Statement

Agenda item 4: Review of Regional Progress and Opportunities for Achieving the SDGs
(a) Progress Towards the Attainment of Sustainable Development Goals 1, 2, 13, 16, and 17 at the Regional Level

Mr. Chair,

The global compounding and interconnected crises exacerbated persistent challenges and jeopardized the realization of sustainable development goals. The convergence of crises, caused by the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, and conflicts, has worsened impacts on poverty, food and nutrition, health, education, and global economic disruption, as well as undermined peace and security, including creating inequality between and among countries.

To respond to the current challenges, there is a need to ensure that policies across different sectors are coherent and aligned with the SDGs. This requires integrating the goals and targets of the SDGs into national and local development plans, integrating social, economic, and environmental dimensions, and ensuring a holistic approach to sustainable development.

The SDGs are ambitious, and the resources, expertise, and capacity needed to achieve the SDGs in Timor-Leste are significant. Mobilizing domestic and international resources will be vital, and partnerships have a crucial role to play.

Mr. Chair,

SDG16 is an overarching goal for TL's development strategy, as laid out in the 2011–2030 Strategic Development Plan. To this end, it also featured prominently in 2023 and 2019 Timor-Leste’s VNR.

Recent examples of SDG16 advancement include:
• Implementation of Justice Sector Reform; One Stop Shop in all municipalities in order to allow access, throughout the country, to the services of the Central Administration;
• Public administrative reform; civil service reform (transparency portal); and
• The local power process, through the phased decentralization of the government and the municipal assemblies.

Strong political leadership was the major factor that helped Timor-Leste overcome its challenges. It fosters the governance system by improving and consolidating its democratic institutions to be more efficient, as well as promoting public participation, stakeholders’ engagement, and enhancing mechanisms of accountability and thrust.

Mr. Chair,
Climate change is negatively affecting small island developing countries and least developed countries like Timor-Leste. The COP28 decision has addressed an important mitigation measure for promoting renewable energy technology, gradually reducing fossil fuel-based energy consumption, and ensuring 1.5 degrees Celsius of the global temperature limit. We underline the importance of regional, south-south, and triangular cooperation for the transfer of technology, financial support, and capacity building in the area of renewable energy to the most vulnerable countries, which is urgently required to enable LDCs and SIDS in the region to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050.

Lastly, we call on ESCAP to intensify its support for the VNR reporting countries in the preparation and post-VNR to accelerate the SDGs implementation at the country level.

I thank you.