

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

**THE DEPUTY SECRETARY-GENERAL**

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REMARKS TO THE 69TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS  
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE  
PACIFIC

Bangkok, 29 April 2013  
As Delivered

**Excellencies,**

**President U Thein Sein of The Republic of the Union of Myanmar,**

**Prime Minister Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão of Timor-Leste,**

**Prime Minister Gordon Darcy Lilo of the Solomon Islands,**

**Deputy Prime Minister of Thailand, Mr. Plodprasop**

**Suraswadi,**

**Deputy Prime Minister of Lao PDR, Mr. Thongloun Sisoulith**

**Madame Noeleen Heyzer,**

**Executive Secretaries,**

**Distinguished delegates,**

**It is a great pleasure for me to be here with you for the sixty-ninth session of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP).**

**I bring you warm greetings from Secretary-General BAN Ki-moon, who has asked me to represent him at this important meeting and to deliver the following remarks on his behalf.**

**Excellencies,**

**I thank the Government and people of Thailand for their strong support of the United Nations and of ESCAP, and for graciously hosting this meeting.**

**I am very much encouraged to know that there is such high-level endorsement for ESCAP and its leadership, with the participation of so many Heads of State, Heads of Government and senior ministers from across the region, as well as many senior United Nations officials.**

**This meeting affirms the importance of our regional commissions as inclusive intergovernmental platforms for development.**

**This session is your first such forum after last year's Rio+20 conference. It is an opportunity to take forward, with a regional perspective, the results of that landmark gathering.**

**The Rio+20 outcome document mandated the UN regional commissions to support you, the Member States, in the crucial task of implementing that agreement.**

**We thus stand together at a turning point in our development journey, moving towards new, more inclusive, and more sustainable approaches to growth, security, justice and equality.**

**I count on your leadership to help build the future for Asia and the Pacific – placing the health and prosperity of both people and the planet at the heart of our endeavors.**

**The range of regional issues before you is both exciting and challenging -- from charting new development paths to building resilience to natural disasters, and from promoting social protection to accelerating economic integration and South-South trade.**

**These are the key issues which will shape the region's promising future, strengthen its human and natural capital and ensure its central role, not only in the global economy, but also in forging a better, more sustainable world for all.**

**With less than 1000 days until the end of 2015, the agreed deadline for achieving the Millennium Development Goals, I urge you to seize the opportunity of this Commission**

**session to scale-up action to accelerate our efforts, be they national, regional or global.**

**The MDGs have been the most successful global anti-poverty drive in history. But there are still many gaps.**

**Two-and-a-half billion people, mostly in rural areas but also growingly in urban areas, do not have sanitation, a threat to health and an affront to human dignity.**

**Far too many women and children still lack access to the health services they need.**

**And in our world of plenty, one billion people do not have enough to eat.**

**In response, the UN system has mobilized around our Zero Hunger Challenge.**

**I am very pleased, therefore, that the Asia-Pacific regional campaign will be officially launched in Bangkok today. Please join us in the commitment to end hunger in our life-time.**

**Accelerating our work for the MDGs is important in its own right. It will also generate momentum for the post-2015 development agenda. Discussions on that framework are under way across the world, featuring a vast array of voices and stakeholders. Our objective should be a vision that is as inspiring and effective as the MDGs have been in mobilizing our efforts both globally and nationally.**

**You have important work to do over the next three days here in Bangkok and in the crucial period ahead.**

**With joint efforts, we can chart a more equitable, prosperous, resilient, prosperous and sustainable path for Asia and the Pacific and by that for the world.**