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**-Draft-**  
**Opening Statement**  
**by**  
**H.E. Mr. Don Pramudwinai**  
**Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Thailand,**  
**at the Opening session**  
**of the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development 2017**  
**at Conference Room 2, UNCC, Bangkok**  
**29 March 2017 from 9.00-09.50 hours**

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**Mr. Chairman,**  
**Ministers, Excellencies,**  
**Executive Secretary,**  
**Distinguished Delegates,**  
**Ladies and gentlemen,**

On behalf of the Royal Thai Government, I would like to warmly welcome all participants of the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development or the APFSD to Bangkok.

The Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development is a forum of great importance as it provides a platform for Member States and stakeholders in the Asia-Pacific to discuss the way forward to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. As the host country of the ESCAP, Thailand fully supports the work of the APFSD.

I feel also particularly pleased that this year the *draft regional roadmap for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific* will be reviewed and adopted as a key outcome of the Forum. The roadmap will allow us to further enhance cooperation in priority areas to achieve the SDGs together, with the facilitating role of the ESCAP.

**Mr. Chairman,**

More than 70 years ago, when we gave birth to United Nations, we joined our collective forces to fight with the scourge of war and the curse of poverty. From then on, we have determined to bring our future generation the better life in larger freedom, from fear and from want. Today our journey continues. Prof. Jeffrey Sachs said that “We need to defend the interests of those whom we've never met and never will.” We have to transfer the world with brighter future to our next generation. That is our shared responsibility.

The APFSD is unique given the fact that it involves multi-stakeholders. Certainly sustainable development cannot be achieved only through government work alone. We need to bring in more and more people to engage in this SDGs journey, be they civil society organizations, academia, business, parliamentarians, youth. Everyone has a bit of experience to contribute. Everyone has to take part in shaping our common future.

**Mr. Chairman,**

It is very timely that this year's APFSD will discuss the topic on "Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing Asia-Pacific". To bring people out from the vicious circle of poverty is the key factor in achieving the SDGs. Development is about transforming the lives of people, not just transforming economies. Thailand's development journey is a people-centered approach, guided by the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy. We have found that the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy can serve as a strong foundation for Thailand to realize SDGs and we are sharing our practices through South-South cooperation with our friends near and far. On Friday morning, I will, together with Director of UN Office of South-South Cooperation, launch the first volume of the South-South in Action Publication Series "Sustainability in Thailand: Experience for Developing Countries". And I will co-chair the High-Level Brainstorming Dialogue on Enhancing Complementarities between the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. So you are all invited to join.

**Before ending, I wish to capture a few points on moving forward to achieve SDGs :**

- 1. Transformative change needs transformative leadership. Nothing can be business as usual. We need to transform our mindset.** Domestically, we need better coordination and policy coherence among agencies; regionally and globally we need to leverage the power of partnerships, as every country has relevant experiences to share and new things to learn. New partnerships and ways of thinking must be explored. We need to take on views of those people whose voices are usually unheard.
- 2. We need to work together. Multi-stakeholder engagement is key.** The cross-cutting and inclusive nature of the 2030 Agenda requires effective partnerships between governments and other stakeholders. Government leadership and commitment to the SDGs is definitely vital, but it is insufficient on its own. Broad coalitions around the SDGs are needed to leverage stakeholders' strengths, generate synergies, and promote national ownership.

3. **Last but not least, we must empower young people everywhere to advance the SDGs.** Youth are not only beneficiaries or targets of change, but they are drivers of change. They all have the talent and energy to build peace, promote human rights, protect the environment and the Planet, and realize the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. I personally wish to see the APFSD engages the young generations in more discussions on SDGs.

**Mr. Chairman,**

**Distinguished Delegates**

I wish you all a productive meeting and a pleasant stay in Thailand. Thank you.

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