Statement on Agenda Item 2: Reinforcing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and eradicating poverty in times of multiple crises: The effective delivery of sustainable, resilient and innovative solutions in Asia and the Pacific

Thank you.

I am Grace Balawag of the Kankanaey Indigenous Peoples in the Philippines. I am delivering this statement on behalf of Tebtebba and the Indigenous Peoples constituency of the APRCEM.

The Asia Pacific region is continuing to face this multiple crises with the regression in Goal 13 as the most alarming, despite commitments from the Paris Agreement and the agreement on the Loss and Damage Fund at COP28. The region is home to 70% of the global population susceptible to climate change adverse impacts such as sea-level rise, stronger typhoons, earthquakes causing destruction to diverse ecosystems and nature-based sources of livelihood.

The Asia Pacific region is also home for almost two-thirds of the world's Indigenous population, with more than 300 million Indigenous Peoples within the region and yet in the SDG progress reports at the regional level and in the voluntary national review reports, we remain invisible. There is a glaring lack of data disaggregation on ethnicity in this very diverse region. The continuing lack of legal recognition of our collective rights, lack of access to justice, land grabbing, forced evictions, increasing resource extraction in our territories, criminalization, violence against Indigenous women and girls, and increasing attacks against us and our communities for defending our territories from imposed, destructive development projects, and climate solutions being advanced that does not respect our rights including the transition to clean energy and mining of transition minerals for clean technologies are exacerbating our marginalization and poverty in our communities.

Despite these challenges, Indigenous Peoples continue their role as stewards to the remaining biodiversity resources within our ancestral domains and indigenous territories. Indigenous Peoples continue to contribute to solutions to the multiple crises through our sustainable lifeways, our knowledge systems and customary governance, and protection of our resources and territories. We remain committed to ensure that our inherent collective knowledge systems, our solutions, and values of solidarity and reciprocity guide us to contribute towards a just, inclusive and effective pathway towards the achievement of sustainable development and climate strategy, in collaboration with sincere partners and networks.

To address the multiple crisis we are facing, we put forward the following recommendations:

- The shift towards renewable energy must be people centered by putting emphasis on decentralising energy systems and supporting community led initiatives on renewable energy.
- Adopt a comprehensive data disaggregation by sex, age, ethnicity, disability, and other relevant characteristics which are crucial for identifying gaps and informing equitable responses to the climate crisis.
• Ensure the sustainable management of forests and the protection, restoration, conservation and sustainable use of important landscapes by recognizing the vital role of Indigenous Peoples as stewards of the forests and biodiversity; and commit to protecting and implementing the rights of Indigenous Peoples under the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and international human rights law.

Finally, we remain steadfast as frontline defenders and stewards of the diverse ecosystems, resources and knowledge systems for a sustainable future for the current and future generations. Our land, our life, our future.