MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
BETWEEN
THE UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION
FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC
AND
THE COMMONWEALTH SECRETARIAT

Article 1: Introduction

1. The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and the Commonwealth Secretariat (ComSec) reaffirm their desire to work together in areas of mutual interest in the service of developing countries of common membership through the present Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

Article 2: Purpose of ESCAP - ComSec Cooperation

2. ESCAP and the Commonwealth Secretariat (collectively known as the “Participants”) will build and strengthen cooperation in the following:

(a) to promote inclusive and sustainable development in their member countries;

(b) to strengthen the means of implementation for climate action within their member countries, catalyzing the effective realization of the goals outlined in the Paris Agreement;

(c) to accelerate the implementation, follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; and

(d) to strengthen the resilience of Small Island Developing States and other vulnerable states against both economic and non-economic shocks.

Article 3. General Principles for ESCAP - ComSec Cooperation

3. The Participants will be guided by the following general principles:

(a) focus on shared strategic and operational priorities of the Participants;

(b) use the comparative strengths and advantages of each Participant;

(c) co-create analytical work, co-implement capacity building and co-financing initiatives and co-organize conferences/policy dialogues at the regional and subregional levels; and

(d) share knowledge, lessons learned and evaluations in developments.
Article 4. Focus of ESCAP - ComSec Joint Activities

4. The priority areas for joint activities would include those listed in the Appendix to this MoU, which may be amended from time to time with the mutual written consent of the Participants.

Article 5. Focal Points for Management of the MoU

5. The Participants agree to designate as focal points for the activities under this MoU:

(a) For ESCAP: Director, Strategy and Programme Management
   Division
(b) For ComSec: Senior Director, Trade Oceans and Natural Resources Directorate

Article 6. Intellectual Property

6. In the event that the Participants foresee that intellectual property that can be protected will be created in relation to any activity to be carried out under this MoU, the Participants will negotiate and agree on the terms of its ownership and use in a separate agreement.

Article 7. Reciprocal Invitations

7. The Participants recognize that appropriate representation is important for the purpose of joint positioning and advocacy. They agree that invitations to meetings, conferences, seminars and workshops relevant to cooperation in the priority areas set out in the Appendix to this MoU will be sent, where appropriate.

Article 8. Monitoring and Reporting of the MoU

8.1 Based on a mutually agreed work plan, the Focal Points of both Participants will consult with one another, prepare, and submit to the executive heads of both Participants joint progress reports on the status of implementation of the cooperation activities, including an assessment of results achieved.

8.2 The Participants recognize that it is important to convene periodic consultations to review what is being planned, what is being implemented, and what is being achieved in terms of results as well as to discuss new challenges, opportunities and problems. They agree to hold such consultations periodically as required and at the midpoint and the end of the term of this MoU.
Article 9. Acknowledgements and Use of Institutional Emblems

9.1 The Participants recognize that the involvement of both organizations in joint cooperation activities needs to be publicized. They agree that:

9.2 there will be public acknowledgment of the role and contribution of each organization to cooperation projects in all public information documentation related to such cooperation; and

9.3 the use of emblems of each organization in documentation related to cooperation will be in accord with the current policies of each organization concerning such usage.

Article 10. Final Provisions

10.1 This MoU may be amended by mutual written consent of the Participants.

10.2 This MoU may be terminated by either Participant on two months’ notice in writing.

10.3 Nothing in this MoU is intended to be a waiver, expressly or implied of the privileges and immunities of the United Nations, ESCAP nor of the Commonwealth Secretariat, and its subsidiary offices.

10.4 In no event will this MoU or any amendment hereof operate to create financial, administrative or legal obligations on the part of either Participant, nor does it prevent the Participants from pursuing the objectives set forth in this MoU on their own or with other third parties.

10.5 The Participants commit themselves to settling by good faith negotiation any dispute or controversy arising out of the implementation and/or the interpretation of the present MoU.

10.6 Any specific activities under this MoU will be covered by a project document or written agreement.

10.7 The term of this MoU will be five years from the date of signature by both Participants until 27 May 2029.
APPENDIX

Priority Areas for ESCAP - ComSec Cooperation

1. Inclusive and sustainable connectivity, including:
   a. Trade facilitation and paperless/digital trade to boost regional trade amongst countries of common membership and capacity building support to MSMEs, youth- and women-owned businesses in e-commerce;
   b. Transport connectivity;
   c. ICT connectivity;
   d. Energy connectivity.

2. Climate action and enhancing resilience; including enhancing low carbon transportation and power generation, climate change mitigation and adaptation and reduction of climate-induced disasters.

3. Inclusive and sustainable energy transition for transformation of energy systems to achieve SDG 7 by 2030, net zero targets under the Paris Agreement, and resilient economic development in Small Island Developing States and developing countries.

4. Sustainable development of natural resources, value chains and transition pathways for resource-rich countries; including revenue management, decarbonisation, decommissioning, carbon taxation, space applications for sustainable development.

5. Enhancing financing and investment, including foreign and domestic direct investment, for sustainable development, access to trade finance, direct investment equity flows and assessment of debt sustainability.

6. Promoting inclusive and sustainable businesses and equitable societies, supporting vulnerable groups and leaving no one behind.
Signed on 28 May 2024 at Antigua and Barbuda.

For the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana
Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Secretary of ESCAP

For the Commonwealth Secretariat

The Rt. Honourable Patricia Scotland, K.C
Secretary-General