

STATEMENT BY HON'BLE SECRETARY, MOEA

CLOSING DINNER

Regional Workshop

On

**Opportunities and Challenges in Using Evidence based Trade Policy for the
Achievement of Sustainable Development Goals**

17 June, 2015

Termalinca, Thimphu

Dr Mia Mikic, Head of Trade Policy and Analysis Section under UNESCAP,

Resource Persons,

Distinguished Guests,

Participants, and

Ladies and Gentlemen.

It is a great pleasure for me to meet and be among the resource persons and participants of the **“Regional workshop on opportunities and challenges in using evidence-based trade policy for achievement of sustainable development goals (SDGs)”**.

On behalf of the Ministry of Economic affairs, I would like to thank the UNESCAP for choosing Bhutan as the host country for this very important workshop. For Bhutan, sustainable development remains an integral part of our national development plan. Bhutan's development framework, guided by the principle of Gross National Happiness (GNH), strives to improve the well-being of our people by balancing material growth with social inclusiveness and environmental

sustainability; which I consider is the premise of the **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**.

I am happy to learn that the workshop has concluded successfully. Please accept my sincere congratulations to the participants, resource persons and the organizers.

I gather that the 3 days workshop was very informative, enriching and interactive with active involvement of the participants. I appreciate that the workshop covered topics on the role of trade in achieving the SDGs; techniques to monitor SDG targets; trade policy choices; global value chains and economic diversification; use of input-output data in building evidence for trade policy making; and trade statistics, among others. I believe the presentations by the resource persons were followed by intense discussions on topics such as trade policy options, nontariff measures, subsidies, global value chains, trade in services and membership to the WTO.

I was informed that, during the course of the workshop; the participants presented their country specific trade policies, strategies and challenges, which I am sure was very useful in sharing the experiences, knowledge and good practices.

I applaud UNESCAP for putting together - most relevant and important topics and bringing along a group of highly qualified and talented resource persons for this workshop. It was indeed a very useful and timely action on the part of the UNESCAP to organize such workshop as we prepare to implement the Sustainable development goals.

I suppose that one of the common problems among least developed countries, including Bhutan, is the lack of good quality data, which is fundamental to research and evidence based trade policy making. Nonetheless, I am confident that this workshop would have trained the participants in collection and use of data to support holistic and evidence based trade policy making.

I am convinced that in the last three days, you have been able to share useful skills and knowledge on the role of trade to achieve sustainable development goals. I am hopeful that the participants will make best use of what they have learnt during the workshop, and contribute meaningfully towards achieving the sustainable development goals in their respective countries.

I would like to once again thank Dr Mia Mikic and the UNESCAP for their continued support and kind cooperation; and for choosing Bhutan to host this important workshop. We look forward to continue our collaboration with the UNESCAP in the near future.

I hope that the modest arrangement and facilities provided by my colleagues and the Department of Trade - as a partner for this workshop - was adequate enough to meet the expectations of the UNESCAP, resource persons and the participants. Please let us know if there were shortcomings from our side, so that we can serve you better next time around.

Finally, I would like to congratulate all the participants for your active participation and successfully completing the training. I would also like to thank the resource

persons for sharing your expertise, knowledge and experiences with the participants.

I hope that you all had an enjoyable stay while you are here in Bhutan.

I wish all the participants, resource persons and the distinguished guests a wonderful evening. And, I would also like to wish the resource persons and our friends from the region a safe flight back to your home countries.

Thank you & Tashi Delek!