

DPRK - item 2

Statement of Mr. Ri Nam Song, Permanent Representative of the DPRK to UNESCAP at the 8<sup>th</sup> session of the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development

Mr. Chairman,

Let me start with congratulating your election as the Chairman of the 8th session of the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development. I am confident that the session will be fruitful under your able leadership.

At the same time, I express my thanks to the Government of the Kingdom of Thailand and the UNESCAP Secretariat for the efforts to make this session possible.

Mr. Chairman,

Several years have already passed since the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was adopted at the UN Summit on Sustainable Development in September 2015.

The DPRK Government expressed its support to the 2030 Agenda, recognizing that sustainable development goals outlined in the Agenda conform to the national development policy, the general goal of which is to further improve people's living standards based on the people-first principle.

For the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the National SDGs Implementation Task Force (NITF) was set up, involving representatives from relevant line ministries and agencies. The Vice Premier and Chairman of the State Planning Commission was appointed as the Chair and the Deputy Director of the Central Bureau of Statistics as the Vice Chair. Technical Committee (TC) consisting of statisticians from the Central Bureau of Statistics was formed under the NITF.

Mr. Chairman,

The DPRK Government will submit its first Voluntary National Review Report for the implementation of SDGs to the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in July 2021.

The report will highlight successes and lessons learned as well as

challenges and way forward for the implementation of each goal.

I would like to take this opportunity to reiterate our appreciation to the Secretariat of UNESCAP for its full support provided to the DPRK for nationalization of SDGs and targets, strengthening of statistical capacity and preparation of VNR.

My thanks also goes to the member states for their frank exchange of views with our experts during the workshops organized by ESCAP.

It is my hope that the collaborative relations between us will continue in the future.

Mr. Chairman,

Continued sanctions and blockade against the DPRK, recurrent severe natural disasters and prolonged COVID-19 pandemic since 2020 are the obstacles that stand in the way of the DPRK Government striving to achieve sustainable development of the country and to improve people's living standards.

Under the leadership of Comrade **Kim Jong Un**, President of the State Affairs of the DPRK, and true to the ideals of believe-in-people-as-in-heaven, self-reliance and single-minded unity, the DPRK Government will continue to dynamically advance along the road of Korean style socialism footing firmly on its own resources, technology, and internal might in order to materialize our lofty ideals and achieve the goals.

Last but not the least, I reaffirm the DPRK government's commitment to strengthening cooperation with other countries and international organizations to implement 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Thank you.