Pakistan's Statement on Agenda Item 2

Status of and progress towards achieving Sustainable Development Goal 7 in Asia and the Pacific

Access to energy is inextricably linked to sustainable development as it interconnects three pillars of sustainable development. It has a profound effect on productivity, economic development, livelihoods, health, education, and food and water security hence it can contribute to reducing inequality and poverty.

Pakistan is an energy deficient country and relies heavily on fossil fuels to generate electricity. Imports account for almost 43 per cent of primary energy in the country, with large quantities of liquefied natural gas (LNG) imported to bridge the supply-demand gap. Energy prices are steadily increasing, creating significant affordability concerns. With its cross-cutting links with other global goals, SDG 7 is among the most important goals for Pakistan.

To accelerate progress on SDG 7, Pakistan has invested heavily in overcoming energy shortages, increasing energy generation and expanding access to electricity. Over the past ten years, access to electricity increased by 8 percentage points. The proportion of the population who rely on clean fuels and technologies has risen by 11 percentage points in the same period.

Pakistan is blessed with a high potential of renewable energy resources. We are in the process of installing hydroelectric, wind and solar projects to harness this potential. At present, the share of renewable energy stands at 4% in the national energy mix. Efforts are underway to increase the share of renewables in Pakistan's energy supply mix to 20 per cent by 2025, and 30 per cent by 2030. Parliament has passed "National Energy Efficiency and Conservation Act 2016" and "Pakistan Council of Renewable Energy Technologies Act 2018". An especially notable initiative was the construction and operationalization of the Quaid-e-Azam Solar Park – Pakistan's first utility scale, on-grid solar power plant of 1,000 MW. Several other solar plants have also been set up and many rural areas have been provided with small-scale solar panel systems to provide basic electricity for local households.

The Alternative Energy Development Board (AEDB) has supported the private sector's installation of several renewable energy plants, including wind and solar power plants. The AEDB is also facilitating bagasse-based co-generation projects under the Framework for Power Co-generation (Bagasse/Biomass) 2013. An additional 2500-300 MW of bioenergy projects are expected to be implemented by the year 2030. Their efforts have enabled Pakistan to rise through the ranks of

countries considered attractive for renewable energy investments – from 38th in 2016 to 26th in 2018.

Improving energy efficiency and conservation are among Pakistan's top priorities. To this end, a National Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority (NEECA) has been established to identify energy efficiency and conservation opportunities. Initiatives on renewable energy focus on affordable energy. The national parliament took a major step towards adopting clean energy when the parliament building was turned into a sustainable, green building in 2016. The "Green Parliament of Pakistan" has the distinction of being "world's first largest solar-powered legislative building". In addition to reducing air pollution, it sets a standard for other government departments and private buildings.

****