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Opening Statement (as prepared for delivery)
3-5 min: 375/390-650 words

Eighty-first session of the Commission

Agenda Item 1
Opening of the session

Monday, 21 April 2025
09:00 hrs.
ESCAP Hall, UNCC

Excellency, Ms. Arzu Rana Deuba, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Nepal and Chair of the eighty-first session,

Excellency, Ms. Paetongtarn Shinawatra, Prime Minister, Royal Thai Government,

Excellencies, distinguished delegates,

It is my honour to welcome you to the opening of the eighty-first session of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific.

At the very onset, I should like, on behalf of the secretariat, to express our deepest appreciation to the Royal Thai Government for hosting the Commission and its unwavering support over the years.

We gather at a time of profound change. Trade fragmentation, sovereign debt crisis, productivity slowdown, demographic shifts, rising digital divide and climate shocks cast a shadow on our progress.

They place stability, a prerequisite for development, at risk and threaten the well-being of people. In such a dynamic landscape, regional cooperation increasingly becomes an important means to tackle these interconnected challenges.

Despite these changes, we remain steadfastly optimistic. The unwavering determination of the people and steadfast commitment of the leaders to enhance cooperation have made our region resilient. It has deftly navigated through past crises and always emerged stronger.

As home to the world's most dynamic and rapidly expanding economies, our region leads the charge in technological advancements and innovations. We have witnessed its remarkable ability to mobilize capital and technology for green transitions.

To accelerate our progress, the scale of our solutions must be raised through regional cooperation. Cross-country collaboration, including through intergovernmental policy dialogue, would foster the sharing of information, transfer of technology and replication of solutions that work. Such dynamics would be our catalyst for further innovation.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This shifting landscape also calls for reflection. Regional cooperation is essential given the diverse levels of development and needs of countries in Asia and the Pacific.

Your presence today underscores your unwavering commitment to such cooperation. It highlights the significance of this forum not only to address economic development but all aspects of sustainable development including climate change, gender equality, poverty eradication and environmental sustainability.

I look forward listening to your deliberations over the next few days. Let this be an opportunity to strengthen existing partnerships and forge new ones.

Together, we can drive the efforts to achieve sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific forward.

Thank you.