Conclusions and Recommendations

1. The Regional Meeting on “Enhancing energy efficiency of the freight transport sector in Asia and the Pacific” was held on 9-10 August 2023 in Kathmandu, Nepal. The Meeting was attended by 70 participants, including countries delegates from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Georgia, India, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor Leste and Türkiye; as well as resource persons and ESCAP secretariat.

2. The Meeting was informed of the study findings of the study project titled “Enhancing energy efficiency of the freight transport sector in Asia and the Pacific”. Technical details on elements pertaining to modal shift, new technologies, and policies to support energy efficient freight transport sector, including national examples of policies and initiatives to support green mobility, were presented in detailed. The regional roadmap towards sustainable and energy efficient freight transport was developed as way forward strategic guidance for the reference of ESCAP member countries, was also presented to Meeting participants.

3. To this end, the Meeting recognized the importance of the subject-matters and welcomed the study findings and the finalized regional roadmap towards sustainable and energy efficient freight transport. The Meeting adopted the Regional Roadmap towards Sustainable and Energy Efficient Freight Transport as the guideline for fostering energy efficiency in freight transport. Furthermore, the Meeting also acknowledged the importance of quality infrastructure, as well as effective operational aspects of connectivity (soft infrastructure), including transport facilities to promote seamless border-crossings, in enhancing energy efficiency. In relating to e-vehicles, the Meeting raised the question on the post-life treatment of batteries and considerations should be given towards its recyclability.

4. The Meeting recognized the additional challenges faced by landlocked developing countries (LLDCs) in ensuring international connectivity and accessibility; and discussed at length various strategic undertakings and initiatives to mitigate the challenges, including through multimodality and green measures, to develop and achieve sustainable and energy efficient freight transport sector as the mean to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

5. The Meeting was also briefed of measures to enhance energy efficient low carbon transport as well as various initiatives on decarbonization and e-mobility undertaken by countries in Africa and Brazil. To this end, the Meeting welcomed the opportunities for knowledge exchanges between the Global South and strongly encouraged the secretariat to increase such cooperations.

6. The Meeting acknowledged the importance of adopting information and communication technologies (ICT) and intelligent transport system (ITS) in promoting
energy efficiency in transport sector. To this end, the Meeting explored various digitalization efforts, such as through the use of artificial intelligence, automations, e-micro-mobility, and other logistics information sharing platforms as mechanisms to support the development of energy efficient and low carbon freight transport systems.

7. The Meeting was informed of best practices and national experiences undertaken by the private sector, notably logistics service providers / freight forwarders, in supporting the transition to clean and energy efficient transport and logistics sector from Indonesia, Nepal and Kazakhstan. In this regard, the Meeting stressed the importance of cooperation between the public and private sectors, in setting common goals of achieving green, sustainable and resilient transport sector.

8. At the open floor discussion session, the Meeting was informed of national experiences and policy initiatives on energy efficiency and low carbon transport through presentations/statements by Cambodia, China, India, Malaysia and the Russian Federation. Examples of such initiatives and policies included, the Truck Modernization Strategic Plan (Cambodia), National Green Freight Distribution Pilot City (China), East Coast Rail Link (ECRL) Project (Malaysia), and “the 2030 Transport Strategy of the Russian Federation with projection up to 2035” (Russian Federation).

9. The secretariat informed the Meeting that, in-line with the project document, targeted capacity building workshops will be organized to support human resource development and knowledge transfer to promote energy efficient freight transport sector, depending on budget availability. Interested countries may contact the secretariat to for further considerations.

10. The Meeting expressed its gratitude to the Ministry of Physical Infrastructure and Transport of Nepal and Nepal Freight Forwarders Association (NEFFA) for co-hosting the Meeting, and the Government of the Russian Federation for the financial support to the study project.

11. These Conclusions and Recommendations were agreed on 10 August 2023 in Kathmandu, Nepal.