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**Deputy Executive Secretary of United Nations Economic and Social
Commission for Asia and the Pacific**

**Opening remarks for the launch of the
Asia and the Pacific SDG Progress Report 2024**

15 February 2024, Time: 11:00-12:00 hrs, Venue: FCCT

Dear colleagues,

Welcome to the launch of the *Asia and the Pacific SDG Progress Report 2024: Showcasing Transformative Actions*.

The report provides an overview of current progress towards the SDGs in the Asia-Pacific region.

This year's report continues to shine a spotlight on success stories and trends and has benefitted from the substantive contributions from 8 other UN agencies.

The report also draws out priorities and opportunities for enhancing data availability on SDG indicators, especially for the most vulnerable population groups.

Please allow me to highlight some key results from the report:

At the current pace, Asia-Pacific will not achieve the 17 SDGs before 2062, making a significant 32-year delay.

At the regional level, our report shows that:

- Progress towards the 2030 Agenda remains uneven and inadequate.

- Goals with most substantial progress since 2015 are no poverty (Goal 1) and industry, innovation and infrastructure (Goal 9).
- Urgent climate action (Goal 13) is imperative, notably due to its ongoing regression.
- Small island developing States (SIDS) stand out as the most in need of support, facing significant challenges in progressing towards the SDGs.
- The effective implementation of the SDGs varies significantly across different segments of the population. For instance, the report reveals that women and girls continue to face considerable challenges when it comes to accessing education and employment opportunities.

Despite the slow progress in the region, there are some commendable practices in individual countries that showcase strategies to strengthen data systems and policy implementation which will help countries to accelerate progress towards achieving the SDGs.

The report shows how data is being used to address climate change adaptation and mitigation, for biodiversity conservation, to build digital skills, reduce child labour, prevent child marriage, and to better measure stateless populations.

You will see that increased capacity in data management and better quality of data lies at the heart of all these improved policies.

I am certain that there are many other good practices beyond these I have mentioned and am pleased to see countries across the Asia-Pacific region are increasingly using data to inform decision making.

But despite improvements in data availability, the pace of improvement in data availability has decelerated and significant data gaps exist.

Gender equality (Goal 5) and peace, justice and strong institutions (Goal 16) continue to have the least available data.

However, Asia-Pacific countries have shown a strong commitment to making better use of the data they do have, including through the integration of SDG indicators into Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs).

In 2023, nearly half the countries conducting VNRs in the region integrated relevant SDG indicators into their progress dashboards.

Finally, I would like to extend my sincere appreciation and thanks to our partners in the UN system who have contributed to the preparation of this report.

Thank you!

I now would like to officially launch the *Asia and the Pacific SDG Progress Report 2024*.

**** [Report video](#) will be played here ****