United States Country statement  
DAS Cook Remarks- SCRIPT

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, it is an honor to be here with you today. The United States is committed to the Asia-Pacific region and to working with you to address our most pressing issues – beating back the COVID-19 pandemic, fostering a resilient and inclusive economic recovery, and addressing climate change. The global COVID-19 pandemic and its socio-economic devastation this past year have shown that good governance at all levels matters, that transparency and accountability matter, and that addressing structural problems, including inequality, matter. Faced with a global health crisis of unprecedented proportions, the people of the United States are proud to support the international COVAX vaccine facility. We have already contributed an initial two billion dollars and committed to provide an additional two-billion-dollar contribution through 2022. We urge current donors to fulfill their pledges and call on others to contribute to address the COVID-19 vaccine funding shortfall. We know the pandemic has caused not only a tragic loss of life, but significant loss of livelihoods. To enable a sustained economic recovery, we are supportive of exploring a new $650 billion allocation of Special Drawing Rights at the International Monetary Fund. These resources have the potential to enhance global reserve liquidity, particularly among low-income countries. Unfortunately, these economic disruptions have not spared the import and tourism-dependent island economies. The White House recently announced an economic cooperation framework designed to strengthen U.S. collaboration with island countries and territories in the Caribbean, North Atlantic, and Pacific regions: the Small and Less Populous Island Economies Initiative (SALPIE) (pronounced “SAL-P”). This initiative marshals resources from across the U.S. government to strengthen island economies vulnerable to the economic shocks of COVID-19 and to respond to climate change. But a permanent economic recovery will not be possible without addressing the outsize impact the pandemic has had on women. Many women have exited the market as they are forced to choose between compensated work and the unpaid labor of caring for loved ones. Women will be critical to driving the global economic response and the United States is committed to supporting them at home and abroad. Through the 2X Gender Lens Investing Initiative, we have catalyzed more than seven billion dollars of investment in women-owned and women-led businesses that offer products or services that empower women. Finally, by addressing the climate crisis we will revitalize our economies, create millions of good jobs, and build sustainable infrastructure. That is why, the United States held a Leaders Summit on Climate and is placing energy transformation and just transition policies at the heart of economic development and diplomacy and accelerating clean energy technology deployment.
The pandemic has laid bare the vulnerabilities in our interconnected world. But to build a world beyond COVID, that is inclusive, resilient, and green, we must work together to deliver a sustained, global response. The United States looks forward to working with you to address these and many other issues that face the region. Thank You.