PAPUA NEW GUINEA COUNTRY STATEMENT

PRESENTED BY

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ON THE

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ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC (UNESCAP)

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Mr. Chairman, 
Excellences, 
Distinguished delegates, Ladies & Gentlemen

I am honored on behalf of the Government and the people of Papua New Guinea to address this august Forum today. Firstly, I wish to express my sincere appreciation to the Government of the Kingdom of Thailand for the warm hospitality to my Delegation and myself in you beautiful country.

Let me also take this opportunity to congratulate Madam Executive Secretary on her exemplary leadership in shaping the hard work and commitment of all those involved in ensuring this commission is delivered successfully. On the news of your retirement from ESCAP, I would on behalf of Papua New Guinea and myself wish you well in your future endeavors.

The 74\textsuperscript{th} Commission session provides an opportunity to not only share the Government’s perspective on this Session’s theme “Inequality in the Era of the 2030 Agenda” but to also share some perspective with the Commission on Multilateralism in Asia and the Pacific to promote inclusive economic and social development in the region and its contribution to global economic governance in our pursuit to realize the vision and pledge of 2030 Agenda.

Chairperson, Excellencies

Papua New Guinea appreciates and expresses its gratitude to the UNESCAP in convening this important forum under the term “Inequality in the Era of the 2030 Agenda of the Commission” in our quest for “leaving no one behind”. Our region is greatly challenged by poverty, natural disasters, and harsh geographical settings among other issues that pose serious challenge to truly achieving the Agenda 2030 for sustainable, create resilient societies and leaving no one behind in our progress.

Addressing the challenges of poverty, natural disasters, and development issues in areas of trade, infrastructure and urbanization, food and water security including other cross-cutting issues in pursuit of economic and social development to leave no one behind in the region requires combined effort and strong partnership within our region by all stakeholders including intergovernmental and governmental as well as regional organizations and civil society organisations.

In this regard, Papua New Guinea supports the call to strengthen international and regional cooperation in mobilizing technical expertise and resources to collectively share ideas and information towards addressing our common goals and aspirations.

In our Sub-region, the Pacific Leaders have endorsed the Framework for Pacific Regionalism in 2014 that encourages collective action, support, commitment, and ownership of all Pacific people, including governments and administrations,
civil society organizations, private sector representatives, regional organizations, development partners, media and other key stakeholders.

In Papua New Guinea, we have commenced a Multi-stakeholder framework that brings together resident international and regional organisations, development partners and civil society organizations to interact with the Whole-of-Government machinery to gauge collective views on the development needs of everyone who would be affected by any form of development. It is indeed inclusivity in ensuring that the voice of everyone is heard.

**Excellences,**

Regional Governance of Multilateral Framework and Agendas like 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, The Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the SAMOA Pathway, the Paris Climate Agreement, Global Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, Framework Agreement on Facilitation of Cross-Border Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific, and other regional and international frameworks through the UNESCAP process in the region comes with opportunities and challenges depending on our national capacities. Nevertheless, we believe these Frameworks will play critical role in accelerating our progress toward achieving our targets set out in the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development.

Papua New Guinea is implementing increasing global and regional economic arrangements. We have domesticated the SDG 2030 into our third Medium Term Development Plan (MTDP3) 2018-2022 to suit our national development aspirations as envisioned in PNG’s Long term development strategy, the Vision 2050. The MTDP3 is the National Strategy for Responsible Sustainable Development (StaRS) that focuses on inclusivity, innovative green economic growth and rethinking financing strategies to ensure financial resources are readily available to implement the SDGs.

PNG is implementing Paris Agreement through an Act of Parliament; established Road Safety Authority to strengthen effort to improve road safety, implementing the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreements (TFA) commitments and PNG is working on acceding to the Framework Agreement on Cross-Border Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific once the domestic process of domesticating the E-Commerce legislation is passed as a bill enabling the necessary legal frameworks in place before acceding to the Framework Agreement on Cross-Border Paperless Trade which we believe through that we will reduce the cost of trade and doing business in Papua New Guinea.

**Chairperson, Excellencies**

PNG is challenged by the need for technological and technical capacity to effectively contribute in driving the regional and global agendas at the domestic level. For instance, for the 2030 SDGs, PNG needs support from relevant stakeholders on specific indicators, for the Framework Agreement on
Cross-Border Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific, PNG requires assistance from ESCAP and related organizations to conduct necessary assessment to assess our domestic capacity and capabilities to implement the framework agreement.

The area of disaster-risk reduction and preparedness remains a serious issue for the nation to address. Recently in February, PNG experienced a massive earthquake of 7.5 magnitude in the central highlands which is the biggest in decades. Hundreds of lives were lost, people displaced, and vital infrastructures worth of millions such as roads and bridges were damaged as well as people psychologically affected. Economic activities within that region were affected due to the impact of the earthquake.

In mitigating the impact of natural disasters, Papua New Guinea is working closely with development partner in setting up alert and surveillance systems to monitor and alert communities on the possibilities and likelihood of any disaster may it be drought, cyclone or flooding. The instruments have been rolled out in the coastal communities and are now being set up in the central highlands of the country.

In reducing that gap between the rural and urban divide, the Government has given its attention since 2012 on infrastructure development to truly connect Papua New Guinea to enable accessibility and connectivity. The country’s national highways, ports and wharfs and transport related infrastructures have undergone expansion to enable government services to reach the farthest in the most remote part of the country.

As you are aware, PNG is hosting the 2018 Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation leaders meeting in November in Port Moresby with the theme “creating inclusive opportunities, embracing the digital future”. One of the key challenges we seek to highlight is the inequalities and unequal distribution of wealth between the developed and developing countries including the Least Developed Countries in the access and use of ICT and emerging technology for development.

PNG welcomes you in this respect as she is connecting for peace and prosperity in a changing globalised world in the spirit of cooperation and mutual benefit for all members of our Asia Pacific community.

Chairperson

In conclusion, I wish to mention that PNG is open to learn from Member States and work together in the spirit of cooperation and partnership with UNESCAP for to achieve an inclusive, sustainable and resilient society for all in the Asia Pacific region.

Thank you.