

Opening Remarks

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Second Committee on Energy

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Excellency, **Ms. Armida Salsiah Alisjabana**, Under-Secretary General of the United Nations and Executive Secretary of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific.

Excellencies **Ministers** from UN Member Countries.

Honourable UN Representatives and Experts, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen.

Good morning

- On behalf of the Royal Thai Government, may I extend my warm welcome to you all to Bangkok. It is my pleasure to open the **Second Session of the ESCAP Committee on Energy** today.
- May I recall, since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in September 2015, many countries are making progress in realizing their effort to meet the targets of SDG by 2030, however challenges and difficulties in implementation still continue to persist.
- Implementing the 2030 Agenda requires collective action in every countries. While the SDGs are universally applicable, each government will also decide how these aspirational and global targets should be incorporated in national planning processes, policies, and strategies that finally must turn into actions.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

- The **Committee on Energy** provides an opportunity to convene Asia-Pacific's policymakers to plan a Regional Agenda for Sustainable Energy. Your discussions on how to achieve of Sustainable Development Goal 7 and to leverage the capacities of all the countries to accelerate progress towards this Goal are critical to our success.
- This week is significant because Bangkok is the venue for not one, but two important energy meetings. The **10th International Forum on Energy in Sustainable Development** that concluded yesterday brought together many of the world's leading

energy experts to discuss how we move to a sustainable energy future. I congratulate UN ESCAP and the other UN regional commissions for the organisation of this conference. Today, as we begin the Committee on Energy, I hope the ideas and strategies discussed at the Forum will benefit your deliberations.

- The **Asia-Pacific region**, as you know, is an economic powerhouse. Its energy needs are growing faster than anywhere else in the world. Here in Thailand, and in other countries of the region, we face some challenges. We need to meet increased demand, ensure secure energy supplies while ensuring the energy system is sustainable, affordable and low carbon.
- Responding to this energy trilemma means that a portfolio of measures is needed. Renewable energy, energy efficiency, electrification of transport and regional power grids all have their places in this portfolio. I am sure that the Member States at this Committee will be discussing these approaches in detail. But each country needs to develop its own response, based on its needs. And importantly, countries need to learn from each other and cooperate in this transition if we are to be truly effective.

Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen:

- The **Government of Thailand** places great importance on the value of regional cooperation for building a sustainable energy future. Last month **Thailand, as Chair of ASEAN**, hosted the 37th ASEAN Ministers on Energy Meeting. At this meeting ASEAN Energy Ministers cooperated to progress many sustainable energy issues, from power grid connectivity, to renewable energy and energy efficiency.
- I am pleased to say there are many achievements in ASEAN's energy sector. As power demand is increasing each year, we need to increase power security and access. One of these examples, which has had strong support from Thailand, is the development of the **ASEAN Power Grid**. This is a cross-border initiative to interconnect the power grids of Thailand and its ASEAN neighbours. By allowing power trade between countries ASEAN can enhance energy affordability, secure and diversify its energy supply, and increase the share of renewable energy in our energy mix. Thailand put an effort toward future **regional cross-border power trade and grid interconnectivity** to strengthen security.
- During the ASEAN Ministers on Energy Meeting last month, Thailand vows to be a **Regional Energy Connector** for the ASEAN Power Grid and operates multilateral power trade firstly through the **Lao PDR-Thailand-Malaysia power integration project** with high potential to expand to other neighbours.
- For '**Thailand Integrated Energy Blueprint**', renewable energy proportion is determined at least 30% of the total energy consumption, especially solar energy which plays a key role in achieving the target. To modernize the deployment of renewables for power generation, **digitalization**, big data, and the Internet of Things (IoT) will play a crucial role.
- For **power sector**, in our new Power Development Plan (PDP), the share of non-fossil energy in total power output will be increased to 35 per cent by 2037. And at least 1,000 megawatts will be earmarked for solar PV installed on private household rooftops. Thailand is also designing a **Grid Modernization and Smart Grid Plan** to improve grid efficiency and reliability, reduce losses and help in the integration of variable renewable energy sources into the grid.

- At present, our “**Energy for All**” strategy through “**Prosumerization**” policy will support the public and community. We are now raising the proportion of renewable energy through **community power plants**. This will not only enhance energy security, but also provide environmental benefits and improve the *well-being* of the people.
- For *policy actions* to scale up RE during current *energy transition*, our Ministry is planning to tackle the disruption era of energy technology through **digitalisation, decarbonisation, decentralisation, deregulation and electrification** or **4D1E Policy**.
- Furthermore, our economy will move through a BCG Model, that is **Bio-Circular-Green Economy**. Thailand is second-to-none in **Biofuels** development. Recently, we introduced a new grade of diesel fuel, with a higher biodiesel content of up to 20%, for use in trucks, buses and boats. We will use B10 as a basis of biodiesel. This diesel replacement strategy will not only provide an outlet for our palm oil production, but it will also reduce particulate emissions from diesel vehicles in the cities to prevent extreme air pollution especially PM2.5.
- For this, Thailand has a *vision* for a sustainable energy future that addresses the multiple energy policy challenges and will be the realization of our national goals and commitments that is in line with the **Sustainable Development Goal (SDG7)** of the United Nation.

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen:

- **Thailand** has put the effort to synthesize the national energy system to accelerate future energy plan as part of the overall economic development. Strong and concerted efforts towards renewable energy, cleaner fuel and efficiency improvement through many successful implementations and best practices in Thailand are clear and well indicate Thailand’s commitment to address its environmental sustainability performance to achieve SDG7 Goal and simultaneously develop the modernization of the country towards low carbon economy.
- In closing, to achieve the SDG7, I do believe, a shared responsibility and collective efforts we make, as well as active engagement with contribution of national, regional cooperation, together with political and economic groups are vital to move forward our intention for a sustainable energy future. No single country can push for such achievement alone.
- I would like to thank **Ms. Armida Alisjahbana and ESCAP** for organizing this second session of the Committee on Energy, with a broad Agenda that contains topics to enhance energy security, accelerate the progress of cross-border power trade, increase the share of renewable energy and accelerate the achievement of the SDG7.
- I wish you all successful deliberation in this Committee on Energy and an enjoyable stay here in Bangkok.

I thank you.