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BRUNEI DARUSSALAM'S COUNTRY STATEMENT

Bismillahir Rahmaa Nir Rahiim.
Assalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh and a very good morning/afternoon.
Honourable Chair,
Madam Executive Secretary,
Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

- It is an honour for me to once again represent my country, Brunei Darussalam, at this 81st Session of the ESCAP. On behalf of my Government, I am pleased to address this esteemed gathering on the crucial theme of **"Regional Cooperation for Resilient and Sustainable Urban Development in Asia and the Pacific."**

- This session highlights the urgent need for resilient urban growth as we work towards implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at all levels. Indeed, as we steadily move ahead, it is important that we recognize the challenges we face. A comprehensive understanding of these issues will allow us to plan strategically, align our resources, and focus on the most pressing priorities for both the short and long term.

- Urban development has always been driven by humanity's fundamental need for a better life, food, and safety. These aspirations remain just as relevant today and continue to shape urban development across the Asia-Pacific region. However, while urbanization has long been a driver of progress, the challenges we face today are more complex and urgent than ever. With the accelerating effects of climate change, population growth and resource demands, it is crucial that we create urban spaces that are both sustainable and resilient. Brunei Darussalam acknowledges the importance of sustainable urbanization and regional cooperation in achieving resilient, inclusive cities, as we strive to advance SDG 11 through meaningful partnerships that drive impactful progress.

- On that note, I would like to outline Brunei Darussalam's initiatives, highlighting key areas where we prioritize action and collaboration: :

    1. First, we focus on **sustainable urban planning** to guide our urban development. The Strategic Plan (2025-2030) and Land Use Plan (2025-2045) aim to ensure efficient land use, focusing on compact city models, natural ecosystem protection, and promoting walkability. Our efforts also include enhancing resilience and risk management to improve disaster preparedness and climate resilience. Regionally, we collaborate within ASEAN frameworks, including the ASEAN Sustainable Urbanization Strategy (ASUS), focusing on key initiatives such as the Connectivity Master Plan for Bandar Seri Begawan to promote sustainable mobility and address infrastructure gaps. Through seminars and workshops, we engage stakeholders to share smart solutions for modern urban challenges.

2. We also prioritize **air quality** through the implementation of national regulations such as the Air Pollution Control and Open Burning Regulations, as well as, installation of air quality monitoring equipments. Regionally, Brunei Darussalam participates in air quality initiatives under the ASEAN Working Group on Environmentally Sustainable Cities and the ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution, focusing on long-term strategies such as the Second Roadmap for ASEAN Cooperation on Transboundary Haze Pollution Control (2023–2030) and the Second ASEAN Peatland Management Strategy (2023–2030).

3. Next, our Construction Industry Framework 2023-2035 emphasizes green technologies and materials, while initiatives such as the Brunei Accredited Green Unified Seal (BAGUS) promote energy-efficient building designs. These efforts align with regional goals for **sustainable construction** towards greener urbanization.

4. **Waste management**, is also another area of focus where we channel efforts on recycling and the circular economy, with initiatives such as a centralized recycling depot and improved waste data collection. Apart from engaging the private sector, and strengthening local enforcement, Brunei Darussalam actively participates in regional environmental efforts, including the ASEAN Working Group on Coastal and Marine Environment and the ASEAN Working Group on Chemical Waste.

5. Strengthening disaster resilience remains a key priority for Brunei Darussalam. Guided by the Disaster Management Strategic Policy Framework (DMSPF) and the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER), we are developing strategies to address climate-related hazards, including mapping landslide risks for informed land use planning. In addition, our collaboration with regional partners through the Coordinating Committee for Geoscience Programmes (CCOP) further strengthens our disaster resilience and mitigation efforts.

6. Equally important, Brunei Darussalam invests in digital infrastructure namely high-speed broadband, 5G readiness, and digital connectivity towards expanding economic opportunities and enhancing public services. The Unified National Network (UNN) plays a central role in modernizing our telecommunications sector. Since its establishment in 2018, UNN has consolidated and upgraded Brunei Darussalam's network infrastructure, ensuring reliable, high-quality, and cost-efficient digital connectivity. We also work with ASEAN to advance digital transformation and bridge connectivity gaps.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

- While Brunei Darussalam has made significant progress with these initiatives, we consistently value regional cooperation in tackling emerging challenges such as food security, water safety, and carbon emissions. We believe that creating sustainable urban spaces is an evolving process that requires collective thinking and innovation. Regional collaboration offers valuable opportunities for knowledge-sharing and joint projects, and we look forward to strengthening these partnerships to support global efforts in building resilient cities.

Thank you.

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