Statement by Mr. Takashi Uto,
State Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan
at the 77th Session of the United Nations Economic
and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
May 27, 2021

Chairperson,
Distinguished delegates,

Let me begin by expressing my congratulation on the convening of the 77th session of the UNESCAP Commission.

Since Covid-19 threatens the lives, livelihoods, and dignity of people around the world, we need to promote the protection and empowerment of all people based on the concept of human security and work hand-in-hand with all stakeholders in the Asia Pacific region to address the problem, in order to minimize delays in efforts to achieve the SDGs and “build back better” in the region.

Japan has been promoting universal health coverage under the principle of “leaving no one’s health behind” and it has provided $2.84 billion in “the COVID-19 Crisis Response Emergency Support Loan” to help improve the difficult economic and social conditions of developing countries.

In order to accomplish “building back better”, it is essential to work and realize a green society. Last October, Japan announced that it aims to realize carbon neutrality by 2050. With cutting edge innovations and proactive measures to combat global warming, we will transform our industrial structure and economy to achieve that goal.
Climate change is already taking a heavy toll on our region. Japan is also facing an increasing number of natural disasters and my hometown, Kagoshima Prefecture, was hit by a torrential rainstorm last July, which caused landslides and floods. We need to be united to tackle this most urgent global issue.

Disaster prevention and mitigation measures are also becoming more
important, and Japan is striving to make the world more resilient by sharing its knowledge and experience. In the Asia-Pacific region, through ESCAP, Japan is promoting support for disaster risk reduction projects that are inclusive of people with disabilities and take into account gender equality.

Japan will continue to work with ESCAP and other stakeholders in the region to overcome the Covid-19 pandemic and realize a post-Covid-19 era with a virtuous cycle of economic and environmental growth that is flexible and resilient and in which the SDGs are achieved.

Thank you.