

Ministerial Conference on CRVS in Asia and the Pacific
24-28 November 2014, Bangkok, Thailand
Statement by Mr. Kuenga Tshering
Leader of Bhutanese Delegation for Senior Official Segment

**Mr. Chairman,
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,**

The Bhutanese delegation would like to thank UNESCAP and other co-organizing partners for hosting and organizing this landmark Ministerial Conference on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) in Asia and the Pacific. We would also like to express our appreciation to UNECAP for undertaking the arduous task of making easy our deliberations here in Bangkok through various preparatory initiatives- such as the High-level Meeting; Regional Steering Group Meeting; Regional Preparatory Meeting; and other regional initiatives on CRVS.

Mr. Chairman,

This historic conference takes place at an opportune time when the entire international community is deliberating on the emerging global development agenda “**beyond 2015**”. There are various discussions and initiatives being undertaken at international, regional and national levels to add voice to the discussions that will go on to shape the Post-2015 Development Agenda. We are happy to note that the conference is designed in a way to contribute further to international discourse on the importance of CRVS and its broader impact on development and societies.

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We look forward to making further contribution to such discourses as various processes and mechanism get underway in realizing our unified goal of: **“get every one in the picture”**.

Bhutan will remain committed throughout in achieving the goals set out in Regional Action Framework (RAF) and accordingly intensify our focused efforts in realizing action-areas defined in the proclamation of forward-looking the **“Asian and Pacific CRVS Decade for 2015-2024”**. We are pleased to note that the shared vision, goals and action areas of RAF finds resonance in Bhutan’s conceptualization of happiness and wellbeing, as encapsulated in our overarching development policy of Gross National Happiness. We look forward to working with our associates at ESCAP, WHO and other development partners to ensure that these priorities find reflection in advancing towards the achievement of universal and responsive CRVS systems in the country, by 2024.

Mr. Chairman,

During the course of the deliberations so far at this meeting my delegation has offered our views on various aspects of the ongoing discussions and developments. Nevertheless, keeping in mind the time constraints, I would like to highlight some of the significant initiatives that we have undertaken to advance CRVS system in the country:

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- 1) A new Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for the registration of every births and deaths has been drafted and is currently being reviewed under the Government to Citizens (G2C) initiatives for the enhancement of good-governance and public services delivery;

- 2) Notwithstanding Rapid assessment, a Comprehensive assessment for CRVS system is planned and initiated through WHO SEARO support, as a measure to gain better insights of CRVS situation and priorities;

- 3) We have been successful in adopting District Health Information System (DHIS2) alias **Druk-HMIS** as a “robust and dynamic” web-based National Health Management & Information System; among others.

Despite the gains, much remains to be done for those left behind or more appropriately **“Not being captured in the picture!”** Additionally, other numerous challenges remain such as: lack of human resource capacity or competency; ICT infrastructure mainly lack or unreliable Internet connectivity in most of the remote areas, and the structural impediments to development that we face as a small, mountainous and land-locked country.

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Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, allow me to reiterate that our vision is one of a common future that will ensure the wellbeing, improvement in the quality of life, social justice, peace and security resulting in happiness for the people of our region. As we move forward in implementation of RAF for CRVS in Asia and the Pacific, I believe that together, we can turn many challenges into opportunities to build “universal and comprehensive CRVS system”. On our part, Bhutan remains committed to this process, and we assure you of our continued support in realizing this common goal.

THANK YOU & TASHI DELEK!