

**Special Remarks by H.E. Mr. Tenzin Lekphell, Secretary General of BIMSTEC  
at the First Meeting of the BIMSTEC Grid Interconnection Coordination Committee  
(30 June 2021, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar) (0930 hrs, Myanmar Time)**

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H. E. Mr. Than Zaw, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Electricity and Energy of Myanmar;

Distinguished Members of the BIMSTEC Grid Interconnection Coordination Committee (BGICC);

Delegates of the BIMSTEC Member States;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

01. Good morning. At the outset, I wish to express my sincere thanks to the Government of Myanmar, for hosting this very first and important meeting of BIMSTEC Grid Interconnection Coordination Committee (BGICC). I would also like to thank all delegates particularly the designated members of the BGICC for their participation in this important meeting.

02. Currently, BIMSTEC has 14 areas of cooperation and Energy is one of the major areas. Hence, I wish to express high appreciation to Myanmar for serving as the Lead Country of this important sector.

**Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,**

03. I wish to apprise you of the existing BIMSTEC Energy mechanisms and overall achievements we have made so far. Over the course of our energy cooperation, the Energy Ministers have met twice in 2005 and 2010 respectively. The mechanism of Senior Officials' Meeting on Energy has met four times since its set up in 2005 and the Fourth Meeting was held in 2017 in Myanmar. At the Fourth BIMSTEC Summit held in Kathmandu in August 2018, the Leaders decided to constitute an Intergovernmental Group of Experts to enhance energy cooperation including hydro-power and other sources of renewable energy. As per the guidance of Leaders, the newly created Expert Group on Energy met once in 2019 and was mandated to deal with all aspects of Energy cooperation.

**Excellences & Distinguished Delegates,**

04. One of our objectives in this sector is to enhance energy cooperation and expand electricity trade through the establishment of BIMSTEC Grid Interconnection. With this objective in mind, the MOU for Establishment of the BIMSTEC Grid Interconnection was signed on 31 August 2018 in Kathmandu, during the Fourth BIMSTEC Summit. It was presumed that the MOU would provide impetus in successful implementation of power trade in the region. However, it is yet to be materialized though the MOU has entered into force on 07 April 2019.

05. Against this backdrop, the role of BGICC, which has been constituted as an institutional arrangement of the MOU, is enormous. The First Meeting of BGICC is taking place today and this is a proud moment for all of us. We, at the Secretariat, are very optimistic that at this Meeting, the BGICC members will be able to consider and decide on how to undertake the long overdue Master Plan study in accordance with the Terms of Reference (TOR) of the BGICC. We also hope that the members of BGICC will give equal focus and attention on Formulation of a BIMSTEC Policy for transmission of electricity and Formulation of a BIMSTEC policy for trade, exchange of electricity and tariff mechanism as these also form the core responsibility of BGICC.

#### **Excellencies & Distinguished Delegates,**

06. As per the guidance of BIMSTEC Leaders, the Secretariat underlines the importance of holding Meetings regularly to ensure the continued cooperation among the Member States. In the context of energy cooperation, the Member States are encouraged to hold the Energy Senior Official Meeting once a year and Ministerial Meeting every two years. We therefore hope to have renewed commitment from the Member States on the holding of the long overdue Third Energy Ministers' Meeting and the Fifth Senior Officials' Meeting on Energy respectively in due course.

07. We are well aware that BIMSTEC is a sector-driven regional organization and our objectives in energy sector are broad and ambitious. Energy will continue to be an important sector in the BIMSTEC cooperation.

08. To conclude, I would like to assure that the Secretariat is at the disposal of the Member States and all delegates present here today. We look forward to a fruitful deliberation and a pragmatic outcome from this Meeting. I have informed my colleague Mr. Han, Director in-charge of Energy at the BIMSTEC Secretariat, to provide all necessary support.

With this, I would like to wish the First BGICC Meeting a great success.

09. Thank you.

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