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Time allocation: (5 minutes)

Excellencies, Ladies, and Gentlemen, good morning.

I am honored to address you this morning in my capacity as Chair of the third session of the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD) in 2016. It is my pleasure to revisit with you some of our major achievements in leaving no one behind and building a robust architecture for achieving sustainable development in our region through the APFSD.

I am particularly proud of our achievements at the third session of the APFSD in respect to recommending the form and function of the Forum and on setting the foundation for the development and implementation of a regional roadmap.

As a region, our collective efforts enabled us to contribute substantive regional perspectives to the global debate and in particular for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. I reported the outcomes of the third session of the APFSD at the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) at a moderated session held on 15 July 2016 with the theme "Regional Experiences".

In my presentation I highlighted the key messages from the past session of APFSD and underlined the need for regional action, and the important role of ESCAP in coordinating regional action. In my capacity of Chair, I recalled the importance of starting the implementation of the 2030 Agenda immediately and identified the important role of ESCAP in carrying implementation forward. I mentioned the agreement by Member States to identify priority areas in the region with a particular emphasis on cooperation and the means of implementation to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Finally, I underlined that the APFSD recommended an effective regional response to address cross-cutting issues to ensure that no one is left behind.

The past APFSD, which was attended by more than 400 government officials, civil society and other stakeholders over three days, including 3 associated events and 4 side events, stood out for decisive deliberations.

It benefited from wide ranging sharing of information, especially from "early movers" on SDGs implementation and suggested how ESCAP could coordinate regional action and implementation of SDGs.

I trust that the present and future sessions of APFSD will continue to embody the same spirit of collaboration and multi-stakeholder engagement that has become the mark of the past APFSD.

I sincerely hope that the APFSD will continue to play an important role in the region, allowing for dialogue on progress on the SDGs, exchange on best practices, and recommendations for

policy and investment options in order to achieve sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific.

I am looking forward to our deliberations in the next couple of days. I thank you.