



H.E. Dr. Kao Kim Hourn, Secretary-General of ASEAN

**Opening Remarks at the
Inaugural ASEAN-Canada Strategic Dialogue
on “Energy Security in ASEAN: Energy Transition for a Resilient Future”**

23 June 2026, ASEAN Headquarters/ASEAN Secretariat

Mr. Weldon Epp, Assistant Deputy Minister for the Indo-Pacific, Global Affairs Canada,

***Your Excellency Phongsavanh Sisoulath, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and
ASEAN SOM Leader of Lao PDR,***

***Your Excellency Marie Pangestu, Special Envoy of the President of Indonesia for
International Trade and Multilateral Cooperation,***

Your Excellency Ambra Dickie, Ambassador of Canada to ASEAN,

Distinguished Members of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to ASEAN,

Senior Officials from Canada and ASEAN Member States,

Distinguished Speakers, Moderators, Ladies and Gentlemen,

All protocols observed.

Good afternoon. Thank you for the invitation to open this Inaugural ASEAN–Canada Strategic Dialogue. On behalf of the ASEAN Secretariat, I thank the Mission of Canada to ASEAN and the Permanent Mission of the Lao PDR — our Country Coordinator for ASEAN–Canada Dialogue Relations — for bringing this Dialogue together, along with our co-implementers, the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada, the Canada-ASEAN Business Council and CSIS Indonesia.

This inaugural Dialogue builds on the ASEAN–Canada Strategic Partnership we launched in September 2023, rooted in our longstanding Dialogue Relations that go back to 1977. As a Track 1.5 platform, it puts policymakers in the same room as the industry leaders and researchers; and that is the only way energy plans turn into energy systems.

The theme before us, "Energy Security in ASEAN: Energy Transition for a Resilient Future," tracks closely with where regional policy is already heading. Under the 2026-2030 ASEAN Plan of Action for Energy Cooperation (APAEC), ASEAN aims to achieve a 30% share of renewable energy in total primary energy supply, 45% share of renewable energy in installed power capacity, and 40% reduction in energy intensity from the 2005 baseline.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Southeast Asia is one of the fastest-growing energy markets in the world. Over the coming decades, our economies will need significantly more energy in order to sustain growth, support industrialisation, strengthen competitiveness, and raise living standards for hundreds of millions of people. Our task is therefore not simply to transition our energy systems, but to expand them; while keeping that energy secure, affordable, reliable, and increasingly sustainable.

That task keeps getting harder. Geopolitical tensions, supply chain disruptions, competition for critical minerals, and volatility in international markets are reshaping the global energy landscape in real time. The disruption to energy shipping, in particular through the Strait of Hormuz — a chokepoint carrying a significant share of the world's oil and gas trade — sent energy prices sharply higher across Asia, a clear reminder of how deeply exposed this region remains to events far beyond its shores.

For ASEAN, resilience means diversifying — across energy sources, technologies, supply chains, and transport corridors — by building on strong partnerships within ASEAN and with external partners. At the same time, our approach must remain practical and inclusive, recognising that Member States start from different energy mixes, resource endowments, and stages of economic development.

Getting there will take more than one technology, more than one solution. It will take an all-of-the-above approach: faster renewable energy deployment, a more scalable ASEAN Power Grid, deeper energy efficiency, expanding the role of natural gas as a transition fuel where appropriate, further progress on carbon capture, utilisation and storage (CCUS), the expansion of hydrogen and other emerging technologies, and secure, responsible supply chains for critical minerals. Above all, it will take investment at a scale no single Member State can mobilise alone.

That is the gap partnerships like this one are meant to close.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Canada brings deep experience and expertise across both conventional and clean energy; in oil and gas, LNG, CCUS, clean electricity systems, hydrogen, critical minerals, and energy innovation. ASEAN, for its part, is one of the world's most dynamic markets for energy investment and innovation. Put the two together, and there is real scope to advance energy security and decarbonisation side by side, while supporting economic growth and prosperity.

This cooperation is not theoretical. We are already working together on energy transition pathways, industrial decarbonisation, and CCUS opportunities for the region. Proof indeed of what is possible when governments, industry, researchers, and financial institutions sit down at the same table, as we are doing today.

I would ask everyone in this room to make good use of the time ahead, and to leave with concrete next steps. The choices ASEAN and Canada make on energy together now will shape how competitive and resilient this region remains long after this Dialogue closes.

Excellencies Ladies and Gentlemen,

It would be remiss of me not to mention Canada's joint hosting of the FIFA World Cup currently playing out. After an opening draw, its team has put in a resounding 6–0 win and stands a genuine shot at reaching the knockout stage for the first time ever – “a rupture, not a transition”, if I may, in international football's usual order. We wish Canada all the best for the rest of the tournament.

If that is the energy Canada is bringing to the pitch, I hope we can translate some of it into energy in this room and I wish the event today a resounding success.

Thank you.
