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ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

**REPORT OF THE MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENT AND  
DEVELOPMENT IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC, 2000**

**Kitakyushu, Japan, 4-5 September 2000**

## **I. MATTERS CALLING FOR ACTION BY THE COMMISSION OR BROUGHT TO ITS ATTENTION**

1. The Conference expressed deep concern that the Asian and Pacific region was entering the new millennium with deteriorated environment and enormous challenges for sustainable development. It therefore, emphasized that a new paradigm for sustainable development was essential. It was noted that this new paradigm will require essential policy reforms in environmental management, and related areas, both within and between governments. Achieving this will require among other things integrating policies within government programmes, adopting preventive approaches and cleaner development mechanisms, raising awareness, building partnership between stakeholders and encouraging public participation, promoting sustainable production and consumption, utilization of economic instruments, and public disclosure of information.
2. The Conference noted that the poverty situation existing in the region was the major obstacle to sustainable development, and recommended that integrated and participatory action plans in adequate details should be drawn up and implemented to alleviate poverty while promoting sustainable development.
3. The Conference recognized the immediate need for undertaking action in areas where technological know-how and resources were available for environmental safeguards such as introduction of unleaded gasoline, catalytic converters in new vehicles, control of hazardous waste and others.
4. The Conference requested that assistance for capacity building, transfer of technology and provision of financial resources to developing countries and economies in transition should be increased for the pursuit of sustainable development in areas such as sustainable and clean energy development, combating climate change, resource conservation and eco-efficiency.
5. The Conference stressed the need for the strengthening of global, regional and subregional cooperation for addressing common environmental problems, promoting technology transfer, information networking and dealing with the negative impacts of globalization.
6. The Conference recommended that the countries of the region should strengthen their commitments and efforts further towards protecting the environment and improving the

quality of life of all people living in both rural and urban areas with special focus on vulnerable groups such as children and women.

7. The Conference further recommended that evaluation of institutions at national and regional levels in the implementation of Agenda 21 and the Regional Action Programme should provide an opportunity to strengthen national policies and regional cooperation initiatives towards sustainable development.

8. The Conference stressed that enhanced financing and technology transfer as recommended by Agenda 21 would play a very important role in its implementation. It noted that Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) continued to decline over the years. Similarly, technology transfer as recommended by Agenda 21 has also not been adequately realized. The Conference urged that the developed countries honour their commitments to reach the established targets of 0.7 per cent of gross national product as ODA. The Conference also urged that the developed countries should take necessary measures to enhance access and transfer of environmentally sound technologies for developing countries on concessional and favourable terms in line with Agenda 21. The Conference also agreed on the important complementary role to be played by the private sector financing.

9. The Conference strongly felt that Rio+10 Conference should be held in Asia. In that context, the Asian and Pacific countries strongly supported the offer of the Government of Indonesia for hosting the Conference in Indonesia. The Conference also noted with appreciation the offer of Cambodia to host the Regional Preparatory Meeting of the Rio+10 Review.

10. The Conference requested ESCAP to assist the countries of the region by providing technical assistance in the implementation of Regional Action Programme and national environmental strategies and action plans.

11. The Conference recommended that the countries of the region should participate actively in the Sixth Conference of Parties to the UNFCCC and urged that financial assistance should be provided to the developing countries for adaptation to the climate change impacts capacity building and to creating an enabling environment for private and public technology transfer.

12. The Conference adopted with minor amendment the ministerial declaration on environmentally sound and sustainable development (E/ESCAP/MCED(00)/1, Annex I) as a

vision for the twenty-first century. It also decided to review periodically the progress made in the implementation of the declaration and the regional action programme for environmentally sound and sustainable development and requested the Executive Secretary of ESCAP to submit to the Commission annual progress reports on their implementation.

13. The Conference adopted the regional action programme for environmentally sound and sustainable development, 2001-2005 (E/ESCAP/MCED(00)/1, Annex IV). It also recommended that appropriate steps be undertaken to implement the Regional Action Programme for strengthening the capacities for sustainable development at regional, subregional and national level.

14. The Conference emphasized that regional cooperation was an essential prerequisite and specific subregional priorities in the Regional Action Programme needed to be better articulated and more focused and targeted. In this connection, the Conference recommended that enhanced efforts were necessary to identify subregional and regional programmes of action.

