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REMARKS

BY

**H.E. MR. COLLEN V. KELAPILE
PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC
AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (ECOSOC)**

AT

**SIDE EVENT ORGANIZED BY THE GOVERNMENT OF MALDIVES AND
ESCAP ON "ASIA-PACIFIC RISKScape @ 1.5°C: SUBREGIONAL
PATHWAYS FOR ADAPTATION AND RESILIENCE"**

**DURING THE 78TH SESSION OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL
COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC (ESCAP)**

**25 MAY 2022
12:45 – 13:45 HOURS**

**UN CONFERENCE CENTRE – MEETING ROOM A
BANGKOK, THAILAND**

Please check against delivery.

- **Excellencies;**
- **Madam Executive Secretary;**
- **Distinguished Guests;**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen;**

1. Let me, at the outset, commend the Government of the Maldives and the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) for convening this important side event on **“Asia-Pacific Riskscape at 1.5 °C: Subregional Pathways for Adaptation and Resilience.”**
2. I appreciate your kind invitation for me to speak at this event, that is showcasing sub-regional pathways for adaptation and resilience in the Asia-Pacific region.
3. This is a timely side event, that seeks to address some of the multi-hazard risks highlighted in the most recent reports issued by the **Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), ESCAP’s 2021 Asia Pacific Disaster Report** and the **2022 Asia and the Pacific SDG Progress Report.**

4. The findings of these reports are alarming, as they reveal the sad reality that there are multiple risks arising from climate change that make many regions of the world increasingly vulnerable.
5. It is in light of these findings that the United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres' rightly categorized the IPCC Report as "**code red for humanity.**"
6. Similarly, the **2022 Asia and the Pacific SDG Progress Report** demonstrated that every Asia-Pacific sub-region has regressed on climate action.
7. Against such a gloomy backdrop, I am very pleased that the Asia-Pacific region has already started initiatives to build systematic resilience, involving its five sub-regions.
8. I commend this bottom-up approach, that requires each sub-region to develop its own "riskscape" or risk profile capturing sub-regional specificities and

identifying key adaptation priorities and capacities for sub-regional actions.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

9. ESCAP has been a trailblazer in developing complex risk scenarios for its sub-regions. It must be a source of pride for the Commission and its Member States that today ESCAP is launching a Report that has identified a set of risk-informed and cost-effective adaptation priorities for policy action in a world that is getting increasingly riskier.

10. I am confident that today's discussions will inform Member States and Associate Members of the Commission, sub-regional organizations, academia, civil society, and other key stakeholders of the challenges and opportunities for accelerating adaptation and resilience pathways in the Asia-Pacific region.

11. It is also pleasing to note that over the past two decades, many countries in Asia and the Pacific have strengthened their resilience against natural hazards.
12. With increasingly robust early warning systems and response mechanisms, the region is making notable strides in disaster preparedness as fewer people are dying because of natural calamities.
13. However, these systems and mechanisms still have critical gaps and unmet needs in High Risk, Low capacity Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries, and Small Island Developing States of the Asia-Pacific region which require urgent attention.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

14. It is worth noting that, while the overarching trends in climate change are global, the translation of the impacts of the warming trends is different between each sub-region of the Asia Pacific.

15. Therefore, each sub-region requires its own risk profile with sub-regional specificities to build tailor-made resilience from multiple hazards.
16. Even at current level below 1.5 degrees Celsius, the increasing intensity of extreme weather events are already being felt by the Asia Pacific region, thus calling for increased investments in key adaptation measures while also implementing mitigation targets.
17. Given the alarming situation, a paradigm shift is needed to reduce climate impacts and build resilience, thereby closing the gaps between adaptation and mitigation.
18. As one of the ways to address the adverse climate impacts, the **2021 Glasgow Climate Pact** laid emphasis on adaptation and resilience tracks of climate action.
19. Support for adaptation and resilience is therefore a moral, economic, and social imperative.

20. To this end, I am delighted that the focus of the upcoming COP 27 in Egypt will be on Climate Adaptation, Mitigation and Financing.
21. As we traverse the road to COP 27, I expect to see progress in these areas from the Asia-Pacific region.
22. It is my sincere hope that this side event will create the necessary momentum, and galvanize political will to accelerate the implementation of the commitments made in the **Paris Agreement** and the **Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction**.
23. Let me conclude, Excellencies, by stressing the imperative of reversing the negative trend in the implementation of SDG 13 on Climate Action in the Asia-Pacific region. More work is still needed to make a remarkable turnaround in climate impacts.
24. I look forward to your fruitful deliberations and recommendations.
25. **I thank you for your kind attention.**