

**Ms. Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana  
Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations  
and Executive Secretary of ESCAP**

**Opening remarks (as prepared for delivery)  
Expert Working Group on Universal Access to Modern Energy Services,  
Renewable Energy, Energy Efficiency and Cleaner Use of Fossil Fuels  
“Towards the High-level Dialogue on Energy 2021”**

**Thursday, 26 August 2021  
Time: 10:00 – 16:00 hrs. (Bangkok time)  
Platform: TEAMS**

**ES slot: 10.05-10.10**

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**Excellency Ms. Raushan Yesbulatova, Ambassador and Permanent  
Representative of the Republic of Kazakhstan to UN ESCAP**

**Ms. Premrutai Vinaiphat, Deputy Permanent Secretary, Ministry of  
Energy of the Royal Thai Government**

**Distinguished participants, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I am pleased to welcome you to the Expert Working Group on Universal Access to Modern Energy Services, Renewable Energy, Energy Efficiency, and Cleaner Use of Fossil Fuels under the theme 'Towards the High-level Dialogue on Energy 2021.' This meeting is the first session of the Expert Working Group after the third session of the Committee on Energy held in February 2021.

I am pleased to note that the Expert Working Group is a step forward in a continuous process of generating knowledge, information and policy research to ensure informed deliberations at intergovernmental meetings such as the Committee on Energy and the Asia-Pacific Energy Forum. I would like to express my gratitude to all member countries participating in the meeting today and the many international organizations taking part.

Today's discussions are focused on the forthcoming global event, the High-level Dialogue on Energy, which will take place at the summit level during the 76<sup>th</sup> session of the United Nations General Assembly in September 2021. This High-level Dialogue is the first global gathering at the summit level on energy under the auspices of the United Nations General Assembly since 1981.

In the 40 years that separate these two energy-focused summits, the world has undergone a significant transformation. The Asia-Pacific region has become the fastest-growing region in the world. Energy demand in this region has almost doubled since 2000 and it continues to rank the highest among global regions in its energy intensity. It is projected that the total global energy demand by 2040 will increase by 30 per cent and this region will account for two-thirds of the growth.

At the same time, the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic have placed additional strains on limited resources - causing both energy supply and demand shocks across all sectors of society and putting existing energy systems under severe pressure.

An ambitious global effort is urgently required to accelerate existing initiatives and actions to deliver sustainable development goal 7 while ensuring access to affordable, reliable, renewable, and modern energy for all by 2030.

This is reinforced with a sustained and decisive effort towards achieving the global climate targets of the Paris Agreement. The Asia-Pacific region can play an important role in achieving global goals.

Countries in Asia and the Pacific demonstrate global leadership in their strong commitment to energy access, energy efficiency and renewable energy. China, Japan and the Republic of Korea have committed to carbon neutrality by 2050 or 2060. As this year's COP26 meeting in Glasgow turns

the world's focus toward decarbonization, new technologies and approaches are emerging alongside new ambitious targets.

The High-level Dialogue presents a historic opportunity to provide transformational action on energy by bringing together world leaders and representatives at the highest level from all regions and sectors with the sole focus of turning this urgency into concrete action.

### **Ladies and Gentlemen,**

To date, an immense amount of work has gone into the preparatory process to ensure that the outcome of the High-level Dialogue on Energy is not only bold but attainable through concrete actions.

Preparatory work was co-led by UN-ENERGY and in collaboration with relevant stakeholders..

ESCAP, in its role as co-lead with the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), and the United Nations Environment Programme, helped facilitate the discussion of the Technical Working Groups on Energy Transition and supported the development of the theme report on energy transition.

The work of the Technical Working Groups successfully fed into the Ministerial Forum, providing high-level insights on priority issues under the five theme reports and formed the backbone of a global roadmap of action for achieving SDG 7 by 2030 and net-zero emissions by 2050, that is to support the High-level Dialogue on Energy in September this year.

In addition, Global Theme Champions represented by the member States spearheaded advocacy efforts on themes and energy compacts to advance objectives on energy access, transition, and resilience.

I am happy to introduce colleagues from our partner organization, Sustainable Energy for All. We will get through one of the most fascinating part of the High-level Dialogue on the Energy preparation process, the Energy Compacts.

The importance of 'Energy Compacts' during the High-level Dialogue cannot be understated. Voluntary commitments and actions, contained in the 'energy compacts,' from member States, sub-national authorities and non-state actors will be the critical vehicles through which outcomes, milestones, and implementation timelines, with clear tracking frameworks, can be expressed towards reaching 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement.

This Expert Working Group meeting will serve as an opportunity to learn more about the High-level Dialogue on Energy preparation. It will be a platform to exchange information on Energy Compacts, helping deliver one of the expected outcomes from the High-level Dialogue on Energy. I hope you have fruitful deliberations.

Thank you.