no one behind. We must do more to empower each nation, each community to enhance capacity and resilience to respond to internal changes and external shocks. Each and every one of us has to be involved. Development is not only a whole-of-government approach, but it must be a whole-of-society undertaking as well.

4. Business sector can play a greater role. In every single business undertaking, it must be an investment for sustainable development. Business sector must have this kind of "sustainability mindset". At the same time, Governments must promote responsible investment to support sustainable production processes, regenerative use of natural resources, improve social protection for labor and other corporate social responsibility initiatives. Everyone must recognize that investment for sustainable development can be profitable. Studies have shown that companies which thrive and last through economic ups and downs are usually those which tend to care more about their consumers, environment, and society. The business sector must be urged to recognize its critical role in promoting sustainable

development. Needless to say, the media too must have this sustainability mindset. And our children need to grow up with this sustainability mindset, for the world to be safe, secure, and prosperous.

Distinguish Delegates,

5. The Asia-Pacific region has many successful development models and shares similar development challenges and conditions. Therefore, we should help each other to boost our strength from within, which can be more cost-effective and adaptable to our contexts.

6. For Thailand, past economic development activities have given us a valuable lesson. It teaches us to be moderate, prudent, and reasonable. It teaches us the importance of informed decision making and evidence-based policies and measures. It shows us the need to be inclusive, to involve all stakeholders, and the need to empower communities and people at the grassroots level.

7. Thailand has His Majesty the King's Sufficiency Economy Philosophy or SEP to guide us in pursuing our balanced development, balanced action and mindset in respect of the environment and the planet and with full consideration for future generations. The SEP, in a nutshell, is based on a "sustainability mindset" which in turn leads to sustainability practices. It focuses on transforming the economics of exploitation into sustainable economic growth and development with resilience.

8. Thailand stands ready to share our sustainable development model based on SEP. We believe that SEP could be one of the tools to support the realization of SDGs. The Sufficiency Economy model has been successfully implemented with concrete outcomes in Thailand in many sectors and levels, including agriculture, community development, education, business, industry, and in the work of governmental organizations. Thailand has shared our experiences with a number of interested countries. Several bilateral development projects are in place through various cooperation frameworks, including through Thailand International Cooperation Agency or TICA.

9. Of course, there may be various other approaches to sustainable development. Together we can share our experiences, our best practices, and help each other to progress on the path to sustainable development.

10. Thailand now serves as ASEAN's Coordinator on SDGs. We feel that each region, each subregion needs to take up the future in its own hands, helping out

each other, starting from home, at community level, and beginning by embracing the "sustainability mindset".

11. Lastly, I have been asked lately why am I so preoccupied with sustainable development. After all, I am a Foreign Minister, not a Minister for development, environment or natural resources. But sustainable development must be everyone's agenda. It must be a top agenda. As Foreign Minister, my top foreign policy agenda is to promote sustainable development for all, not only for my own country, but for all. And I humbly ask you, Madam Secretary, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, and everyone of us, to do the same.

Thank you
