Pakistan 36

Mr. Chair, thank you for giving me the floor,

It has been widely accepted that energy is a critical enabler for economic growth, structural transformation, environmental sustainability, human well-being and global security. As we heard from the Executive Secretary in her opening remarks, the demand for energy in the Asia Pacific region has doubled since 2000 but not being fulfilled from within, the region has become a net energy importer. Whereas, the region is abundant in clean energy resources and considering the imperatives of climate change, managing the transition towards low-carbon and sustainable growth pathways has become inevitable as well. However, for developing countries, such as Pakistan, realizing this transition within the limited realm of their national budgets and traditional technological base is not entirely possible, it can only be achieved through access to International Finance and technology transfer.

Energy connectivity offers a viable solution to the energy starved countries in the region, therefore, it is extremely pertinent for UNESCAP to focus on it, as for many of its member states it provides the only platform to seek regional cooperation in this field.

Regional cooperation is also the most promising policy solution to South Asia's challenges and supply constraints in the energy sector. Sharing energy sources and building on supply demand compatibility through trade, cross border investments and technical cooperation will reduce inefficiencies in the energy production-consumption cycle. Particularly in the electricity subsector, cooperation enhances reliability and stability to ensure that resources are equitably distributed. The proximity of transmission networks among South Asian countries and complementary hydro and thermal power resources with varying demand peaks and seasonal power requirements create the ideal conditions for regional energy cooperation. Regional connectivity in South Asia is particularly important because of its potential to turn the subregion into a land bridge between Europe, Central Asia and South-East Asia.

Mr. Chair,

It is pleasure to report that Pakistan is already a part of an ambitious but achievable cross border electricity connectivity project i.e. CASA 1000. When complete, the CASA-1000 transmission lines will move electricity between the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan (the first 477 kilometers) and from Tajikistan to Afghanistan and Pakistan (the next 750 kilometers). This project demonstrates landmark cooperation among the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Afghanistan and Pakistan. The modern and efficient CASA-1000 electricity transmission system

will help transform the region and signify an important step toward realizing the planned Central Asia-South Asia Regional Electricity Market (CASAREM). The CASAREM initiative will help not only these four countries, but also improve the electricity systems and develop inter-regional cooperation between Central Asia and South Asia. A high level Inter-Governmental Council has been established through which the participating countries are working together to make decisions about project implementation and operation, common policies and rules, and use consistent technical, safety, and environmental standards.

In the end, let us note that, as very aptly pointed in reports by the ESCAP secretariat, geopolitical issues and lack of trust among many of the countries in Asia and the Pacific are major challenges for enhancing connectivity and establishing cross-border electricity trade. Overcoming this requires a process of continuous trust-building, which must be supported by independent intergovernmental organizations such as ESCAP, sub-regional cooperation organizations and multilateral banks. There is also a need to build consensus among member States for the long-term vision of energy connectivity in the Asia Pacific region. The roadmap on Energy Connectivity, is therefore, a step in the right direction.

Thank you all for your attention.