

**70<sup>th</sup> SESSION OF THE UN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION  
FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC  
PHASE II: 4-8<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST 2014, BANGKOK**

**STATEMENT BY LYONPO RINZIN DORJI, HON'BLE FOREIGN  
MINISTER OF BHUTAN**

Mr. Chairperson,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen.

1. Allow me to congratulate you on your election as Chairperson of the 70<sup>th</sup> Session. It gives us great pleasure as well as pride to see you, Hon'ble Prime Minister, preside over the work of this important body.

Mr. Chairperson,

2. I am pleased to share with this august gathering that Bhutan to date is proud to have achieved significant progress in the areas of socio-economic development. Bhutan has achieved strong economic growth with real GDP averaging about 8.4 per cent from 2000 to 2012 and a per capita income of USD 2584 in 2012. We have achieved most MDGs and are on track to achieve remaining targets by 2015. Poverty has reduced from 32 % in 2003 to 12 % in 2012. Today, we

have 93 per cent electricity coverage and 100 per cent mobile connectivity in the country.

3. However, like most vulnerable states, our challenges continue to weigh heavily on these hard earned gains. Despite our efforts, economic growth and structural transformation has not translated into employment generation, rural poverty remains high, and the private sector is still in nascent state while climate change and natural disasters continue to threaten our livelihood. We are also concerned over the uneven distribution of ODA. While Asia Pacific is home to 66% of the world's poor, only 20% of total ODA from 2008-2010 was allocated to the region, placing us at a significant disadvantage in the achievement of international development goals.

Hon'ble Chair,

4. In your keynote statement this morning, you referred to the convergence of three watershed moments that will shape our collective future. The fast approaching target date of the MDGs, the elaboration of the post 2015 development agenda, and current negotiations underway towards the Paris 2015 Agreement on climate change. Bhutan is convinced that the Asia Pacific region must seize this opportunity to determine how its destiny is shaped. Despite seemingly insurmountable challenges, many of us, including the most vulnerable states, have boldly forged a head in many areas to bring the fruits of progress and wellbeing to our peoples. This

demonstrates that in the post 2015 era, the mantra of victimization must give way to a new narrative, one where developing states set the agenda, leading by example. However, to enable us to unlock our full potential, effective global partnerships hold the key. Bhutan on its part is committed to achieving inclusive green socio economic development and self-reliance by 2020. We have taken several bold measures in the area of climate change and intend to pursue further decarbonization of our economy.

5. The challenge before us will be to reach consensus on a global agenda that adequately identifies the development needs and priorities of present and future generations. An agenda that is capable of crystalizing priorities into action and guide coherent policy action at the global, regional and national levels for the next decade and beyond.

Tashi Delek