

**Secretary General's remarks at the  
3<sup>rd</sup> BIMSTEC Energy Ministers' Meeting**

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**Your Excellency Pampha Bhusal,**

Hon'ble Minister, Ministry of Energy, Water Resources and Irrigation of Nepal  
Chairman of the 3<sup>rd</sup> BIMSTEC Ministers' Meeting on Energy

**Your Excellencies - the Honorable Energy Ministers of the BIMSTEC Member States,**

**Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen**

It is an honour for me, to present to you today at this Third BIMSTEC Energy Ministers' Meeting, the Report of the Secretary General on the progress in the areas of Energy cooperation. I shall be brief in my oral presentation, as the detailed Report has been circulated amongst the Members States prior to this meeting.

It is very encouraging to see that, the BIMSTEC Energy Ministers are finally meeting after a long gap of 12 years. We feel reassured that, with today's meeting, the vigour, the energy and the importance of energy cooperation in our BIMSTEC Region, as envisioned by our leaders and emphasized repeatedly in all summits, will be renewed.

For this, Your Excellency, Honourable Energy Minister Pampha Bhusal, I would like to thank the Government of Nepal, and in particular, the Ministry of Energy, Water Resources and Irrigation of Nepal, for hosting this long overdue 3<sup>rd</sup> BIMSTEC Energy Ministers Meeting.

I would also like to extend, my sincere gratitude to Your Excellencies, from the other BIMSTEC Member States, for their kind participation in this much awaited Meeting.

**Honourable Chairman, Excellencies,**

Right from the early years of the establishment of BIMSTEC, the leaders recognized the enormous potential, in the hydropower and renewal energy area, which can be harnessed from its rich natural resources.

BIMSTEC being one of the fastest growing regions, the energy needs of our Member States, are immense, and continuous to increase rapidly.

Therefore, realizing the importance of benefits from harnessing this potential, energy sector was identified, as one of the core areas of BIMSTEC cooperation, as early as 1998.

The First BIMSTEC Energy Ministers' Meeting held in New Delhi in 2005, adopted the Plan of Action for BIMSTEC Energy Cooperation, which included

- Establishment of Task Forces on BIMSTEC Trans Power Exchange,
- Development of Gas Pipelines,
- Establishment of BIMSTEC Energy Centre
- and Development of Hydro-power projects.

During **the Second BIMSTEC Energy Ministers' Meeting held on March 2010** in Bangkok, Thailand, the Ministers reiterated BIMSTEC's commitment to conclude;

- a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) which would be a framework for future trade in electricity;
- commencement of BIMSTEC Grid Interconnection Master Plan Study;
- and to establish a BIMSTEC Energy Centre (BEC) in India.

**Excellencies,**

The BIMSTEC Energy Sector, has a well structured institutional mechanism and a clear vision provided by the leaders to strengthen energy connectivity in our region. However, I would like to bring to your kind notice that, the vision and mechanisms developed, has not been utilized well and the progress in energy sector is therefore minimal.

The BIMSTEC Energy Senior Officials Meeting, has so far met only 5 times including the meeting that took place yesterday.

The Second BIMSTEC Energy Ministers Meeting was held in 2010, and the third Meeting that is taking place at the moment, is after a gap of 12 years.

Similarly, the Energy Expert Group Meetings and BIMSTEC Grid Interconnection Committee meetings have also been very slow and irregular.

**Excellencies,**

The MoU for Establishment of the BIMSTEC Grid Interconnection was signed on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2018, during the Fourth BIMSTEC Summit.

As per the Article 3 of the MOU, a BIMSTEC Grid Interconnection Coordination Committee (BGICC) was formed, to coordinate the implementation of grid inter connection and trade in electricity - and it's first meeting was held in June 2021.

The Government of Bangladesh expressed its willingness to develop the BIMSTEC Policy for Transmission of Electricity, and BIMSTEC Policy for trade, exchange of electricity and Tariff Mechanism, which is essential to coordinate energy Trade in the Region.

Although the policy documents have not yet been received, I am pleased to inform your Excellencies, that yesterday in the 5<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the BIMSTEC Senior Officials on Energy, Bangladesh reiterated their commitment, to forward the Policy Papers soon for circulation among the Member States.

Further, in accordance with the directives received from the Second BIMSTEC Energy Ministers Meeting, to develop a BIMSTEC Grid Interconnection Master Plan Study, the Secretariat has initiated a concept paper, for BIMSTEC Grid Interconnection Master Plan and its Terms of Reference with ADB.

The Concept Paper and the Terms of Reference have been circulated to all member states and ADB is currently waiting for comments and concurrence from the member states to go ahead in developing the Master Plan.

**Honourable Chairman, Excellencies,**

On 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2011, the Member States signed the Memorandum of Association to set up a BIMSTEC Energy Centre (BEC). The Secretariat would like to report that, currently, the establishment of the Centre is, at a very initial stage.

The Governing Board of the BIMSTEC Energy Centre has been formed only recently, and the first Governing Board Meeting that was scheduled on 6<sup>th</sup> April 2022 has been further postponed due to inconveniences of some member states.

However, the 5<sup>th</sup> SOM Energy meeting held yesterday has committed to hold the meeting as early as possible.

**Excellencies, Distinguished delegates,**

The importance of coordinating energy in the seven Member States has been emphasized during the previous Summits, and recently, re-emphasized, by the leaders during the 5<sup>th</sup> BIMSTEC Summit.

Therefore, we anticipate that, all the BIMSTEC Energy Sector Mechanisms, give utmost importance;

- in establishing the BIMSTEC Energy Centre,
- finalize the BIMSTEC Master Plan,
- and hold the Senior Officials and Ministers Meetings at regular intervals.

**In Conclusion,**

The Secretariat would like to once again commend, the Government of Nepal, for hosting the long awaited BIMSTEC Energy Ministers Meeting.

We would also like to extend our appreciation to Myanmar, who has been the lead country in the energy Sector so far, and laid the foundations of BIMSTEC Energy Cooperation.

**Excellencies,** after the 5<sup>th</sup> BIMSTEC Summit adopted the reconstitution of sectors; India is now the lead country in the Energy sub sector.

The Secretariat is very confident (and has high hopes) that BIMSTEC Energy Cooperation under the leadership of India will be more dynamic, vibrant and stronger.

We look forward to working very closely under India's leadership.

Thank you.

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