15. The Conference also emphasized that the Regional Action Programme should be implemented effectively and in this regard both member countries and international organizations should undertake actions. It was recommended that in order to monitor the sustainability process, sustainable development indicators should be identified and utilized at both national and regional levels. It was further recommended that an ad hoc committee should be established to monitor the implementation of the regional action programme. Cooperation with other regions such as OECD in exchanging information could also be fruitful in the implementation endeavours.

16. The Conference adopted the Regional Message for the 10-Year Review of the Implementation of the Outcome of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (E/ESCAP/MCED(00)/1, Annex II).

17. The Conference adopted the Kitakyushu Initiative for a Clean Environment (E/ESCAP/MCED(00)/1, Annex III). The Conference stressed that through the implementation of the initiative the environmental problems in the Asian and Pacific region can be mitigated and eventually overcome through the development of inter-city networks.

18. The Conference agreed that future Conferences would benefit from the more active inclusion of major groups both at the meeting itself and in the preparatory stages.

## II. PROCEEDINGS OF THE CONFERENCE

### A. Perspectives on a new paradigm of sustainable development for Asia and the Pacific into the twenty-first century

#### (Agenda item 4)

19. Mr. Kim Hak-Su, in his policy statement delivered to the Conference, stressed that the environment and development challenges in the new millennium were formidable and highly complex. He stressed that several environment and development policy issues, namely reversing the current patterns of the production, consumption and distribution towards sustainable path, strategies to manage rural and urban environments to counter negative socio-economic and environmental impacts, viable energy strategies and use of clean-energy technologies that offered prosperity and healthy environment, harnessing the process of globalization including trade liberalization, enhanced foreign direct investment and financial flows to benefit all nations and all sectors of society, correcting policy failures and institutional weakness through good governance and partnership with all stakeholders needed urgent attention. He further stated that the global community was at the threshold of ushering in green, pro-growth environmental revolution and by actively promoting and participating in such a revolution, the region could lay a foundation for a sustainable future. The Ministerial Conference was an important milestone towards that revolution.

20. Mr Klaus Töpfer, Executive Director of UNEP, in his keynote address recalled the recent Malmo Global Ministerial Environment Forum, which reiterated global commitment to the goals for sustainable development, and the need for addressing the emerging environmental challenges, as well as enhancing partnerships with the private sector and civil society. He referred to the numerous challenges of the region, particularly to the recent economic crisis in the region. He mentioned that the economic resurgence provided the opportunity to implement in the region environmental precautions, promote cleaner technologies and raise environmental awareness amongst the people especially the youth and the women. He discussed the priority environmental issues facing the region, as highlighted in UNEP's recent Global Environment Outlook 2000 report. He also highlighted the transboundary nature of environmental problems, and its potential for causing disputes, with specific reference to sea level rise, glacial floods and transboundary haze. He then mentioned some of UNEP's responses through regional institutions and programmes, as well as UNEP's role in the Global Environmental Facility (GEF). He made specific reference to the fundamental relationship between poverty and the environment which was an immense

challenge for the region. In conclusion, Mr Töpfer mentioned the numerous partnerships UNEP had forged in the region. In particular, he referred to the partnership with ESCAP, in the preparations leading up to the Ministerial Conference, and expressed optimism that this partnership would be further enhanced in the implementation, monitoring and review of the Regional Action Programme, 2001-2005.

21. The Conference noted the policy statements made by the ministers highlighting their major concerns, challenges and opportunities for environmental management and sustainable development.

22. The Conference showed deep concern with the deteriorating state of the environment in the region. Land degradation; loss of forests and loss of biodiversity; spreading scarcity of fresh water; increase in solid wastes; pollution of air, land and water have become all the more serious. Forest fires and haze problems have intensified. The main causes of these were the rapidly rising population and the accompanying demands for increased economic output; growing urbanization; and rising poverty in a large number of developing countries in the region, unsustainable practices such as slash-and-burn practices by plantation owners and small farmers, illicit logging and uncontrolled development, just to name a few.

23. The Conference stressed that poverty, unsustainable patterns of consumption and production, and high population growth coupled with inadequate financial resources and access to technology were the major impediments to promoting sustainable development in the region. It was therefore necessary to address those issues for the effective implementation of Regional Action Programme and Agenda 21.

24. The Conference noted that considering that the Asian and Pacific region being home to 60 per cent of the world's population and overall characteristics defining the region as well as the recent trends of environmental deterioration, the region is destined to play a decisively important role in the achievement of global environmental protection. The Conference stressed that should the region fail to achieve its goal of environmental protection and sustainable development, the protection of the global environment would be in jeopardy.

