

**Pakistan Statement at the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development,
Bangkok 21-22 May 2015**

Agenda Item 4

Mr. Chairman,

Excellences and Distinguished Delegates,

Let me take this opportunity to congratulate Mr. of on assuming the Chairmanship of this Forum. I am confident that, under your able stewardship, this Forum would successfully complete its deliberations. I assure you the full cooperation of my delegation in this regard.

2. As we shape the development agenda for the next decades, it is high time to identify key challenges and opportunities of sustainable development for the region. We need to set accurate priorities for integration of economic, social and environmental development in our future policies and plans across relevant sectors.

3. In this regard, the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development can take a significant place to underpin our collective efforts. However, our joint endeavours should be complementary to the global agenda and based on principles of volunteerism and state-led process. Through this regional forum we are looking forward to our constructive contribution to the forthcoming global High Level Political Forum (HLPF) on Sustainable Development.

4. We note findings of the recently released *Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific 2015* which informs a small increase in the growth of region's developing economies (i.e. from 5.8 in 2015 to 5.9 in 2016). The reduction in extreme poverty and forecast for lower inflation rate for the next year are encouraging. Nevertheless, inequality, inclusiveness and cross-sectoral structural reforms would remain daunting challenges for the entire region.

Mr. Chairman,

5. The developing countries of the Asia-Pacific are facing a vicious cycle of poverty, depleting natural resources, and environmental degradation. This must be transformed into a virtuous cycle of eradicating poverty, reducing inequalities and delivering universal access to water, food, education, health, and energy to all.

6. Pakistan recognize that poverty can only be brought down through a holistic approach by promoting pro-poor growth, creating employment opportunities, equality of accesses and ensuring benefits to reach all-- at the grass root level.

7. The *Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific 2015* recognizes that strong infrastructure and connectivity are pivotal in realizing the actual growth potential of the region. Regions with better transport and information networks are progressing more than those without the necessary rail and road linkages and ICT infrastructure.

8. The post-2015 Development Agenda will address the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. Democratic governance, the rule of law, macro-economic stability, promotion of human rights, and institution building will continue to be critical enablers for sustainable development.

9. Data collection and statistics would play a pivotal role in monitoring and implementation of the evolving post 2015 development agenda and SDGs. However, data collection, analysis and dissemination should build synergies and avoid duplication of effort in order to produce effective results.

10. Accountability should be people- centered. This is best done at the national level. Parliaments, audit institutions and civil society actors are good vehicles for enhancing this objective. Self-Assessment should be the guiding principle. In this regard our work should not be pre-emptive to the global efforts.

11. It is heartening to note that the women, youth and children are at the center of our efforts, not merely as beneficiaries but too as potential contributors. They jointly help in poverty eradication, protecting environment, and reducing inequalities. Their participatory involvement in our policies, plans and implementation is required to ensure inclusive growth and development.

Mr. Chairman,

12. In Pakistan, the MDGs have provided us with concrete socio-economic targets to work towards poverty alleviation, good governance, and social justice. Poverty in Pakistan is being reduced. On areas including child mortality and improved maternal health work is in progress. Our efforts to promote women empowerment through appropriate legislation and by enhancing their representation in national and provincial assemblies has been exemplary.

13. Although, our success has been slowed down by the security constraints, our fight against terrorism and massive natural disasters, we as a nation are determined to overcome these obstacles.

I thank you all.

Accountability and Monitoring Mechanism

Appropriate incentives for governments and other stakeholders should be built into the design to ensure that all commitments regarding SDGs and financing for development are fulfilled.

Accountability should be people- centered. This is best done at the national level. Parliaments, audit institutions and civil society actors are good vehicles for enhancing this objective. Self-Assessment should be the guiding principle.

A universal, inclusive, broad and coherent accountability framework should be stated, global and universally applicable. Appropriate incentives for governments and other stakeholders should be built into the design to ensure that all commitments regarding SDGs and financing for development are fulfilled.

Accountability should be people- centered. This is best done at the national level. Parliaments, audit institutions and civil society actors are good vehicles for enhancing this objective. Self-Assessment should be the guiding principle.