Ministerial Panel

Agenda Item 2(a): Building back better from COVID-19 while advancing the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda in Asia and the Pacific

Session 1: Ministerial panel and country statements on the APFSD/HLPF theme: “Building back better from COVID-19 while advancing the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda in Asia and the Pacific”

Venue: ESCAP Hall and online

Time: Day 1 – Monday 28th March 2022: 10:30-12:00 hours (Bangkok time)

Background

The magnitude of the challenge to attain the 17 Sustainable Development Goals by 2030 in Asia and the Pacific now is even greater as the pandemic slows or reverses many of the region’s hard-won development gains. The thematic focus of the Ninth Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development, the outcomes of which will inform the 2022 High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, is “Building back better from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) while advancing the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.”

The following Sustainable Development Goals will be reviewed at the 2022 Forum and frame the focus of this discussion: Goal 4 on quality education; Goal 5 on gender equality; Goal 14 on life below water; Goal 15 on life on land; and Goal 17 on partnerships for the goals. In this connection, this agenda item will allow reviewing challenges and integrated approaches to reshape the dynamics of recovery—with focus given to inclusion, empowerment and longer-term sustainability and resilience. Drawing from the highlights of document ESCAP/RFSD/2022/1, the discussion will include national recovery strategies to not only address vulnerabilities within and among countries, but to also re-ignite and accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through policy action in the following areas:

- Aligning and raising the ambition of national recovery strategies with the 2030 Agenda and leaving no one behind;
- Protecting and investing in people and enhancing resilience, especially women and vulnerable population groups;
- Accelerating the transition to inclusive green economies; and
- Strengthening regional cooperation and partnerships.

During 2021 countries in Asia and the Pacific began to emerge from what we hope is the worst of the pandemic, but to a reality of rising poverty and inequalities and converging crises. The need to shift to a more sustainable, inclusive, and resilient development pathway is clearer than ever. Transformative whole of government solutions are needed to address the fault lines which have made the region and its people vulnerable to the pandemic and climate change. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development provides the compass for countries to set in
motion a sustained and sustainable recovery. But efforts need to be redoubled to put countries back on track towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and build back better.

To this end, the distinguished panelists will elaborate on country and cooperation efforts to manage the challenge of shifting priorities and limited fiscal space for keeping SDGs at the forefront of the recovery vision and plans.

Member States and stakeholders are invited to comment, share their perspectives as well as good practices for building a more inclusive, sustainable, and resilient recovery in the post-COVID-19 era and to renew regional efforts needed to attain the Sustainable Development Goals so that we leave no country behind.

Programme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tentative Programme</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Agenda Item 2a: Building back better from COVID-19 while advancing the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda in Asia and the Pacific</strong></td>
<td>30 min 10:30-12:00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Opening** | Moderator: Ms. Valerie Julliand, UN Resident Coordinator of Indonesia  
The Moderator will frame the discussion with reference to the theme of Building back better from COVID-19 while advancing the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda in Asia and the Pacific and the 5 SDGs under review | 5 min 10:30-10:35 |
| **Panel Discussion** | The moderator will lead the discussion by posing 2 questions to each of the honourable panelists.  
Panelists:  
- H.E. Ms. Ariunzaya Ayush, Minister of Labor and Social Protection of Mongolia  
- H.E. Mr. Jone Usamate, Minister for Infrastructure and Meteorological Services, Lands and Mineral Resources of Fiji  
- H.E. Mr. Ali Sabry, Minister of Justice of Sri Lanka  
- H.E Mr. Muhammetgeldi Serdarov, Acting Minister of Finance and Economy of Turkmenistan | 45 min 10:35-11:20 |
| **Interventions** |  
- Intervention from Ms. Kanni Wignaraja, UN Assistant Secretary General, UNDP Assistant Administrator and Director of the UNDP Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific, UNDP  
- Intervention from Mr. Shixin Chen, Vice President overseeing South Asia and Central West Asia Operations, ADB | 10 min 11:20-11:30 |
| **Dialogue with Member States and stakeholders** | The Chair of the Forum will invite interventions from Member States and stakeholders on their own raised ambitions and promising practices for an inclusive and resilient recovery and provide further guidance on priority areas in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. | 30 min 11:30-12:00 |