

Address by H.E. Mr. Shanker Das Bairagi Foreign Secretary of Nepal, at the
Regional Meeting for Sustainable Energy in Asia and Pacific jointly
organised by the Government of Nepal and the UN-OHRLLS, at Hotel
Radisson, Kathmandu
22 March 2017

(Please check against delivery)

**Honourable Dr. Min Bahadur Shrestha, Vice-Chairman of the National
Planning Commission and Chair of the Session**

Honourable Mr. Janardan Sharma 'Prabhakar' Minister for Energy

**His Excellency Mr. Gyan Chandra Acharya, UN Under-Secretary-
General and High Representative for the LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS**

Distinguished representative of the UNDP

Distinguished delegates from the LDCs of Asia and the Pacific Region

Distinguished representatives of development partners

Excellencies and representatives of the diplomatic community

Friends from the media,

Ladies and gentlemen,

1. It is indeed a pleasure for me to speak before such a gathering of distinguished delegates, representatives and professionals from LDCs and development partners in this important regional meeting of Asia and the Pacific LDCs on sustainable energy.
2. Let me first express my sincere appreciation to the UN-OHRLLS for close collaboration in co-hosting this meeting with the Government of Nepal.

3. I appreciate Honourable Vice-Chairman Dr. Shrestha for his stewardship of the Session.
4. I would like to express my thanks and appreciation to the Under-Secretary-General Mr. Acharya for his constructive leadership, tireless efforts and articulation in the promotion of cause of LDCs in the international arena.
5. I would like to appreciate Honourable Energy Minister for his vision and determination towards promoting sustainable energy in Nepal.
6. And, I welcome all the delegates and representatives to the session and appreciate for their encouraging participation. I am confident that your insightful contribution to the important theme of sustainable energy will lead to a fruitful conclusion of the meeting.

Distinguished participants, Ladies and gentlemen,

7. Acute energy gap remains a constraint to the development of these countries. Sustainable energy, therefore, is critical to respond to the special needs, specific challenges and particular vulnerabilities of the Least Developed Countries.
8. Access to energy can make a real difference in pursuing the goal of accelerated and sustained economic growth, poverty eradication, socio-economic development, full employment and decent work for all. It is, therefore, essential to devise a sound strategy in a way of ensuring sustainable energy for LDCs.
9. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development incorporated ‘Sustainable Energy’ as a standalone goal that is to “ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all”.

10. Energy sector is one of the key priorities areas for many LDCs like Nepal. Indeed, access to affordable, reliable and renewable energy is the key to achieving sustained economic growth and sustainable development.
11. The Istanbul Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020 (IPoA), which was negotiated when Nepal was Chair of the LDCs, has recognized that inadequate production and access to energy in majority of the LDCs are serious constraints to their development process.
12. (Similarly, the Vienna Programme of Action for LLDCs for the Decade 2014-2024, has highlighted the importance of energy infrastructure and access to affordable, reliable and renewable energy and related technologies, for enhancing productive capacity to achieve sustained economic growth and sustainable development. It has emphasized on the need for supporting regional renewable energy centers and developing energy infrastructure for the effective supply of modern and renewable energy services to urban and rural areas).
13. Emphasizing the need for regional energy market to foster energy cooperation for mutual benefits at the regional level, the South Asian countries have signed the SAARC Framework Agreement on Energy Cooperation during the 18th SAARC summit in Kathmandu in 2014.
14. Similarly, under BIMSTEC, high priority is given to the development of energy sector. We have decided to expedite the signing of the BIMSTEC Memorandum of Understanding on Grid Interconnection and are committed to take steps for early operationalization of the BIMSTEC Energy Centre for mutually beneficial cooperation.
15. At bilateral level, the Governments of Nepal and India have signed Power Trade Agreement (PTA) creating an opportunity for public and private sector involvement in power development thereby opening a large market for hydropower developers in Nepal to export electricity to India

and also to sub-regional and regional levels. In that context, development of cross-border transmission lines is important aspects of critical energy infrastructure for facilitating trade and distribution.

Excellencies, Ladies and gentlemen,

16. Nepal has attached high priority to the development of energy sectors. We have started major hydropower projects with the aim of creating avenues for multi-sectoral national development efforts.
17. Hydro-power generation is one of the major priority sectors of Nepal's development diplomacy as well.
18. Nepal has tremendous potential for sustainable energy that includes hydropower, solar power and wind energy. However, Nepal has been experiencing energy shortage.
19. In recent months, the Government of Nepal has taken important initiatives to address energy shortage. With effective regulatory measures in place and emphasis on the promotion of micro-hydro projects and other renewable sources of energy, we have been efficiently addressing the rural energy needs and creating conducive climate for energy investment in mega projects.
20. The fourteenth periodic plan has envisioned sustainable development and prosperity of the country via rapid development of hydro-electricity with appropriate strategies, action plans and programmes.
21. Nepal has been encouraging community participation in sustainable energy including through '*Light Nepal*' campaign.

Distinguished Guests and Participants,

22. There is certainly much discussion, documentation and commitment at national, regional and international levels on the importance of collaboration and project development for sustainable energy.
23. Implementation of important initiatives requires adequate financial resources, cost-effective technological solutions and coordinated action. Learning from each other's best practices would inspire us in bolstering regional cooperation.
24. Affordable and accessible energy is essential for private sector development, productive capacity building, job creation and expansion of trade.
25. Success of our efforts in climate action, health, education, water and food security is intimately linked to sustainable energy.
26. It is a matter of satisfaction that bilateral, regional and international efforts and understanding on the promotion of sustainable energy has helped to forge sustained global partnership to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

27. LDCs lack sufficient finance and appropriate technology to accelerate the pace of energy development in a required speed, quality and quantity. So, we emphasize on leveraging all sources of financing and effective operationalization of the Technology Bank for the LDCs.
28. Enhanced solidarity, cooperation and partnership between the LDCs and development partners, is essential to fill the resources and technology gap in attaining our goals. Sharing of mutual experiences and expertise of the LDCs will certainly be instrumental in this regard.
29. A successful global partnership for development that effectively addresses LDCs' priorities and needs is in the interest of everyone and

will serve the cause of global peace, prosperity and sustainable development for all.

30. The prosperity of LDCs is about the development of one sixth of the humanity, almost a billion people living in the mother Earth. In this context, we would like to emphasize that unless international support is enhanced, squarely targeted and focused on LDCs' needs, their genuine ambition to reach the stage of graduation will remain unfulfilled.

31. Let us join hands, work together and make our plans and commitments a reality: *affordable, accessible, reliable and sustainable energy for all.*

32. I am confident that the meeting will be fruitful in realizing its well-defined objectives. I wish you all enjoyable stay in Kathmandu.

Thank you.