

**SENIOR MINISTER OF STATE S ISWARAN TO ATTEND
THE 26TH ASEAN MINISTERS ON ENERGY MEETING
IN BANGKOK, THAILAND, 7 AUGUST 2008**

Senior Minister of State for Trade and Industry Mr S Iswaran will be in Bangkok, Thailand, on 7 August to attend the 26th ASEAN Ministers on Energy Meeting (AMEM), the 5th ASEAN + 3 (China, Japan and Korea) Ministers on Energy Meeting (AMEM + 3), and the 2nd East Asia Summit Energy Ministers Meeting (EAS EMM).

2 The meetings are a platform for Ministers from ASEAN, together with their dialogue partners from Australia, China, India, Japan, South Korea, and New Zealand, to discuss energy issues, and to explore areas for cooperation.

3 The last ASEAN Ministers on Energy Meeting and related meetings were held in Singapore on 23 August 2007. At that meeting, the ASEAN Energy Ministers signed the Memorandum of Understanding on the ASEAN Power Grid in Singapore. The MOU provides the legal framework for ASEAN Senior Energy Officials, the private sector and other relevant institutions to jointly resolve regulatory and institutional barriers and expedite the implementation of the ASEAN Power Grid. Since the signing of the MOU, the Heads of ASEAN Power Utilities/Authorities (HAPUA) Council have initiated the formation of the ASEAN Power Grid Consultative Committee (APGCC), which is made up of representatives from ASEAN Member Countries and the HAPUA Member Utilities. The APGCC has begun work and will facilitate and assist the HAPUA Council in the implementation of the MOU on APG.

4 The East Asia Summit Energy Ministers also met for the first time in Singapore last year. At that meeting, the Ministers noted that officials had begun work on three works streams covering (i) energy efficiency and conservation, (ii) energy market integration, and (iii) bio-fuels for transport and other purposes. Since the last meeting, the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA) has completed a report that analyses the impact of proposed additional energy savings goals and action plans in the East Asia Summit Region. Work is also underway to compile a compendium of energy policies and measures undertaken by EAS Member countries. These are important first steps towards improving energy efficiency in the region. On energy market integration, the Intelligent Energy Systems, an energy consultancy, has completed a regional study on the state of energy markets in the EAS region. This study identifies trade and investment barriers to energy market integration, and makes recommendations on possible policies and measures to develop an integrated EAS energy market.

5 To encourage the production and use of bio-fuels in a sustainable manner, EAS Member Countries have prepared a set of “Asia Biomass Principles”. These principles are expected to be endorsed by the Ministers at the upcoming EAS EMM. At the same time, ERIA has also completed a study on the “Benchmarking of biodiesel fuel standardisation for vehicles in East Asia”. In addition, the Asia Biomass Energy Research Core in collaboration with the Asia Biomass Energy Cooperation Office, both based in Japan, has launched a biomass training programme to train researchers from the region.

6 While in Bangkok, Mr Iswaran will also meet Mr Nobuo Tanaka, the Executive Director of the International Energy Agency, at the sidelines of the meetings. Mr Iswaran will be accompanied on this trip by officials from the Ministry of Trade and Industry and the Energy Market Authority.

MINISTRY OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY
6 August 2008