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Mr. Chairperson,

First of I would like to express my confidence that under your able leadership this forum will review the progress in social development of this in Asia and the Pacific Region successfully and come out with consensus plan of action for the future.

Mr. Chair,

Due to substantial progress in social and health sector Nepal's elderly population has increased from 6.5% in 2001 to 9.1% in 2011 making the total population 26.4 million from 23 million of 2001. Of the elderly rural population, 47.12% is economically active that includes 59.7% of males and 34.3% of females, but urban elderly population is economically inactive.

The above statistics suggests that like in many other Asian countries, many of the elderly in Nepal are living in rural rather than urban settings, both in terms of size and proportion. Most likely, this is due to a low level of urbanization (17% of the total population living in urban centers) and many elderly not willing to change their rural into urban lifestyles. Also, the elderly population prefers to live in a traditional rural society because of the presence of strong family ties. Over 80% of elderly are living with their children (97.3% with sons and 2.7% with daughters) and over 60% of male elderly still head household in Nepal.

Mr. Chair,

Multiple motivations schemes are essential to improve the caring of elderly people, for example, tax break and paid leave for a few days for employees who take care of their parents. The government and non-governmental sectors also have established service centers to take care of the elderly people, however, social welfare system is still not sufficient in Nepal. In 1995, the Government of Nepal introduced a pension scheme for people of 75+ years of age and 60+ year old widows, which now amounts to Rs 500 per month per person. From the Ninth Five Year Plan (1997-2002), GoN started family-based security system to improve the living conditions of elderly. GoN enacted Senior Citizens Policy and Working Policy 2002, National Action Plan for Senior Citizens 2005, Senior Citizens Health Facilities Program Implementation Guidelines, and Senior Citizens Regulation 2009 to implement the policies and programs that ensure the social security to the elderly.

The Old-Age-Allowance (OAA) is a step towards the fulfillment of the Directive Principle of the Constitution and the commitment expressed in the international forum on ageing. Pensions are safe income for the remainder of life; however, a large bulk of the population in Nepal receives no pension and must depend on familial support and personal savings. Despite being small in amount, the pension has

been a subsidy to purchase medicine, food, and/or clothing and has given strength to elderly people. Rural dwellers appreciate the pension more highly than the urban dwellers.

Mr, Chair,

The following programs and activities need to be addressed in the future to mainstream the older people in development.

- * Extension of senior citizen health care service.
- * Establish geriatric ward in the hospitals
- * Launch programs like Senior Citizen Insurance Scheme
- * To provide wider subsidy and concessional facilities in basic services
- * Implementation of programs through National Plan of Action on Senior Citizens.
- * Include senior citizen matters in school curriculum.

Mr. Chair

At the end I again would like to appreciate initiation of UNESCAP social sector issues in this region.
Thank you Chair,