

Remarks
Opening Plenary Session
Asia Clean Energy Forum 2010
June 23, 2010, 08:30-09:30

Thank you, President Kuroda, for that kind introduction.

Minister Farooq Abdullah, Secretary Heherson Alvarez, Steven Sawyer, Secretary General of the Global Wind Energy Council, friends and colleagues from government, the private sector, and civil society,

Ladies and gentlemen,

I am speaking to you today at a time of great change. Although we may have weathered the worst of the global economic crisis, we are still in a time of transition.

The worldwide market for sustainable and renewable energy has continued to grow in the face of the economic downturn, and Asia is leading the way. In fact, it is safe to say that Asia is in the process of becoming the center a global transition to clean energy. We are seeing a renewed emphasis on targeted action, quantifiable results, and specific domestic policies.

For our part, we are leading by example. Under the Obama administration, the U.S. has taken serious steps toward putting the country on a pathway to a clean energy future.

The United States 2009 stimulus plan provided more than \$80 billion in investments, loans and incentives to transform the way the U.S. produces and consumes energy.

President Obama noted that these investments will not only lead to reductions in overall energy consumption, but also create jobs and help businesses develop new technologies.

I would like to highlight a few specific actions that the U.S. Government is taking in this region to help build a clean energy future:

- Through the multilateral Private Financing Advisory Network, supported by USAID and a number of other countries, innovative new clean energy projects across Asia are being nurtured and matched with financing. Here in the Philippines, this has led to the launch of a major biomass plant – using local agricultural waste – that will make Aklan Province self-sufficient in electricity. In Rosario, La Union, Pepsi Cola Corporation is converting to biomass energy to run one of its bottling plants

– and is in the planning stages of converting three more.

- We are currently providing technical assistance to the Government of the Philippines to stimulate both public and private sector investment in renewable energy, so that even the most remote areas can have access to electricity. Such is the case of Kabuling village in the province of Maguindanao. I understand this community received a solar lighting system from the American firm SunPower Corporation for their small primary school.
- In October last year, USAID, along with the Australian Government, national lighting associations from around Asia, and some of the largest lighting companies in the world, launched the Asia Lighting Compact, a new framework that will encourage the widespread adoption of energy efficient lighting and harmonized lighting standards across the region.

In isolation, and in the face of the overall challenges of climate change and the transition to a clean energy future, these may seem like small steps. But it is the accumulation of these small steps that lead to real change.

Finally, this approach is also about *partnerships*. Partnerships between the U.S. and Asian nations to build new energy solutions. Partnerships between the public and the private sector. Partnerships between U.S. and Asian businesses. Together, we can develop the clean energy technologies and business models of the future.

Here, today, we have hundreds of clean energy policymakers, project developers and technical experts from across the region and around the world. Today, and in the days to come, I challenge you to exchange ideas, build new partnerships, and discuss new innovations that will help us make our transition to clean energy.

You are building a better tomorrow.

I wish you a great forum.

Thank you.