25. The Conference noted that it was of utmost importance that the Asian and Pacific region aim at creating a more equitable society in which the fruits of development should be shared by all members of the societies and nations. The Conference therefore stressed that the region should take a lead role in striving to create a new model of development and

implement policies and measures needed to move towards that ideal system including the "prosper thy neighbour" concept. The new model should also address a present and future environmental conditions as well as rapid changes in social economic conditions accompanying the new developments in information technologies and in countering the negative impacts of globalization.

26. The Conference noted that a number of initiatives on environmental cooperation have been undertaken between and among countries and have brought positive results. The Conference stressed that such initiatives should be further enhanced so that indigenous technical capacities could be built through sharing of experience and expertise.

27. The Conference noted that the environmental challenges have to be met on four fronts namely promoting rapid economic growth, reducing poverty and improving social empowerment, enhancement and efficient utilization of natural resources and protecting and conserving the environmental endowment. It emphasized that poverty eradication should form the core of efforts towards the promotion of sustainable development. Significant assistance would be needed by the developing countries in their poverty alleviation programmes.

28. The Conference acknowledged efforts made by the countries of the region in meeting their commitments pledged in the global conferences and conventions and activities undertaken in response to emerging challenges of environmental degradation. A major response from the national authorities for environmental improvement had been in the formulation and enforcement of legislation and strengthening of institutions, and regulatory measures as well as use of economic instruments.

29. The Conference appreciated that initiative taken by the countries and the ESCAP secretariat for undertaking preparations for the Rio+10 review of Agenda 21. It also commended the efforts of the Government of Japan in organizing the ECO ASIA 2000 Congress along with a number of associated events for involving all relevant stakeholders. The Conference also noted the establishment of a committee of eminent persons under the guidance of ECO ASIA.

30. The Conference noted that most developing countries of the region had undertaken activities to fulfill their commitments to international conventions such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Convention on Biological Diversity, and the Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer and United Nations Convention to Combat

Desertification. It advocated urgent support by international organizations and donors to assist them in further implementing these conventions.

31. The Conference also noted that achievements in abating the pace of environmental degradation could not be made because of weak capacities, lack of financial resources and technological know-how. The Conference noted that some developed countries had not honoured their commitments regarding financing and technology transfer given by them during the UNCED. It emphasized that developed countries should honour their commitments to reach the agreed ODA targets and technology transfer obligations under Agenda 21.

32. The Conference emphasized that most countries in this region was challenged with the pressures of a weak economy, poverty, increased population and environmental degradation. It noted that without adequate access to financial resources and environmentally sound technologies, the capacity of the countries of the region to implement national Agenda 21 and the Regional Action Programme would continue to remain severely limited. The developed and donor countries were therefore urged to assist and promote an external environment conducive to sustainable development.

33. The Conference recognized that the production and regeneration capacity of the nature is limited and should be managed accordingly. Therefore, it is important to internalize the environmental damage to production costs. The effectiveness of pollution control strategies based on “polluter pays” and “user pays” principles should be increased.

34. The Conference stressed the need for identifying issues of common priorities and actions. In that connection, coordination between countries and promotion of regional and sub-regional cooperation was considered extremely important. Such cooperation would help address the environmental issues of transboundary nature, promote exchange of information on experiences, know-how and expertise, and assist in technology transfer, and capacity-building.

35. The Conference pointed out that the mechanisms for coordinated monitoring, data collection, processing and management in the region are still inadequate. In the period of 2001-2005, high priority should be given to improving these mechanisms as well as the state of environmental information to support decision-making and to improve the availability of reliable environmental information to the public.

36. The Conference noted that increasing sustainability is mainly dependent on innovation, through both fundamental research and the widespread dissemination and adoption of its results. Therefore, research and development activities and dissemination of their results in the region should continue to be supported.

37. The Conference recognized that sub-regional cooperation had strengthened in the region. It took note of the initiative of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) on the adoption of the ASEAN action plan on haze. The cooperation within the countries of Central Asia had been made on the basis of decisions taken on the level of heads of the states. International Fund for Aral Sea Rehabilitation, Interstate Sustainable Development Commission (ISDC), and other bodies have been established for sub-regional cooperation. Central Asia Regional Environmental Center has been established in Almaty, Kazakhstan in order to strengthen the cooperation between the countries of the subregion, state bodies and business sector, and public participation in the decision making.

38. The Conference reaffirmed the adherence to the principles for international cooperation on environment and development as identified in the Rio Declaration such as the "inseparable environment and development", "common but differentiated responsibility" and "taking into account the special need of developing countries".

