

Opening Remarks
by
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Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand
At the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD) 2015,
Thursday 21 May 2015, United Nations Conference Center, Bangkok
as delivered

Excellencies,
Madam Executive Secretary,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. On behalf of the Royal Thai Government, I wish to warmly welcome all participants of the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development to Bangkok.
2. This APFSD is particularly important and most timely, coming only four months before the September Summit when our leaders will meet to adopt the Post-2015 Development Agenda.
3. We are here to help shape the Post -2015 Development Agenda. Our discussions over the next two days will feed into the global process.

Excellencies,

4. Despite our collective efforts during the past 15 years, MDGs remain an unfinished business. Several countries in our region still lag behind. We need to make sure that they can quickly achieve the MDGs. At the same time we must also ensure that their needs and aspirations as well as those of the Asia-Pacific region are well reflected.
5. Let me highlight a few issues for your discussions. First, disaster risk reduction must be an integral part of the Post-2015 Development Agenda. Asia-Pacific is the world's most disaster-prone region. The recent earthquakes in Nepal have, once again, underlined the urgent need for disaster risk reduction.
6. We, in the Asia-Pacific, must prepare ourselves for adverse population dynamics. The rapid change in proportions of youth and elderly groups has led to youth unemployment in many countries. At the same time, we must deal with elderly mal-nutrition and prepare public facilities for an active aging society.

7. As more people are leaving their homes in search for better employment opportunities, we must also do what we can so that migration takes place in legal and safe conditions. In addition to combatting human trafficking and people smuggling, Thailand will work to promote comprehensive partnership and cooperation among countries of origin, transit and destination.

8. The vulnerability of our region's least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and Small Island Developing States must remain among our region's priorities. We can and should work together through South-South cooperation in areas such as innovative financing platforms, as well as science, technology and innovation.

9. Deepening regional integration and connectivity is vital to narrowing development gaps within our region. The development of seamless connectivity in the areas of transport as well as information and communications is essential to address inequalities across the region.

Distinguished Delegates,

10. Each country, each society has its own difficulties and constraints. That is why we are here together to learn from one another and to share our experiences.

11. Thailand's national economic and social development plans have been guided by His Majesty's the King's Sufficiency Economy Philosophy. We are committed to promoting global partnership for the betterment of the livelihood of the people and to build their resilience in face of challenges. We are ready and most willing to share our development experiences with our brothers and sisters.

12. It is my fervent hope that this meeting will contribute substantively to the global processes leading to the adoption of the Post-2015 Development Agenda. I wish you all fruitful deliberations and a successful outcome.

13. I now have the honour and pleasure to declare the Forum open.

Thank you.
