**Concept Note**
**Fireside Chat: Women in Leadership: Policy and Technology in Asia**
**Theater, United Nation Conference Centre, Bangkok Thailand**
**February 14, 2025, 10:00 – 11:30**

## Background

As Asia undergoes rapid digital transformation, the gender gap in fields such as technology, cybersecurity, research, and innovation has become increasingly evident. Despite some progress, women's participation in these critical areas remains limited, highlighting the need for concerted efforts to bridge this gap. Recognizing the importance of gender parity for both social and economic development, the upcoming event aims to address these challenges head-on.

## Objectives

- Increased awareness of the gender gap in technology, AI and policy sectors in Asia.

- Identification of best practices and strategies to support women's success in these fields.

- Strengthened collaboration among stakeholders to promote gender equality.

- Development of actionable recommendations for policymakers and industry leaders.

## Event Focus

This panel discussion will bring together leaders from key Asian institutions, member states, and the tech industry to discuss how stakeholders can create an environment that supports women's success in policy and technology. The session will explore the following key topics:

- **Challenges:** Identifying the barriers that hinder women's participation in technology and policy sectors, including cultural barriers, lack of mentorship, work-life balance, and limited training opportunities.

- **Opportunities:** Highlighting the potential opportunities for women in the tech sector and the importance of their participation in driving innovation and economic growth.

- **Strategies:** Discussing strategies to foster an inclusive culture, offer mentorship programs, support flexible work arrangements, and provide continuous learning opportunities to promote gender equality.

- **Actionable Recommendations:** Discussing actionable recommendations for policymakers, industry leaders, educators and other stakeholders to promote women's participation and advancement in these critical fields.

## Agenda

| 09:00 | **UNCC Tour** |
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| 10:00 | **Welcome Remarks** <br><br> • Jasmine Begum, Director of Legal, Corporate & Government Affairs, Microsoft ASEAN and New Markets <br> • Professor Wilert Puriwat, D.Phil, President, Chulalongkorn University |
| 10:10 | **Panel Discussion** <br><br> Breaking Barriers: Empowering Women in Asia's Tech and Policy Sectors <br><br> **Moderator:** <br><br> **Panelists:** <br><br> 1) Kate Behncken, Head of Philanthropy, Microsoft Asia <br> 2) Chalitda (Ji) Madhyamapurush, Electronic Transactions Development Agency, Ministry of Digital Economy & Society, Thailand (TBC by Microsoft) <br> 3) Penny Burtt, President of Boeing Southeast Asia (tbc) <br> 4) Chulalongkorn University (TBC by Chula) <br> 5) Nattinee Doa Sae Ho, CEO and Founder, Thrive Venture (TBC) <br> 6) Cecilia Tinonin Statistics Specialist, Women's Economic Empowerment Unit, UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific <br><br> **Open discussion (Q&A and interventions)** |
| 11:25 | **Wrap up and Closing** <br><br> Ruhimat Soerakoesoemah, Subregional Office for South – East Asia, ESCAP |
| 11:30 | **Refreshment** |

Potential questions could include:

1. *What are the most significant cultural barriers that women face in the technology and policy sectors in Asia, and how can these be effectively addressed?*

2. *How can education and mentorship programs be designed to better support women in technology and policy, and what role can educational institutions and tech companies play in facilitating these programs?*

3. *What specific opportunities exist for women in the tech sector that can drive innovation and economic growth, and how can these opportunities be made more accessible?*

4. *How can organizations implement flexible work arrangements that support work-life balance for women, especially in high-demand tech roles?*

5. *What are some successful examples of continuous learning programs that have helped women advance in their tech careers, and how can these be scaled across different regions and industries?*

6. *What are some actionable recommendations for policymakers, industry leaders, educators and other stakeholders to promote women's participation and advancement in these critical fields?*