39. The Conference noted the concerns of the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in respect of climate change and sea level rise, waste management, nuclear and other radioactive materials transport, and international trade and sustainable development, and urged for international assistance to SIDS to enable them to undertake the necessary measures for environmental protection and sustainable development. In this regard it supported the initiative of SIDS to promote utilization of renewable energy as a part of their sustainable energy development strategy. A request was made to donor communities, including ADB, the World Bank and GEF to finance the renewable energy initiative of SIDS.

40. The Conference agreed that a shift in development paradigm was essential through identification of internal capabilities in local technological know-how, particularly in new and renewable sources of energy, traditional conservation based life styles and attitudes, and sharing of experiences. Simultaneously, integration of efforts towards globalization would need to be continued along with countering the negative impacts of the globalization.

41. The Conference advocated the use of strategic environmental planning for promoting sustainability of the development process. In that regard, it recognized that integration of

environmental consideration into sectoral planning was imperative. The Conference considered that stakeholders should be involved in environmental economic decision making and their participation should therefore be encouraged in the decision making and implementation process. It was stressed that environmental policy should not be confined to end-of-the-pipe process, rather policies and tools should address sustainable management of resources such as land, water and energy.

42. The Conference noted with appreciation that Kitakyushu was an ideal venue for holding of the Ministerial Conference as it was a model of rejuvenation of the environment and as such carried a good lesson towards enhancement of the environment.

43. The Conference felt that curative measures such as recycling alone was not enough for the enhancement of the environment. It was more important to introduce preventive measures such as low or no waste generation. Furthermore, the Conference cautioned that some short-term measures may appear highly beneficial, but it is important to note that their long-term environmental impacts may be quite serious. It is therefore prudent to use precautionary principles in such cases. The Conference noted that the use of instruments such as EIA and environmental risk management were extremely important to make sure that projects and activities were environmentally sustainable.

44. The Conference noted the statements made by United Nations organizations to promote sustainable development and environmental protection since the last Ministerial Conference. The activities of the Secretariat for the Basel Convention (SBC) on the Control of the Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal were noted. The Conference noted the progress in the ratification of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) as well as various initiatives of the United Nations Children's Funds (UNICEF), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and World Health Organization (WHO) in the promotion of environmental sound and sustainable development in the region.

45. The Conference noted the priorities currently followed by the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the contribution of the Asian Productivity Organization (APO) in introducing environmental issues into production activities and the Vision 2020 set up by the association of South-East Nations (ASEAN). It noted the publication of Ramsar Toolkit and its dissemination of the Convention on Wetlands in the region. The Conference noted the statement made by the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) on the lack of commitment by governments to ratify the Kyoto Protocol by 2002.

The strengthening of regional cooperation on environmental issues by the South Asia Cooperative Environment Programme (SACEP) and the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) was also noted. The Conference was informed of the various activities of the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES), the representative of Earth Council mentioned the need for close involvement of stakeholders in the Rio+10 preparatory process.

46. The NGO Symposium on Developing Partnership Strategies for Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction, held as an associated event of the Ministerial Conference, expressed its firm commitment to the goals of the Regional Action Programme for Environmentally Sound and Sustainable Development, 2001-2005. It also affirmed its commitment to a dynamic, equitable, transparent, and effective partnership with other stakeholders in achieving the goals of the Regional Action Programme. It urged the ESCAP secretariat to strengthen cooperation with the civil society in implementing the Programme. The Symposium recommended that the governments should institutionalize the partnership of the non-governmental organizations, including the establishment and strengthening of multi-stakeholders mechanisms. It recommended that the governments should recognize the role played by the judiciary in the conservation of environment and promotion of sustainable development. It urged ESCAP and ADB to provide further assistance in cooperation with civil society to develop and learn about multi-stakeholder partnership and participatory approaches and strategies through workshops and seminars. In that context, it further recommended that women should be at the centre of efforts towards achieving the intended goals. The Conference endorsed the recommendations put forward by the NGO symposium and commended ESCAP for its pioneering and continuing efforts in engaging the NGOs and other segments of the civil society in promoting sustainable development in the region.

47. The Media Symposium on the Role of Media in Achieving Sustainable Development emphasized the need for free and improved access to environmental information to enable the media to achieve their paramount role of providing citizens with a fuller awareness of the state of their environment. It called for governments to give greater recognition to the watchdog role of the media in establishing acceptable and transparent environmental governance. It expressed its firm commitment and determination to strive to work closer with its partners in civil society to achieve the goals of the Regional Action Programme for Environmentally Sound and Sustainable Development, 2001-2005. It urged international donors and ESCAP support to strengthen regional networks of the Asian Pacific Forum of

Environmental Journalists and their professional skills through training and exchange programmes, and in establishing a Training Institute for Environmental Journalists.

