



**Opening Remarks
--- Ministerial Roundtable ---
Group Captain Anudith Nakornthap
Minister of Information and Communication Technology
Royal Thai Government**

**Honourable Leaders,
Ministers,
Secretary General of International Telecommunication Union,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Good afternoon and a very warm welcome to the Ministerial Roundtable.

It is a great pleasure and honour for me to chair the final and crucial session of this historic Connect Asia-Pacific Summit.

This morning, our leaders have put set before us a vision of **Asia-Pacific 2020: Smartly DIGITAL** (Digital Inclusive Green Innovative Transformative Affordable Living).

Our leaders affirmed their common vision of an inclusive and development-centred as well as creative Asia-Pacific by the year 2020, where everyone can access, use, create, and share information and knowledge to empower individuals, communities, industries and countries to achieve inclusive and sustainable development in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the Declaration of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS).

I would like to thank Mr. Sanou for providing us an overview of the Leaders' Vision.

I would like to reiterate that our leaders acknowledged the promising ICT development in the Asia-Pacific region, where the ICT growth has surpassed global ICT growth rates in all key indicators and where significant investments have been committed in 2011-2015 to roll out ICT infrastructure and applications including innovative public-private partnerships.

Our leaders recognized the challenges faced by countries in the Asia-Pacific region, with its unique geographic and demographic circumstances and diversity, has a stark

contrast or digital divide between the region's high-income and highly advanced countries on the one hand, and the Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs), and Small Island Developing States (SIDSs) on the other hand.

These challenges also offer opportunity of harnessing the immense potential for developing innovative ICT infrastructure and creative ICT applications in order to positively transform lives of people moving towards reaching the Vision of **Asia-Pacific 2020: Smartly DIGITAL**.

Thus, the focus should be on continued sustainable and inclusive growth in ICT - broadband *inter alia* - through policy leadership and recognition that ICT/broadband is a national priority for the overall socio-economic development as well as a powerful tool or enabler for achieving Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the post-2015 Development Agenda and the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) Declarations and Actions.

Our Leaders highlighted, in particular, all stakeholders in the Asia-Pacific region and beyond for joining hands in this historic Connect Asia-Pacific Summit.

**Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

As all of us recognize, ICT has multi-sector and multi-stakeholder dimensions. Also, we are fortunate to be in such a dynamic region. The presence of such a wide gathering of stakeholders from the world speaks of the potential that we have the opportunity to harness.

In order to achieve **Asia-Pacific 2020: Smartly DIGITAL**, the Leaders have identified priority areas for actions to be carried out in innovative partnership with all relevant stakeholders.

1. Investing in ICT Infrastructure
2. Stimulating Innovation and Creative Use of ICT
3. Encouraging Innovative Public-Private Partnership
4. Promoting Sustainable Development through ICT
5. Fostering Digital Inclusion
6. Achieving Digital Literacy and Building Human and Institutional Capacity

Keeping in mind the diverse needs of the countries in the region with different phases and levels of ICT development and market conditions, it is important for all stakeholders including governments, public and private sectors, civil society, UN agencies, regional and international organizations, and development and funding agencies to work together.

It has been indeed a pleasure for me to see the level of partnership commitments made earlier session that all stakeholders agreed to work towards suitable and inclusive frameworks and mechanisms at the regional and/or sub-regional levels while allowing sufficient flexibility to tailor approaches at the national and local needs.

I would like to encourage all stakeholders to continue the momentum and spirit in which we have gathered today.

The Leaders also highlighted the importance of following up on the progress made in implementing the commitments and called on ITU and all partners to work resolutely with commitment to achieve the common vision adopted.

**Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I hope the discussion in this Ministerial Roundtable will lead to a fruitful result, particularly on ways forward to realize the vision Asia-Pacific 2020: Smartly DIGITAL.

On this note, I now have the honour and pleasure to declare the Ministerial Roundtable opened.

Thank you.
