OPENING REMARKS
BY
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FOR
5TH HIGH-LEVEL BRAINSTORMING DIALOGUE (HLBD) ON ENHANCING COMPLEMENTARITIES BETWEEN THE ASEAN COMMUNITY VISION 2025 AND THE UNITED NATIONS AGENDA 2030 FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
31 March 2021

“Policy Perspectives: Enhancing Complementarities Towards Recovery from COVID-19”

13.00-15.30 (GMT+7)
Teleconference

H.E. Don Pramudwinai, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Thailand

H.E. Ms. Armida Salisiah Alisjahbana, Under-Secretary General of the United Nations and Executive Secretary of ESCAP

Distinguished participants, Ladies and Gentlemen

Good afternoon

1. It is with great pleasure for me to join the 5th High-Level Brainstorming Dialogue and deliver opening remarks. I would like to congratulate Thailand as well as ESCAP for your continued commitment to organize this important collaborative platform for the fifth year.

2. Since the 4th HLBD held in June 2020, ASEAN has worked tirelessly to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. We have acted promptly and concertedly to ensure that the lives of our peoples are protected and their livelihoods are safeguarded amidst the compounded vulnerabilities brough about by the pandemic.

3. Acknowledging that our sustainable development gains are at risk of being reversed since the onset of COVID-19, ASEAN has accorded high importance to post-pandemic recovery strategies, aimed to take stock on lessons learned, restore ASEAN’s connectivity, prevent potential economic downturns and foster human security and resilience for ASEAN people.

4. As such, the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework (ACRF) was adopted by the ASEAN Leaders in November 2020 with the aim to holistically articulate ASEAN recovery from COVID-19 and serve as guidance for ASEAN sectors through strategic priorities and partnership.
Ladies and Gentlemen,

5. The ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework and its Implementation Plan are, in its essence, contributing to the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and enhancing the implementation of the Complementarities Roadmap, through its focus on people-centered and Whole-of-Community approach.

6. Resting upon its five broad strategies encompassing health systems, human security, economic integration, digital transformation and sustainable and resilient future, we are united in not only accelerating the implementation of the five priority areas of the Complementarities Roadmap, but also in achieving an inclusive recovery journey along which no one is left behind.

7. Certainly, to achieve the goals of the Recovery Framework and forge ahead with the realization of ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and its complementarity with the 2030 Agenda, all initiatives related to recovery efforts must be implemented in synergy with other regional responses, economic recovery measures as well as national recovery plans while maintaining its agility and flexibility to optimize our efforts.

8. In line with the recommendation of the 4th HLBD concerning the spirit of multilateralism and cross-sectoral synergy, the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework as our critical blueprint and exit strategy, upholds open regionalism as a principle and embraces partnership and exchanges from all relevant stakeholders in ASEAN and beyond.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

9. A lot remain to be done for us to take the region through the reopening and recovery stages towards longer term resilience without losing sight of the needs of those that have been affected the hardest by the pandemic.

10. The ASEAN’s journey beyond COVID-19 will not be an easy path as the lives of our people have been largely shattered and the time to return to normalcy has yet to arrive. We are cognizant of the setbacks and we recognize that more collaboration, innovation and candid conversation need to be leveraged to ensure that the sustainability of our development policies and interventions amidst threats and uncertainties.

11. The Complementarities initiative and the ACRF are indeed exemplary of our joint and steadfast commitment to ensure that our development success will continue and that our people are equipped with capability, knowledge, and needed support to lead lives free from deprivation and vulnerability in times of crisis and in the post-COVID 19 era.
12. I would like to once again commend Thailand for your unwavering commitment in advancing the Complementarities Initiatives and in strengthening development cooperation and dialogue tapping the opportunities of the new normal. Additionally, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to ESCAP for the long-standing support and look forward to working together as we endeavour to recover and build back better.

13. I wish you a fruitful deliberation and a successful 5th HLBD.

14. Thank you.