48. The representative of the Asia Pacific Regional Youth Caucus informed the Conference of the work of the Youth Caucus in increasing youth awareness and strengthening the network among youth to confront environmental challenges. The Conference took note of the Singapore Declaration and Regional Action Plan for Youth, developed in 1999, to affirm the commitment of youth to act on pressing environmental issues. The representative of the Youth Caucus appealed to the Conference to give support to young people by promoting environmental education, capacity building, funding through links to government and the private sector and by giving recognition to youth ideas through the establishment of a consultative process. The representative called upon the Ministers to uphold their environmental responsibilities. Finally, the representative requested the Conference to reflect, in the Ministerial Declaration, its commitment to working with youth.

49. The Women's Conference on Environment in Asia and the Pacific, pledged to achieve gender equality and to incorporate gender perspectives into every effort to protect the environment and to promote human security through increased participation of women in decision-making processes at all levels of society. It called for the governments to reconfirm the statement contained in Chapter 24 of Agenda 21 and to renew their commitment to the Beijing Platform for Action, particularly Section K on Women and Environment. The Women's Conference expressed its concern about the lack of women's rights to land and erosion of their rights to bio-diversity. It advocated citizen's access to information on such advanced technologies as genetic engineering and its impact on reproductive health of women. The Women's Conference valued the customary knowledge and skills of women to protect the environment and people's health. It encouraged people to build and strengthen international networks to achieve sustainable consumption and recycling of resources. It expressed its concern at the growing destitution of women, including trafficking of women and children, and emphasized that priority should be given to women in poverty. It stressed the need to collect gender segregated data as an essential input for gender mainstreaming in environmental decision-making.

50. The Private Sector Symposium was organized on 31 August and 1 September 2000 to review the role of the private sector in meeting the intentions of the Regional Action Programme for Environmentally Sound and Sustainable Development, 2001-2005. The Symposium noted that private sector plays a significant role in creating a resource recycling

society and will further its efforts to deal with environmental problems. The Symposium adopted conclusions and recommendations containing 19 recommendations, which have been categorized into three groups, namely actions to be undertaken on voluntary basis by the private sector; actions proposed to national governments to support private sector initiatives and joint actions by private sector and public sector. The Symposium concluded that the private sector needed to further promote positive cooperation, including technical cooperation among themselves and with the public sector and civil societies. At the same time, it is important that the public sector provide a framework, in which the businesses can engage in environmental protection activities and by which fair competitive conditions are maintained.

51. The Global 500 Asia Forum, held as an associate event of the Ministerial Conference, was organized on 2 September to share experiences as well as to exchange knowledge and ideas between the Global 500 Laureates of Asia and the youth of the region. The Forum recommended that meetings such as the Global 500 Asia Forum would be held periodically, in order to enhance activities for protecting the global environment through international, inter-generational, and inter-organizational discussions. The Forum expected governments to pay attention to the quality and targets of environmental education as well as to make efforts to promote the transfer of technology.

## **B. Report of the Preparatory Meeting of Senior Officials**

### **(Item 5 of the agenda)**

52. The Chairperson of the Preparatory Meeting of the Senior Officials, which had been held from 31 August to 2 September 2000, presented the Report of the Meeting E/ESCAP/MCED(00)/1 together with its annexes containing:

1. Vision for the twenty-first century: Ministerial Declaration on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific, 2000 (Annex I);
2. Regional Message for the 10-year review of the implementation of the Outcome of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (Annex II);
3. Draft Kitakyushu Initiative for a Clean Environment (Annex III); and
4. Draft Regional Action Programme for Environmentally Sound and Sustainable Development, 2001-2005 (Annex IV).

53. The Chairperson indicated that the report of the Preparatory Meeting of the Senior Officials also contained the conclusions and recommendations arisen out of the deliberations.

54. The Conference expressed its appreciation for the excellent work undertaken by the Senior Officials in making a careful review and comprehensive assessment of the documents, and adopted the Report of the Preparatory Meeting of Senior Officials with acclamation.

