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Introductory Statement (as prepared for delivery)

**Agenda Item 5: Management Issues
78th Commission session**

**Friday, 27 May 2022
10:00-12:00 hrs.
ES location: ESCAP Hall**

Honourable Chair, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

It is a pleasure to be with you during these deliberations on management issues. Allow me to say a few brief words about each of the documents you are considering today.

(a) Proposed programme plan for 2023

The proposed programme plan of ESCAP for 2023 (Document ESCAP/78/28) is developed based on the endorsement of the General Assembly's¹ of the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on management reform².

It also takes into account additional requirements in annual programme planning requested by member States through General Assembly resolutions³ on programme planning.

¹ Resolution 72/266

² [A/72/7/Add.24](#)

³ A/RES/75/243 and A/RES/76/236

The proposed programme plan provides the overall orientation for ESCAP and details 13 frameworks for each subprogramme and subprogramme component. It provides an outline of how ESCAP will work with member States and partners, including subregional organizations, to support the acceleration of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development while recovering from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

An earlier draft was circulated to the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives (ACPR) and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission, and comments received from the ACPR were incorporated in the current document.

Following the Commission's endorsement, the proposed programme plan will be reviewed by the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC) and the ACABQ. It will then be considered by the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly, as part of the programme budget document, which is expected to be adopted by the General Assembly at the end of 2022.

The secretariat seeks your endorsement of the proposed programme plan for 2023. We count on your governments' support as it goes through the approval process with the CPC and the Fifth Committee.

(b) Overview of partnerships, extrabudgetary contributions and capacity development

Allow me to now turn to the overview of ESCAP partnerships and the outcomes of capacity development activities funded by extrabudgetary contributions received in 2021 (Document ESCAP/78/29).

The year 2021 proved to be even more challenging than 2020 for the Asia-Pacific region, with new waves of the pandemic and recurring lockdowns.

Against this backdrop, we continued to implement technical cooperation programmes, and expanded and strengthened partnerships across the board.

Working together with UN development system entities, in particular through the Regional Collaborative Platform and its issue-based coalitions, ESCAP focused on supporting sustainable recovery from the pandemic and accelerating progress towards the SDGs.

In addition, ESCAP joined hands with UN country teams and Resident Coordinators in direct support to the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework process with the governments of India, Kyrgyzstan, Maldives, Mongolia, Thailand, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, as well as Pacific islands countries and territories.

ESCAP continued to work with its regional and subregional partners and member States. Highlighted in the document are some of these examples, including enhancing complementarities between the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and the 2030 Agenda and strengthening partnerships with members of the Council of Regional Organizations of the Pacific.

In 2021, through various activities, we intensified our preparation for the Global South-South Development Expo, which will be co-hosted in September by Thailand, the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation and ESCAP . The overarching theme of the Expo is “Advancing South-South and Triangular Cooperation for Sustainable COVID-19 Recovery: Towards a smart and resilient future.” It will be the first time this Global Expo is held in Asia and the Pacific. I look forward to your participation to showcase our region to the globe.

ESCAP continued its engagements with existing and new donors. The total contributions received for technical cooperation grew to \$24 million in 2021 from \$22.7 million the year before.

I would like to express the secretariat's deep appreciation to member States, donors and development partners, many of whom are represented here, for their continuous support to ESCAP.

(c) Report on the evaluation activities of the Commission during the biennium 2020 - 2021

Finally, let me turn to the report on the evaluation activities of the Commission during the biennium 2020-2021.

Document ESCAP/78/30 is issued in support of resolution 66/15 on strengthening the evaluation function of ESCAP and is in response to the Commission's request for periodic evaluation of the secretariat's programme of work, including the work of divisions, subregional offices and regional institutions. It summarizes the main findings and recommendations contained in two subprogramme and nine project evaluations completed during the biennium 2020–2021 and the steps taken by the secretariat to address those recommendations. It also outlines the key steps we have taken to improve the quality and utility of evaluations at ESCAP.

Thank you, Chair.