

# **Opening Address**

**by**

**H.E. Mr. Somboon Mekpaiboonwattana  
Vice Minister for Information and Communication  
Technology  
The Government of Thailand**

**at**

**The Fourth Session of  
The Committee on Information and Communications  
Technology**

**14 October 2014  
13:00 hours  
United Nations Conference Centre,  
Conference Room 4, Second Floor**

Your Excellency, Dr. Shamshad Akhtar, Under-Secretary General of the United Nations and Executive Secretary of the Economic and Social Commission of Asia and the Pacific,

Your Excellency, Mr. Louis Napoleon Casambre, Undersecretary, Information and Communications Technology Office, Department of Science and Technology of the Philippines,

Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great honour for me to be here on behalf of His Excellency Mr. Pornchai Rujiparpa, Minister of Information and Communication Technology of Thailand who could not preside over the opening ceremony of this Fourth Session of the Committee on Information and Communications Technology due to an urgent official mission.

First of all, I would like to extend His Excellency Pornchai's warm thank to Dr. Shamshad Akhtar, for her invitation to attend this important gathering.

Excellencies,

We are all aware that information and communications technology is one of the driving forces of economic growth and social inclusion. ICT is enhancing the delivery of education, healthcare, government and financial services across Asia and the Pacific. ESCAP and this Committee provide us with a unique platform to bring together policy-makers from Ministries across Asia and the Pacific, to discuss policy challenges in bringing ICT to all.

The Government of Thailand places great importance on bringing the benefits of ICT to all people. We recognize that government policy has an important role to play in developing ICT infrastructure and we have embarked on an ambitious plan focused on developing the digital economy. This will increase our competitiveness, lead to growth in other industries, and raise the standard of living.

For the coming year in 2015, as you are aware, Thailand is to host “the Fourteenth ASEAN Telecommunications and IT Ministers Meeting” to be held from 22 – 23 January 2015. The Meeting aims to strengthen the ICT cooperation towards the implementation of ASEAN ICT Masterplan 2015 and the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity. We will also be hosting the 2nd Asia Cooperation Dialogue Summit at the end of 2015, and I am pleased to learn that ESCAP is providing analysis and other knowledge products in support of the mutual goal of bringing affordable and reliable ICT to all.

Excellencies,

In closing, I would like to thank Dr. Shamshad Akhtar and ESCAP for organizing this Fourth Session of the Committee on ICT, with a rich agenda that contains topics of crucial importance to our future well-being. The items that you will discuss over the next three days, from cross-sectoral infrastructure synergies to capacity building and the measurement of ICT indicators, offers a balanced agenda that is focused on the most important ICT issues of today. And I am confident that by all of us working in partnership, for the greater common good, the Asia-Pacific region will continue to rise as a global player in innovation.

I wish you successful deliberations and an enjoyable stay here in Bangkok.

Thank you

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