**C. Declaration, regional message, the Regional Action Programme for Environmentally Sound and Sustainable Development, 2001-2005, and the Kitakyushu Initiative for a clean environment**

**(Item 6 of the agenda)**

55. The Conference deliberated on the draft Ministerial Declaration (Annex I of E/ESCAP/MCED(00)/1) entitled “Vision for the twenty-first century: Ministerial Declaration on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific, 2000”, which had been carefully reviewed and endorsed by the Preparatory Meeting of Senior Officials earlier and submitted for consideration of the Conference. The Conference adopted by acclamation the Ministerial Declaration with minor amendment.

56. The Conference considered the draft Regional Message for Rio+10 Review of Agenda 21 as contained in Annex II of document E/ESCAP/MCED(00)/1. Noting that the Preparatory Meeting of Senior Officials had reviewed and endorsed the Message for the consideration of the Ministers, the Conference adopted the Message as presented. The Conference recommended that the Message for Rio+10 Review of Agenda 21 that contains the special situation in the Asia and the Pacific Region should be issued as a regional input to Rio+10 Review.

57. The Conference endorsed the Kitakyushu Initiative for a clean environment as contained in Annex III of document E/ESCAP/MCED(00)/1. The Conference noted that the modalities of operation of the Kitakyushu Initiative Network, identification of targets and periodic review of its achievement, and provisional follow-up projects would be discussed by the first meeting of the network, which is proposed to be organized by ESCAP in cooperation with the City of Kitakyushu and relevant organizations.

58. The Conference considered and adopted the Regional Action Programme for Environmentally Sound and Sustainable Development, 2001-2005 (Annex IV of document E/ESCAP/MCED(00)/1) as finalized by the Preparatory Meeting of Senior Officials.

### III. ORGANIZATION OF THE CONFERENCE

#### A. Opening, duration and organization of the meeting

59. The Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific was held in Kitakyushu, Japan on 4 and 5 September 2000.

60. The Secretary General of the United Nations, Mr Kofi Annan, in his message to the Conference, expressed concern over the state of the environment in Asia and the Pacific. He noted the alarming statistics related to soil degradation and air and water quality. He further noted the pressures placed on the environment by increasing poverty and rapid population growth. The Secretary General stated that, in spite of these disquieting statistics, there is reason for optimism through maximizing the benefits of information technology and globalization. Finally, the Secretary-General noted that governments alone cannot carry the burden of sustainable development. In this connection, he expressed his encouragement of the involvement of the various stakeholders to develop new strategies for the environment and to discuss ways of integrating environmental considerations into the decision making process.

61. In his opening message, the Executive Secretary of ESCAP, Mr. Kim Hak-Su expressed his gratitude to the Government of Japan for hosting this event and for providing generous financial assistance in the preparatory process. The Executive Secretary further thanked the local governments of Fukuoka Prefecture and the City of Kitakyushu for their hospitality and hard work toward organizing the Conference. He also expressed his appreciation to the Asian Development Bank and the United Nations Environment Programme for their close collaboration. The Executive Secretary also expressed his satisfaction with the strong networks of subregional cooperation. Finally, the Executive Secretary expressed his gratitude for the continued support of the donor community.

62. Mr Wataru Aso, Governor of Fukuoka Prefecture, delivered the welcome speech, stating that this Ministerial Conference was timely as the challenges of environmentally sound development is becoming even more urgent than ever in this most dynamically-growing region in the world. The meeting was informed that hosting of this Conference is the gesture of Fukuoka Prefecture demonstrating its determination to contribute to the environmental conservation efforts in Asian-Pacific countries by *inter alia* promoting environmental education and training opportunities, enforcing the technology-base and systems to support resource recycling society; enhancing cooperation among industry, academics and local administrations for information exchange and dissemination and

technical cooperation; cooperation with international organizations, such as hosting the UNCHS Regional Office.

63. Mr Koichi Sueyoshi, Mayor of Kitakyushu, also delivered his welcome speech, expressing his admiration to the progress made by Preparatory Meeting of Senior Officials and the prospect for the expected outcome of the Ministerial Conference, such as the Regional Message for Rio +10 and Kitakyushu Initiative for a Clean Environment. He commended the fact that birth of these important documents would be witnessed in Kitakyushu, which was once a very polluted city. The Meeting was informed that the City would continue activities to support environmental conservation efforts in Asia and the Pacific to assist in the implementation of the Kitakyushu Initiative. The Conference was also informed of the messages received from Mr Maurice Strong, Special Advisor to the UN Secretary-General, and International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) to congratulate the organization of the Ministerial Conference in Kitakyushu, which were distributed together with the message from the citizens of Kitakyushu.

