

Key Note Speech
By
YB Pehin Dato (Dr.) Haji Mohammad Yasmin
Minister of Energy at the Prime Minister's Office
Workshop on Policies, Feed-in Tariff Frameworks and Best Practices for Grid-Connected Solar PV Projects
The Rizqun International Hotel, Brunei Darussalam
8 September 2013, 15:00 hours

Bismillah Hirrahman Nirrahim,

All praise be to Allah Subbahanhu Wataala, salawat and salam upon our beloved Prophet Muhammad Sallallahu 'alaihi Wassalam, his family, companions and faithful and honest followers till the end of time.

Assalamualaikum Warahatullahi Wabarakatuh and Very Good Afternoon.

Your Excellency Ambassador Daniel Shields, US Ambassador to Brunei Darussalam,

Yang Mulia Hj Awang Jamain bin Haji Julaihi Permanent Secretary at the Prime Minister's Office,

Prof. Hidetoshi Nishimura, Executive Director, Economic Research Institute for the ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA),

Mr. Samuel Browne, U.S. Department of Energy

Dr Weerawat Chantanakome, BNERI CEO,

Ambassadors, High Commissioners, Senior government officials, Invited guest speakers, Delegates from the Government and Private sectors, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. First and foremost, I would like to give a very warm welcome to Brunei Darussalam to all our foreign friends, speakers and delegates from outside Brunei Darussalam.

2. Brunei Darussalam is very much honoured and proud to be able to jointly organize this Workshop with the United States of America. We are equally proud that the establishment of the Renewable and Alternative Power Generation Work Stream under the auspices of the US-Asia Pacific Comprehensive Energy Partnership (USACEP), itself was a result of His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam's meeting with the President of the United States, President Barack Obama during His Majesty's state visit to the United States in March this year. Brunei Darussalam and the USA have formed a strong and committed partnership since in an effort to establish the Work Stream, as co-chairs of the Work Stream. This hard work resulted in the endorsement of the Work Stream during the 18th EAS ECTF meeting earlier in June held in Bali, Indonesia.

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

3. Many developing countries in East Asia have made strides in their electrification drive and in advancing the contribution of renewable energy in their power generation activities. Nonetheless, there are still 600 million people without access to electricity in developing Asia. It is therefore a moral obligation of countries in the Asia-Pacific region to cooperate towards addressing this unsatisfactory situation. At the same time, it should be noted that the very same situation represents an impressive market opportunity, especially for *off-grid* renewable applications.

4. Both Governments and the private sector need to work together. On this, Governments need to create enabling environments, including introducing proper policies and market mechanisms, while the private sector can provide the necessary financial resources and implementation. For example, under the USACEP, private financial institutions such as the Export-Import Bank (EXIM) & OPIC have committed to finance energy projects up to 6 billion US dollars.

5. This workshop is one small step to achieving this cooperation – a platform where best practices and experiences can be shared, which would result in common policy recommendations and principles for use by the countries of this region. We hope to see much more scale-up investments in Renewable Energy power generation and further development in feed-in tariff policies and practices for grid-connected solar PV Projects.

6. I urge our guest speakers and participants here today, who undoubtedly have vast experience in policy making, research, utility frameworks and private sector projects in the power sector, to keep this vision of cooperation in mind and strive to achieve our aspirations for this workshop and the Work Stream in general.

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

7. With regard to a feed-in tariff system, I believe that implementing such a scheme in Brunei Darussalam would have numerous benefits. An introduction of such a system would spur home ownership of solar PV technology. This would give homeowners a personal stake in the development of renewable energy in the country. Global experiences have also shown that they are effective in attracting private sector investments for rapid deployment of renewable energies. I believe that Brunei will benefit from *feed-in tariff* schemes and we look forward to adopt and implement similar schemes in Brunei Darussalam in the near future.

8. I personally look forward to the workshop achieving its key deliverable, that is to come up with a best practice guideline document on *feed-in tariff* frameworks and grid-connected solar PV projects to be developed by Brunei and the US.

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

9. The work that is being done through this workshop, and this Work Stream is an important step toward promoting renewable energy projects in the region that inevitably also contributes to our efforts to combat the negative effects of global climate changes. Your work over the next few days will go a long way in contributing to this effort. Brunei Darussalam, as the Chair of ASEAN 2013, is sincerely committed towards green and low carbon economic development for the region and beyond.

10. On behalf of Brunei Darussalam, I would like to thank our American colleagues for their steadfast dedication and commitment to the project and their close attention and interest to the Asia-Pacific region as a whole. As we move forward in this new enterprise of cooperation under this Work Stream, we greatly welcome and encourage the participation and contribution of all EAS member countries. I was made to understand that our workshop here in Brunei, will be followed by another workshop on wind energy to be to be held in the US in 2014.

11. My special thanks goes to the US Department of Energy and its laboratories such as the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL), the US Embassy in Brunei Darussalam and the Brunei National Energy Research Institute (BNERI) for your involvement in organising this workshop.

12. I look forward to seeing fruitful discussions, viable solution, concrete deliverables and productive next steps. In that respect, I thank each and every one of you here today for your dedication and commitment in making this workshop and Work Stream a success.

With that and by reciting *Bismillah Hirrahma Nirrahim*, I declare this inaugural workshop of the 'Renewable and Alternative Power Generation' Workstream of the East Asia Summit Energy Cooperation Task Force open.

Thank you.

WABILLAH TAUFIK WALHIDAYAH WASSALAMU'ALAIKUM
WARAHMATULLAH WABARAKAATUH.