

**Closing Statement by Mr. Thomas Stelzer,
Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Inter-Agency Affairs
(DESA)**

**Regional Preparatory Meeting for Asia and the Pacific
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**Honourable Ministers,
Excellencies,
Distinguished guests,**

We have now come to the end of a very interesting and productive day. I would like to take this opportunity to express once more special thanks to our host, the Royal Government of Thailand and our close partner, the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific for making this meeting possible.

I also would like to express my heartfelt appreciation to all panellists and participants. Without your active participation and engagement, it would not have been possible to have such a rich discussion.

Today, we heard many interesting ideas and insights. In July, the Royal Government of Thailand will have an opportunity to convey the main policy messages emanating from our deliberations to Ministers from around the world at the 2013 Annual Ministerial Review of ECOSOC.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

So much has already been said. But allow me to share some few, broad messages from our discussions, which I will take with me back to New York.

- Today's discussions have reiterated the centrality of energy to alleviate poverty. Sustainable, affordable and accessible energy was identified as a key priority for the Asia and Pacific region, especially in rural and inaccessible areas of many developing countries.
- We identified renewable energy as one of the most efficient and viable solutions to address the energy and sustainable development challenges in the region, particularly for the poor. A majority of developing countries, however, have very limited capacity and financial incentives to substitute conventional energy sources despite increasing awareness of the benefits stemming from renewable energy.
- We recognized that STI systems geared towards renewable energy can go a long way in overcoming some of the technological and economic challenges associated with integrating RETs in existing delivery mechanisms of energy services – for example, in integrating RETs with

grid-based conventional power supply in rural areas. Very few developing countries in the region, however, have such systems in place.

- While STI can play an important role as means of implementation for sustainable development, current STI systems tend to be market-driven rather than driven by the needs of the poor and the critical objectives of sustainable and inclusive development.

How do we redirect national STI systems towards poverty eradication and sustainable development challenges? What policies and other measures are necessary to use STI effectively to promote sustainable energy for sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific? How do we tackle the issue of limited institutional, infrastructure, human and financial resource capacity for renewable energy in the region? How do we increase the awareness and engagement of a broad-range of stakeholders that are relevant to the RET value chain, to promote wider dissemination of these technologies?

Our discussions today have stressed, among other things, the central role of national STI policies and programmes as well as R&D agendas, in expanding the use of renewable energy in all countries.

While there are no magic bullets, we can draw some important insights from several good practices in the region.

Among conditions needed to promote effective national STI systems, I would like to highlight the following:

- Policy frameworks and institutional capacity that promote a wider use of RETs to address needs in key sectors of the economy contributing to sustainable development as part of an overall national innovation system (NIS)
- STI agendas that include achievable renewable energy targets
- National STI policies that address the broad issues concerning RET development, including inter-linkages between energy, water and food security
- Financial, fiscal, and regulatory incentives together with innovative financial mechanisms and an adequate regime for intellectual property rights that foster development, innovation, and commercialization of RETs
- National STI policies that foster enterprise development in the renewable energy sector
- Policy measures aimed at promoting collaboration and partnerships among a broad range of stakeholders in the value-chain for the transfer and adoption of RETs – from government agencies, to research institutes, and venture capital – to build their capacity and to promote dissemination of these technologies.

- A focus on establishing renewable energy networks and centres of excellence both at the national and regional level to promote readiness for and dissemination of RETs

The realities of countries in the Asia and Pacific region vary widely with respect to the level of development and dissemination of RETs. Institutional and R&D capacity is one of the main factors that set them apart.

Regional measures to facilitate the transfer of climate-friendly technologies - such as, fostering regional technology platforms to promote renewable energy solutions; strengthening linkages and partnerships among different stakeholders to capitalize on cross-border cooperation; promotion of south-south cooperation; as well as burden-sharing arrangement to strengthen weak infrastructure – can help build this capacity and help reduce current imbalances in RET-driven technological and industrial development in the region.

Distinguished guests,

This meeting of distinguished participants is part of a broader effort to forge a regional strategy to use STI to facilitate a wider dissemination of RETs for sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific. We hope to build on this event at the global level to ensure stronger partnerships with the region to support an effective use of STI for sustainable development.

This is especially important this year as the Council sets out to follow-up on the Rio+20 Outcome and contribute to the formulation of a common vision for a future development agenda.

I therefore hope that you will remain engaged with the work of the Council beyond this meeting and will join us for the Annual Ministerial Review in July, in Geneva.

Thank you.