64. The President of the Asian Development Bank (ADB), Mr. Tadao Chino, in his opening statement expressed his satisfaction for co-sponsoring the Ministerial Conference, organized by ESCAP and hosted by the Government of Japan. He recalled the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development which put human beings at the centre of concerns for sustainable development. However, despite significant progress made in the region during the last three decades, the region was afflicted by unacceptable levels of deprivation, illiteracy, child malnutrition, gender disparity and environmental degradation. He informed the Conference that the ADB has made poverty alleviation its overarching objective. Poverty was both a cause as well as consequence of environmental degradation. Since natural environment was of crucial importance to the poor, ADB's forthcoming environment policy would place increased emphasis on the environmental constraints which inhibited poverty reduction.

65. The Executive Director of UNEP, Mr. Klaus Töpfer, in his opening statement referred to the key role of the Asia-Pacific region in the context of the global future. He mentioned that the 21<sup>st</sup> century would be strongly influenced by the success of the people in building an economically vibrant and environmentally sustainable region. He referred to the numerous challenges of the region, as well as their solutions, such as the tolerance for diversity and a willingness to embrace social change. He was appreciative of the Government of Japan for hosting the Ministerial Conference, and for its continued assistance and partnership. The

venue of the Conference itself, Kitakyushu City, he reflected, provided an exemplary model for the region to emulate as living proof of balancing both industrial growth and a clean environment. Furthermore, he reiterated the importance of regional and sub-regional partnerships, inclusive of the regional economic commission, the regional development bank and sub-regional environmental bodies in the implementation of the endorsed Regional Action Programme. Finally, he offered UNEP's full commitment and support for the follow-up of the Ministerial Conference.

66. The representative of the World Bank, Mr. Shuzo Nakamura, speaking on behalf of the president of the World Bank, Mr. James D. Wolfensohn, noted that while strong macro-economic policy and growth are essential for development, they are not sufficient. The representative informed the Conference that the World Bank is in the midst of developing an environment strategy to reflect the broader mission of the Bank to reduce poverty. The strategy seeks to identify those areas where the Bank can be most effective in using environmental interventions to reduce poverty including decreasing environmental health impacts such as air and water pollution, improving livelihoods of the poor through sustainable natural resource use, and minimizing the vulnerability of people to natural disasters. The strategy will also focus on establishing a framework for sustainable economic growth led by the private sector, including a strong system of environmental safeguards and will help countries address regional and global environmental problems.

67. The Conference was declared open by H.E. Ms. Yoriko Kawaguchi, Minister of State, Director-General of the Environment Agency of Japan, by stressing the necessity to create a new society which addresses issues of poverty and the environment in a more active way. She emphasized the significance of this Conference as a valuable opportunity to chart a path for the future of the Asia-Pacific region and promote both the efforts at national, subregional and regional levels to move us along that path. In particular, she expressed her expectation for the Kitakyushu Initiative to be considered and endorsed by the Conference, as it represents not only a concrete measure which will lead to the improvement of the urban environment but also a means of promoting regional cooperation.

## **B. Attendance**

68. The Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific 2000 was attended by the following members and associate members of ESCAP: Australia; Azerbaijan; Bangladesh; Bhutan; Brunei Darussalam; Cambodia; China; Fiji; France; India; Indonesia; Islamic Republic of Iran; Japan; Kazakhstan; Kiribati; Kyrgyzstan; Lao People's

Democratic Republic; Malaysia; Maldives; Mongolia; Myanmar; Nepal; Netherlands; Pakistan; Papua New Guinea; Philippines; Republic of Korea; Russian Federation; Samoa; Singapore; Sri Lanka; Tajikistan; Thailand; Tonga; Turkey; Turkmenistan; Tuvalu; Uzbekistan; Vanuatu; Viet Nam; Cook Islands; and Macao, China.

69. The following United Nations bodies and specialized agencies were represented: Department of Economic and Social Affairs; United Nations Centre for Human Settlements; United Nations Children's Fund; United Nations Development Programme; United Nations Environment Programme; United Nations Centre for Regional Development; United Nations Population Fund; United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification; United Nations University; World Food Programme; International Labour Organization; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization; World Health Organization; World Bank; World Meteorological Organization; International Atomic Energy Agency; and the Secretariat for the Basel Convention on the Control of the Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal.

70. The following intergovernmental organizations attended: Asian Development Bank; Asia-Pacific Network for Global Change; Asian Productivity Organization; ASEAN; Regional Environmental Centre of Central Asia, Global Environment Facility; Convention on Wetlands; South Asia Cooperative Environment Programme; and the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme.

