

United Nations Day for South-South Cooperation 2021

“South-South cooperation: solidarity in support of a more inclusive, resilient and sustainable future”

**10 September 2021, 9–11 a.m. New York Time
Virtual High-level Panel Discussion**

Statement

United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP)

It is the honour of UNESCAP to join the commemoration of the United Nations Day for South-South Cooperation today. South-South cooperation, which represents the solidarity of the countries in the South, has been driving cooperation among the developing countries in advancing sustainable development and responding to global threats such as COVID-19.

As a regional commission, South-South cooperation has always been at the heart of our core business and a key approach in partnership. It underpins our research and analysis; intergovernmental and normative work; and technical assistance programmes. South-South cooperation is instrumental in all our regional issues, especially those that are multi-sectoral and transboundary such as sustainable connectivity, environment and ecosystem challenges and, disaster risk reduction and management.

For example, sustainable regional connectivity, which spans our transport, information and communications technology and energy infrastructure as well as trade facilitation work, has been a major focus of ESCAP and one that is gaining renewed importance in the COVID-19 era. In the area of transport, ESCAP launched an online resource to monitor national policy responses on freight transport connectivity during the COVID-19 pandemic to help member States access the relevant information, to consider coordinating policies and to provide support to the global observatory on border-crossing status due to COVID-19.

On trade facilitation, ESCAP has a long-standing programme which focuses on supporting member States in making trade processes “paperless”. Through the Framework Agreement on Facilitation of Cross-border Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific, electronic exchange of trade data and documents across borders effects the reduction of trade costs and safer and more efficient

and transparent trade procedures for traders and custom officials amid the COVID-19 pandemic in the region.

Turning to ESCAP's capacity development and research programme, the Asia Pacific Research and Training Network on Trade (ARTNeT), which was established in 2005 for increasing quality and quantity of relevant research in the region in the areas of trade, investment, integration and development, has organized a series of knowledge sharing webinars and workshops, including on topics such as the adaptation to digital trade era, harnessing trade for faster recovery and generating digital COVID certificate in support of cross-border travel and tourism recovery.

Beyond the substantive work and to scale up support to member States in South-South and triangular cooperation in the region, ESCAP, together with the Government of Thailand and United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation Regional Office for Asia and Pacific (UNOSSC), organized the first Asia-Pacific Directors-General (DG) Forum on South-South and Triangular Cooperation in June 2018. The purpose of the DG Forum is to serve as the regional platform for member States in the Asia-Pacific region (1) to deliberate on the challenges and opportunities of South-South cooperation; (2) to strengthen the institutional framework of South-South and triangular cooperation in the region; and (3) to share experiences, good practices and success stories in promoting South-South and triangular cooperation.

The 4th Asia-Pacific DG Forum is planned to be held back-to-back with the Global South-South Development Expo which will be organized in Bangkok in September 2022 under the theme: 'Advancing South-South and Triangular Cooperation for Sustainable COVID-19 Recovery: Towards a smart and resilient future.' ESCAP will engage South-South Cooperation partners in the lead-up to this event to help match the offer and the needs of member States especially for pandemic recovery and the acceleration of the achievement of the SDGs in the Asia-Pacific region. We believe that the Expo will build on the solidarity of Countries to support the development of green economy through digitalization and towards a more inclusive, resilient and sustainable future.

List of Activities on South-South Cooperation 2018-2022

No.	Date	Title	Organized by
1.	27 – 29 June 2018	Regional consultation on South-South Cooperation in Asia and the Pacific The inaugural Asia-Pacific Directors-General Forum on South-South and Triangular Cooperation was held on 29 June 2018	ESCAP , UNOSSC, and Thailand
2.	12 September 2018	Commemoration of the United Nations Day for South-South Cooperation	ESCAP , UNOSSC, and Thailand
3.	27 November 2018	Asia-Pacific Directors-General Forum for South-South and Triangular Cooperation: Review of regional South-South and triangular cooperation in the context of the BAPA+40 Conference	ESCAP and Indonesia, with the support by UNOSSC
4.	12-13 February 2019	Regional technical meeting in preparation for BAPA+40: Perspectives and experiences in measuring South-South cooperation	UNDP, ESCAP , UNOSSC, Southern Voice, Network of Southern Think Tanks and Reality of Aid Network
5.	19 March 2019	Side Event: “Shaping the Future of Regional South-South Cooperation: Sharing the ASEAN Experiences and Nurturing Synergies across Regions”	UNOSSC, ESCAP , Thailand, Viet Nam, ASEAN Secretariat and The Asia Foundation
6.	25 February 2020	Student Competition on triangular cooperation for sustainable development	UNOSSC and ESCAP
7.	22 July 2020	Webinar: Supporting SMEs in response to COVID-19 pandemic in Asia-Pacific	UNOSSC and ESCAP
8.	25 November 2020	3rd Asia-Pacific Directors-General Forum for South-South and Triangular Cooperation: The Role of South-South Cooperation in Building Back Better from COVID-19 Pandemic in Asia and the Pacific	ESCAP , UNOSSC, Indonesia and Thailand
9.	14 September 2021	Intergovernmental Organisations Meeting on South-South and Triangular Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific Region 2021	UNOSSC, ESCAP , UNDP
10.	March 2022	Preparatory meeting for 4 th Asia-Pacific Directors-General Forum for South-South and Triangular Cooperation	ESCAP , UNOSSC and Thailand
11.	September 2022	4 th Asia-Pacific Directors-General Forum for South-South and Triangular Cooperation	ESCAP , UNOSSC and Thailand