

11th South Asia Economic Summit

4-7 December

Islamabad, Pakistan

Concurrent Panel A-2

Round Table on Regional Cooperation for Achieving SDGs in South Asia

Panel Organizers: UNESCAP South and South-West Asia Office and SDPI

The Panel aimed at a comprehensive assessment of the baseline scenarios and the policy challenges required to frame a coordinated regional approach to achieving the SDGs in South Asia. With its grossly inadequate share in global income and assets, which is unacceptably disproportionate to its share of world population, the subregional countries face crippling resource deficits and capacity constraints, most of which can be overcome only through collective action. The SDGs provide a common non-political development agenda, to which all South Asian countries are committed as signatories, which can be utilized to reinvigorate regional cooperation for achieving the common goals. This Session discussed how regional/subregional cooperation and coordination can support and complement the effectiveness of national mechanisms for achieving the SDGs in South Asia, also highlighting the importance of inclusive and effective multi-stakeholder partnerships. The Session also discussed the possibilities and prospects of alternative platforms for regional cooperation, to complement and strengthen existing subregional organizations in their delivery, and how the United Nations Development System can provide support in this regard. The main points for discussion were:

- Review of the progress in implementation of the 2030 Development Agenda in South Asia and the key challenges and opportunities for the subregion in achieving the SDGs
- Ways of utilizing regional partnerships and cooperation as a strategy to strengthen the means of implementation for achieving the SDGs in South Asia
- Identifying gaps in technology and financing, and exploring innovative ways of mobilizing resources for the SDGs
- Assessment of the statistical capacity preparedness and regional monitoring frameworks needed to support the implementation of SDGs
- The potential of regional networks of think-tanks in fostering regional cooperation by way of data generation, knowledge sharing, capacity-building and other means of support
- The role of partnerships between regional think-tanks and the United Nations Development System

Chair: Mr Riaz Fatyana, Convener of the National Parliamentary Task force on Sustainable Development Goals in the National Assembly, Government of Pakistan

Moderator: Dr. Abid Q. Suleri, Executive Director, Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI), Pakistan

Keynote Address: Dr. Nagesh Kumar, Head, UNESCAP South and South-West Asia Office, New Delhi

Speakers:

Mr. Shahid Naeem, Chief, Ministry of Planning Development & Reform, Government of Pakistan

Dr. Dushni Weerakon, Executive Director, Institute of Policy Studies (IPS), Sri Lanka

Dr. Posh Raj Panday, Chairman, South Asia Watch on Trade, Economics & Environment (SAWTEE), Nepal

Ms. Rukhsana Naveed, Parliamentary secretary on Climate Change, Government of Pakistan

Ms. Kanwal Shauzab, Parliamentary secretary on SDGs, Government of Pakistan

Mr. Hemanta Kharel, President, Nepal Council of World Affairs, Nepal