

S 1

Statement by Ambassador Kesang Wangdi, Head of delegation of Bhutan to Second Asia Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development, Bangkok, 21-22 May 2015 and Permanent Representative of Bhutan to ESCAP

Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. The Bhutanese delegation expresses its deep appreciation to ESCAP Secretariat for convening the Asia Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development. We recognize UNESCAP's vital role in shaping the Post-2015 development agenda for a region that is home to two-thirds of humanity.

2. My delegation is of the view that true measurement of human progress must be expanded to encompass happiness and well-being. It is imperative that development agenda beyond 2015 must be broad, transformative and holistic in its scope taking into account the special needs and challenges of the most vulnerable states. We welcome the fact that Bhutan's proposal to measure progress in ways that go beyond GDP has found reflection in the UN Secretary General's Synthesis Report.

3. Guided by the philosophy of GNH, Sustainable Development has always been a cornerstone of development and public policies of the Royal Government of Bhutan. Equitable and balanced economic growth with minimum adverse impacts on natural environments and socio-culture values have been the main guiding principle of our five year development plans. Accordingly, the 11FYP focuses on self-reliance and inclusive green socio-economic development. The cross cutting issues like environmental degradation, over-utilisation of natural resources, climate change and those relating to poverty, gender, differently-able persons, unemployment and income, food and nutrition, health, sanitation and natural disasters have been mainstreamed in our Eleventh Plan. All these issues has been integrated in our decision making process of policy making, planning and budgeting right at the outset of the Eleventh FYP. Moreover, we have also established strong institutions and robust mechanism to monitor and review the Eleventh Plan through integrated planning, budgeting and expenditure management system. The Mid-Term

Review of Eleventh Plan will assess the progress of the plan and make mid-term adjustment in policies, programmes, and projects and allocation of resources. We also benefit from the consultative Round Table Meetings with our development partners on the socio-economic development priorities and progress of Bhutan.

4. We are currently at a confluence where various streams of processes for fashioning post 2015-development agenda are merging this year. The deliberations in adoption of SDGs, financing for development, climate change and disaster risk reduction, among others, calls for stronger coherence and coordination in our work since our ultimate goal is for a development paradigm which is inclusive and sustainable.

Mr. Chair, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

5. My delegation is of the view that it is critical to arrive at a broad consensus on a clear set of means of implementation for the implementation of the SDGs and post 2015 development agenda through global partnerships with special considerations for vulnerable countries such as LDCs, LLDCs and SIDs. Therefore, we would welcome international development partners and financial institutions to deliver on their commitments made under various international frameworks and decisions.

6. The Bhutanese delegation would like to recall its view expressed at the First Session of APFSD on the need for a road map to ensure the implementation of SDGs is action-oriented and time bound. The success of the post 2015 development agenda would also hinge on an effective and matching follow-up and review mechanism. In this regard, we believe the Asia Pacific Forum for Sustainable Development could serve as an excellent regional platform for review and taking stock of implementation of the SDGs. This platform could be also be gainfully utilized to share best practices and explore innovations including meaningful engagement of civil society and the private sector, in the implementation of the SDGs.

7. With regard to the form and function of the Asia Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development beyond 2015 my delegation supports in

principle the proposals by the Secretariat contained in document E/ESCAP/FSD(2)/2 as they serve as critical inputs in seeding further deliberations on this important subject. Further, my delegation recognizes the pivotal role APFSD can play in translating the global discourse on sustainable development to tangible outcomes at the local level. We have also noted that the convening of the Forum and the implementations of the recommendations are subject to availability of financing and changes in HLPF modalities. In this regard, my delegation is of the view that we need to ensure regular holding of the Forum and support for the widest possible participation in it, especially of the LDCs.

Thank you,

Tashi Delek.