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Agenda Item 2
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(3 minutes)

Thank you, Chair.

As I am taking the floor for the first time, please allow me to express my appreciation to ESCAP for arranging a face-to-face Asia Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development this year. With the Ministerial HLPF and the Summit of Future scheduled for July and September, respectively, this is a valuable opportunity to take stock of how far we, the Asia Pacific, have come in our journey towards 2030.

We have already passed the halfway mark of the 2030 Agenda, but only 17% of the measurable targets have been met in Asia and the Pacific. If this trend continues, around 90% of the targets will not be met by 2030, and the achievement of SDGs will be lagging at least 32 years behind schedule. Because the 17 goals are interlinked and cannot be considered in isolation, failure to achieve one goal will result in failure in all the other.

Today's meeting, therefore, is important in that it brings us together to share our invaluable experiences and insights on addressing the challenges before us and pool our collective wisdom under the theme of "Reinforcing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and eradicating poverty in times of multiple crises". Against this backdrop, I would like to make some points.

First, digital technology is critical in addressing the challenges to achieving the 17 goals. From climate action to the food system, from healthcare to education, digital technology is an important tool for building inclusive and
sustainable economies and societies. Digital technology can contribute to implementing the SDGs in developing countries. Especially digital technology is crucial for countries in special situations such as landlocked developing countries (LLDC) and small island developing states (SIDS) because it can help to overcome the hurdle of geological disconnection.

Second, we must enable the youth to unleash their potential and shape the future. There is no doubt that education was a key factor in driving Korea’s development. To share our experience, President Yoon announced at the UN General Assembly last year that Korea would actively channel its ODA efforts into education and training to help partner countries build their capacity to progress socially and economically on their own.

Third, we need to invest more collectively for each and every one of the 17 goals. To accelerate the implementation of the SDGs, both private and public sector financing must be scaled up and coordinated. As such, Korea is committed to shoudering a greater role and responsibility. For example, Korea has increased its development budget by more than 40% this year to support the SDGs implementation in partner countries.

Chair,

I would like to conclude by rendering the Republic of Korea’s strong support for ESCAP’s continued leadership in the region towards achieving the 2030 Agenda.

Thank you very much. /End/