71. The representatives of the following Non-governmental Organizations, Other Entities, and Observers also attended: International Alliance of Women; International Council on Social Welfare, International Planned Parenthood Federation; International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources, Pacific Basin Consortium for Hazardous Waste Research and Management, Asia-Europe Environmental Technology Centre, Institute for Global Environmental Strategies, Philippine Federation for Environmental Concern, Earth Council; Water Resources Investigation Office; Japan Model United Nations; Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University; Kobe University; Japan Kyushu University; Network "Earth Village", Kitakyushu Forum on Asian Women, Women's Conference on Environment in Asia and the Pacific, Sophia University, and Kyushu University.

### **C. Election of officers**

72. The Conference elected H.E. Ms Yoriko Kawaguchi (Japan) Chairperson, H.E. Mr H.N. Ashequr Rahman (Bangladesh), H.E. Mr Mareth Mok (Cambodia), H.E. Mr Zhu

Guangyao (China), H.E. Mr Ratu Tu'uakitau Cokanauto (Fiji), H.E. Mr T.R. Baalu (India), H.E. Mr A. Sonny Keraf (Indonesia), H.E. Mr Serikbek Daukeyev (Kazakhstan), H.E. Mr Kakaotika Tekee (Kiribati), H.E. Mr Alykulov Tynybek (Kyrgyzstan), H.E. Mr Souli Nanthavong (Lao People's Democratic Republic), Dato Hieng-Ding Law (Malaysia), H.E. Mr Ulambayar Barsbold (Mongolia), H.E. Mr Shiva Raj Joshi (Nepal), H.E. Mr Jan Pronk (Netherlands), Hon. Herowa Agiwa (Papua New Guinea), H.E. Ms Myung Ja Kim (Republic of Korea), H.E. Mr Aleksey Filippovich Poryadin (Russian Federation), Hon. Matataualiitia Afa Lesa (Samoa), H.E. Mr Yock Suan Lee (Singapore), H.E. Mr Shokirov Usmonkul (Tajikistan), Hon. Tu'l'afitu (Tonga), H.E. Mr Fevzi Aytakin (Turkey), H.E. Mr Begench Atamuradov (Turkmenistan), Hon. Teleke Peleti Lauti (Tuvalu), Mr Sherimbetov Khalilulla Sertimovich (Uzbekistan), H.E. Mr Maxime Carlot Korman (Vanuatu), H.E. Mr Chu Tuan Nha (Viet Nam), H.E. Mr Norman George (Cook Islands) Vice Chairpersons and H.E. Mr Yousef Hojjat (Islamic Republic of Iran) Rapporteur.

#### **D. Agenda**

73. The Conference adopted the following agenda:
1. Opening of the Conference.
  2. Election of officers.
  3. Adoption of the agenda.
  4. Perspectives on a new paradigm of sustainable development for Asia and the Pacific into the twenty-first century.
  5. Report of the Preparatory Meeting of Senior Officials.
  6. Declaration, regional message, the Regional Action programme for Environmentally Sound and Sustainable Development, 2001-2005, and the Kitakyushu initiative for a clean environment.
  7. Other matters.
  8. Adoption of the report.

#### **E. Other matters**

##### **(Agenda item 7)**

74. The Australian delegation expressed the concern of Australia about Japan's expanded whaling activities currently under way in the North Pacific and recalled the International Whaling Commission meeting in July this year which, by its resolution, called upon the Government of Japan to refrain from issuing permits for this whaling programme.

75. The Japanese delegation stressed that the issues on whaling should be discussed from the point of view of resources sustainability based on scientific data. It stated that Japan's purpose of research whaling was limited to collecting scientific data, for example, to learn about whale's consumption of fish, and that Japan's research whaling was being duly conducted in accordance with the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling.

76. The Conference expressed its deep appreciation to the Government of Japan for hosting the Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific, 2000. It also extended its thanks to the Fukuoka Prefecture for their support and to the City of Kitakyushu for providing excellent host facilities and generous hospitality.

77. The Conference appreciated the support provided by the donor community in promoting sustainable development in the region and urged it to strengthen their efforts in achieving that goal.

78. The Conference expressed its deep gratitude to different segments of the civil societies including the NGOs, the media, the private sector, women groups, and the youth organizations for their active role in achieving the objective of sustainable development in the region.

## **F. Adoption of the report**

### **(Agenda item 8)**

79. The Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific 2000 adopted the report on 5 September 2000.

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