

Draft

Statement to be delivered by
Nepali Delegation at the 81st Session of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)

Bangkok, Thailand
21 April 2025

……
……..

Madam Chair,

It is my honour to address the eighty-first session of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP).

This session's theme 'Regional cooperation for resilient and sustainable urban development in Asia and the Pacific' is both pertinent and timely.

Urbanization is a planetary megatrend, with our region being in the forefront.

But the development of infrastructures and services has not kept pace. Our cities lack adequate housing, sufficient public transport and a healthy environment.

In the same way, our cities are vulnerable to disasters and climate change.

Therefore, we have a lot to do for resilient and sustainable urbanization, starting with proper plans for our cities and settlements.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Asia and the Pacific is a region of diversity and potential. We have not only the largest nations of the world in area and population but also the smallest ones.

This region is home to hundreds of ethnicities and thousands of languages.

We also have enormous human and natural resources, which can be harnessed for our development and prosperity.

In this context, we must work together to turn our cities into engines of economic growth, innovation, and social transformation.

Distinguished Delegates,

Nepal is also experiencing a rapid urbanization.

Our urban policies and plans focus on sustainable and resilient urbanization aligned with the New Urban Agenda, the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement.

Equity and inclusion are integral values of our urban development.

We are committed to ensuring human security, comfort and well-being while building cities and settlements.

We are planning to develop smart cities equipped with modern infrastructures and technologies.

For this, regional and international cooperation is indispensable.

ESCAP's role as a regional platform is more crucial than ever in this regard.

Nepal stands ready to collaborate actively with UNESCAP members, other partners and stakeholders for human-centric sustainable urbanization.

Distinguished Delegates,

History illustrates that cities are the cradles of culture and civilization.

The unprecedented development of new and emerging technologies including ICTs and artificial intelligence has the power to spawn a new generation of smart cities.

The transformed cities will revolutionize all aspects of our life.

However, significant challenges remain in harnessing this transformative potential.

Particularly, we are one of the most vulnerable regions to climate change and disasters, with many least developed, landlocked, mountainous and low-lying small island countries.

Against this backdrop, we must promptly address the challenges facing the entire spectrum of human settlements, from remote villages to major cities.

Progress should start with communities as local actions are the building blocks for green, just and resilient future.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the New Urban Agenda, the Paris Agreement on climate change, and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction together provide a roadmap for a more sustainable and resilient world.

In addition, the Summit of the Future last year adopted a pact that calls for ensuring just, safe, healthy, accessible, resilient and sustainable cities and affordable housing for all.

But we cannot deliver these promises alone without substantial international and regional cooperation, particularly financing is crucial.

Let us join hands to harness urbanization as a force for healthy planet and prosperous communities.

Thank you.