



Asia Pacific Regional CSO Engagement Mechanism

Session 7. Regional Roadmap

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NGO MG, Asia Pacific CSO Engagement Mechanism, Statement on the Regional Roadmap

I speak here on behalf of Asia Pacific Research Network and the NGO Constituency of the AP-RCEM.

The Regional Roadmap represents the aspiration of the region towards achieving the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda. There is no doubt that there is substantial space and need for regional cooperation on attaining the SDGs, and in particular for facilitating the MOI. There is no denying this will be of immense benefit to the developing and least developed countries in the region. It is clear that unless major progress made on the MOI, most countries will find it difficult to achieve the SDGs.

From last year we have seen negotiations on the Regional Roadmap. It has weakened considerably from last year's version, and we are alarmed to see absence of any concrete doables and deliverables. There are glaring gaps, for example on trade. However we understand the document is a living document, and therefore can be changed. We hope it can become more constructive and effective in the next iteration.

We have a few constructive recommendations;

First, on trade, include a comprehensive regional SDG compatibility impact assessment of the trade and investment agreements, involving CSO participation in the process who can support government and UN agencies. We also urge the Secretariat to support national level SDG impact assessment as and when governments request for it.

We would like to reiterate our recommendation that the UNESCAP secretariat and member-states establish an open and participatory regional mechanism that will evaluate the potential environmental and socio-economic impacts of new and emerging technologies that are promoted as solutions to development challenges and crises.

On financing, we ask for continued research, analysis and consensus building initiatives in the areas of financing for development to enhance regional knowledge of infrastructure financing, including public-private partnerships; and secondly to critically enhance effectiveness and accountability mechanisms on PPPs.

We also call upon the Member States to renew discussion on the Regional tax forum so that at the regional level, developing and least developed country voices are better included in the

planning and implementation of tax cooperation mechanisms between countries, so that issue of the gigantic of illicit financial flows that they are losing is addressed.

Finally we ask you to respect the principles of stakeholder engagement and provide institutional space and financial support to facilitate and improve engagement, especially with CSOs, which are working under challenging conditions not only in terms of their legitimate engagement spaces but also financial resources. We urge you to do this, for the people cannot be left behind in a regional roadmap to achieve development justice.