



N A R U C  
National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners

## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Clean Energy and Climate Change Cooperation at the Forefront of U.S. - Lower Mekong Energy Regulatory Forum**

PHNOM PENH, Cambodia – With support from the Power Sector Program of the Bureau of Energy Resources of the United States Department of State, and the U.S. Embassy Phnom Penh, the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC) today opened a three-day forum in Phnom Penh to advance regional policymaking on clean energy and climate change in the Lower Mekong sub-region. The forum – “Building Regional Energy Networks for a Sustainable Future” – will convene regulators from Cambodia, Thailand, Vietnam, and the U.S., and those performing regulatory functions from Lao P.D.R. Throughout the forum, regulators will share practical experience, develop strategies for cooperation, and discuss regulatory tools to promote renewable energy development and mitigate climate change.

Countries in the Lower Mekong sub-region share many common interests and challenges in the power sector. The forum will enable regulators to compare experience on good practices in energy regulation and ensure a coordinated approach to clean energy and climate change. During the forum, regulators will discuss a range of topics including: how to integrate intermittent renewable resources like wind and solar without compromising reliability for consumers; how to distribute costs equitably for regional energy projects that benefit a number of Lower Mekong countries; how to coordinate planning for clean energy projects so that Lower Mekong countries do not need to build excess or unnecessary energy generation facilities; and how to maximize efficient use of energy.

This forum is the third in a series of workshops sponsored by the U.S. Department of State, and organized by NARUC. NARUC’s previous work in the Lower Mekong centered on regulatory capacity building and regional power market development. Both prior workshops proved to be vital convening opportunities for regulators to advance multinational cooperation towards more integrated, optimized, and sustainable energy networks. NARUC’s international programs develop partnerships spanning the globe, enabling international regulators to share good practices, challenges, and lessons learned with colleagues in order to enhance energy governance.

The NARUC delegation is led by the Chairman of the Public Service Commission of the District of Columbia, the Honorable Betty Ann Kane. In her opening remarks, Chairman Kane commended regional officials on their ongoing efforts to develop more sustainable and effective regulation. **“The decisions that regulators make have a profound impact on the societies they serve. Effective regulation is essential to encourage the development of renewable energy resources and reduce demand for electricity,”** Kane said. **“Regional coordination on energy regulation can also help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions while simultaneously lowering electricity costs for consumers. NARUC is eager to support our partners in the Lower Mekong, and to share our experiences and lessons learned to inform your own regulations.”**

His Excellency Dr. Ty Norin, Chairman of the Electricity Authority of Cambodia (EAC) and co-host of the forum, thanked partners for their commitment to regional cooperation and sustainability. **“I offer my**

**sincere thanks to the U.S. Department of State and NARUC for organizing this forum. I am also grateful for the participation of my colleagues from other countries in the Lower Mekong,” said Chairman Norin. “Together, we can create a more sustainable power sector and work to ensure that we decouple our economic growth from greenhouse gas emissions.”**

Launched in 2009, the Lower Mekong Initiative (LMI) is a multinational partnership among Cambodia, Lao P.D.R., Myanmar, Thailand, Vietnam, and the U.S. to foster integrated sub-regional cooperation. LMI serves as a platform to address complex, transnational development and policy challenges in the Lower Mekong sub-region. Priorities of the LMI Energy Security Pillar include increasing energy security and economic competitiveness through developing new resources of energy, ensuring access to energy, and enhancing regional energy interconnectivity.

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*The National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners is a non-profit organization founded in 1889. Its members include the governmental agencies that are engaged in the regulation of utilities and carriers in the fifty States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. NARUC's member agencies regulate telecommunications, energy, and water utilities. NARUC represents the interests of State public utility commissions before the three branches of the Federal government and the Federal agencies.*

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