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**Statement**

**by**

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**Under-Secretary-General**

**and High Representative**

**for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries**

**and Small Island Developing States**

**Regional Meeting of Asia Pacific LDCs on Sustainable Energy**

**Closing Session**

**Kathmandu, Nepal**

**23 March 2017**

Thank you very much.

Honourable Member of the National Planning Commission Dr. Mishra,  
Mr. Gauri Pradhan, LDC Watch, and the Chair of the Civil Society Leaders from  
the LDCs,  
Distinguished Experts,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me also at the outset to express my sincere appreciation to you all for your active participation in, and contribution to, this very important meeting.

I know that you have come from quite faraway countries, as well as nearby countries, but you came here with some dedication and with some experiences to share with all of your colleagues from countries of the Least-Developed Countries.

I think this shows a very strong commitment of all of you, to come here and tell us what your national energy plans are, what you are doing in terms of really promoting it, what are the challenges that you face, and then of course, how to really ensure that we all collectively meet the goals that we all have set for ourselves. We also discussed your views, the ways and means to respond to the challenges in terms of the implementation of very ambitious goals that we have set, both at the national, the regional and the global levels.

Bringing together Asia-Pacific LDCs, their development partners, regional and international organizations, private sector actors and the civil society has, in my opinion, enabled us to have a fruitful multi-stakeholder dialogue, in terms of

sharing of experiences and devising a forward-looking approach to deal with the challenges and aspirations.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me to share some key messages that I consider as a takeaway from this particular meeting. Of course, the full summary will be provided by the distinguished members of the National Planning Commission later.

But the messages that I get, it is very clear that there is a very strong commitment on the part of the Asia Pacific LDCs to deliver on the energy goals that we have set, both in the IPoA as well as in the SDGs.

Affordable and reliable access to energy for all has positive multiplier effects on sustainable development. We heard time and time again that it is not only for poverty alleviation, not only looking for the low equilibrium, where you have basic health and basic education and basic facilities – sanitation facilities and other facilities. But really, making it able for everyone to move to the next stage with jobs, with economic growth and economic transformation of each of the LDCs. We believe that energy – we all heard from everyone that energy plays a key role in really bringing about that structural transformation in each LDC.

The pursuit of affordable and reliable access to energy for all requires, as you all said, in energy generation, transmission, trade and consumption. You also focused on how you should have a good combination of grid, mini-grid and off-grid solutions, requiring the assistance, but also the very policy-focused stakeholders at the national and the international level.

Affordable and reliable access to energy for all also requires massive financial resources, technical assistance, and the right technologies. Increased budget allocation is needed. Such a commitment will demonstrate country ownership and leadership, of course, from each of the least-developed countries. And it was also discussed that it has to be inclusion, especially focusing on the rural area, because the large majority of countries, even today, have the rural population, and that is where we have the energy poverty at the highest level.

No amount of efforts by Asia Pacific LDCs will be enough. Increased concessional finance to the energy sector and strengthened public-private partnerships and south-south and triangular cooperation are needed. With respect to external sources of financing, the issue is not only about availability of finance, but its accessibility by the countries and by all other stakeholders which are engaged in the energy sector. Attracting all the sources of finance requires streamlining rules and regulations, and promoting viable business and financing models that can take care of the particular characteristics of LDCs.

The meeting has therefore provided a unique opportunity for all of us in sharing experiences and best practices, and I'm sure also networking, better understanding of supportive facilities available in the energy sector at the regional as well as global levels, formulating input to global monitoring and follow up of the SDG7, and advocating for effective integration of sustainable energy into all relevant sectors.

Distinguished Experts,

The United Nations looks forward to working hand in hand with all of you to make this happen. The deliberations of this meeting along with those of the African regional meeting that we had had in Dar-es-Salam in Tanzania, just a couple of months ago, will serve as one of the LDC inputs to the United Nations High-Level Political Forum, which monitors the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and its global Sustainable Development Goals. This input will also echo the unique perspectives of LDCs on the implementation of SDG 7.

Also, as a member of the governing council on Sustainable Energy for All, my office will ensure that the reports of our two regional meetings feed into the discussions of S4All, especially as they relate to the least developed countries.

Distinguished Delegates,

I wish to seize this opportunity to extend my deep appreciation to the Government and the people of Nepal for their excellent hosting of this very important meeting, and for extending to us their wonderful generosity and hospitality. Hosting this event attests to Nepal's firm commitment and growing contribution to the noble cause of sustainable energy for all.

We commend the National Planning Commission, and especially the vice chair and the honourable member, and many of the staff as well as the distinguished officials from the Planning Commission, the Minister of Energy as well as the Ministry of Energy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Nepal for this, and count on their continued engagement and leadership in supporting the development efforts of LDCs, and

ensuring that the broad messages agreed upon here will translate into tangible action for the benefit of all.

My thanks also go to UNDP for co-organizing this meeting as well as providing good logistical support.

I am also grateful to the generous contribution of Finland to the LDC Trust Fund. The resources from this Fund have enabled us to secure the participation of many Asia Pacific LDC representatives.

Finally, allow me also to convey my appreciation to my colleagues from my own office, OHRLLS, for their dedication and assiduous efforts, which have contributed in no small measure to the success of this meeting.

My thanks also go to all the staff from all the three ministries mentioned earlier, as well as those who came here and work here with all of us, but also those who work behind the scenes, and conference services staff, all of whom greatly contributed to the success of the event.

And I'd also like to thank the media, for really coming and really taking care of the meeting in terms of giving publicity to it.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

To conclude, I wish you all a safe journey back home, And I thank you for your attention, and I thank you for your wonderful contribution.

But at the end of the day, they say that the pudding is in the eating, therefore, I'm sure that when you go back, you'll implement what you have already agreed here, or what you have learned here, and we all look forward to the day when we all achieve affordable, universal, reliable and modern access to all of LDCs.

Thank you very much.