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**Introductory Statement as Delivered by Dr. Noeleen Heyzer,
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the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific**

**Agenda Item 4: Management Issues
69th Session of the Commission
Bangkok, Thailand, on 26 April 2013**

Madame Chair,
Distinguished delegates,

Introduction

It gives me great pleasure to introduce this session on management issues. At the last session of the Commission I underlined the fact that ESCAP's work is underpinned by three key drivers: results, partnerships, and building ESCAP as a learning organization.

We strive, through our programme of work, to make a real and lasting difference, by achieving results that have a positive impact on the lives of people across the Asia-Pacific region. It is this goal which is at heart of all of ESCAP's subprogrammes.

In these efforts, we recognize the power of partnerships. ESCAP works with a number of different partners, and seeks different types of partnerships – often far beyond funding. We look for skills, ideas, local knowledge, technologies, and networks that other partners can offer, so that together we can achieve the best results and make the greatest difference in the countries of Asia and the Pacific.

We continue to build ESCAP as a learning organization, finding new solutions and new ways of doing our work better. Learning from our experiences, through effective monitoring and evaluation systems, is an essential foundation for our success.

Madame Chair, Distinguished delegates,

Documents Before the Commission

Turning now to the documents before the Commission, delegates should have the following:

- E/ESCAP/69/16, the draft programme of work for the biennium 2014-2015;
- E/ESCAP/69/4, a summary of progress in the implementation of Commission resolutions; and
- E/ESCAP/69/17, an overview of ESCAP's technical cooperation activities and extra budgetary contributions received.

Document E/ESCAP/69/16 contains the draft programme of work for the biennium 2014-2015. It is based on the strategic framework for 2014-2015, which was reviewed last year by

the Commission and the Committee for Programme and Coordination, and subsequently approved by the General Assembly.

The Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission (ACPR) considered earlier versions of the draft programme of work. This version incorporates the views expressed at those reviews.

The draft programme of work sets out the ways in which ESCAP, in 2014-2015, will continue unlocking its value as the most comprehensive multilateral platform for promoting cooperation among member States, to achieve inclusive and sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific.

It draws on ESCAP's mandates, expertise and comparative advantages, as a regional platform with significant convening power. It strives to make optimal use of our multi-disciplinary approach, and South-South cooperation, in responding to the many interlinked opportunities and challenges for our region. And it places greater emphasis on mainstreaming gender perspectives, and the priorities of countries with special needs.

All of these efforts will aim to achieve the three shared development results of all eight mutually supportive subprogrammes. These are:

- Governments of member States have *more effective, inclusive and sustainable development policies* for addressing development from a multi-disciplinary perspective, to narrow development gaps and build resiliency;
- *Global processes are shaped by a stronger, coordinated regional voice* and countries are supported in implementing international commitments; and
- *Regional cooperation mechanisms and institutional frameworks* are in place to promote regional integration and inclusive development.

After the Commission's consideration, the draft programme of work will be reviewed by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions. I will defend the proposed budget associated with the programme of work at that time. Then, during the Autumn session of the General Assembly, the Fifth Committee will consider our proposal. Based on their recommendations, the programme of work and the programme budget for 2014-2015 of the United Nations will be adopted in late 2013.

Madame Chair, Distinguished delegates,

As you may be aware, ESCAP has been asked to reduce its programme support by nearly US\$ 1.4 million, and the programme of work and the regular programme of technical cooperation by US\$ 2.5 million during the biennium 2014-2015. As the indicative budget for each biennium is largely based on the approved amount for the previous one, these reductions could have an impact on the proposed programme of work.

Given this backdrop, we would appreciate our member States' support for ESCAP, by endorsing the programme of work for 2014-2015, and subsequently conveying your support for our programme of work through your representatives in the ACABQ and the Fifth Committee, who have been instrumental in the past in the approval of our previous programme budgets with minimal changes.

Madame Chair, Distinguished delegates,

Document E/ESCAP/69/4 provides a summary of progress in the implementation of Commission resolutions. I am pleased to highlight that significant progress has been made towards implementing resolution 68/8 on enhancing coordination within the UN system and cooperation with regional organizations for promoting regional development.

The Regional Coordination Mechanism (RCM) convened by ESCAP, which I Chair, is key to enhancing coordination of the UN system at the regional level. Much of the work of the RCM in 2012 has focussed on the articulation of Asia-Pacific perspectives on the post-2015 United Nations development agenda, including through preparations for, and subsequent implementation of the decisions taken at, the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio +20). An important outcome of this work has been an agreement, which I led, among RCM members to develop a strategic framework for development cooperation for the region together with the United Nations Development Group Asia-Pacific (UNDG A-P).

The secretariat continued to strengthen its collaboration with regional and subregional organizations. In this context, it signed a memorandum of understanding with the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) to enhance cooperation in areas such as trade, energy, transport, environment, information and communication technologies, and social development.

The secretariat also stepped up its work with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), including in such areas as connectivity and energy, as well as with the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), the Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA), the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), the Pacific Island Forum, and the g7+ group of fragile and conflict-affected states.

At the annual consultation held in July 2012 with the Asian Development Bank (ADB), it was agreed to further enhance joint work in areas such as the Millennium Development Goals, water, environment, statistics, social development and connectivity.

Madame Chair, Distinguished delegates,

I would at this time also like to make a few remarks regarding agenda item 4(b) on programme changes for the biennium 2012-2013.

Although we have no significant programme changes to propose at this time, I would like to take this opportunity to highlight one particular recent accomplishment that was not foreseen at the time the current programme of work was adopted, and which has been funded by additional resources approved by the General Assembly for Rio+20 implementation activities.

This was the highly successful international consultation on the post-2015 Development Agenda “Development for All: Stop conflicts, develop States and eradicate poverty,” which was held with ESCAP support in Dili, Timor-Leste, from 25-28 February 2013, in partnership with the Government of Timor Leste and the g7+ group of fragile States. As reported separately during this Commission session, this meeting ensured that the voices and priorities of our Pacific islands, and our fragile and conflict affected states were heard at the Fourth Meeting of the High-level Panel on the post-2015 Development Agenda, in Bali, Indonesia, 25-28 March 2013, and was reflected in the Panel’s report to Secretary-General of the United Nations.

As many of you are aware, we have likewise been able to draw on the additional resources approved for Rio+20 follow-up to considerably raise the level of participation from the least developed, landlocked and island developing countries at our Asian and Pacific Regional Implementation Meeting (RIM) on Rio+20 outcomes, held earlier this week here in Bangkok.

Madame Chair, Distinguished delegates,

Let me now draw your attention to ESCAP's technical cooperation work, as outlined in document E/ESCAP/69/17.

The past decade has seen marked changes in the landscape of development cooperation. For one, Middle Income Countries are now home to the majority of the people living in poverty, but are at the same time becoming providers of development cooperation in their own right. At the same time, we are witnessing growth of 'new regionalism', as countries in Asia and the Pacific increasingly seek regional solutions to transboundary and even national challenges, with a rapidly growing focus on south-south cooperation. These trends accentuate the critical role of ESCAP in regional development cooperation.

At our last Commission session, I outlined a number of steps taken by the secretariat to strengthen the results focus of our technical cooperation work. We continued in these efforts over the past year, and I am pleased to share with you the key further steps undertaken by the secretariat.

First, through our Programme Planning and Partnerships Division, we initiated a number of measures and actions to step up relations with development partners. This included a first annual multi-agency consultation meeting with partner agencies of the Republic of Korea, ESCAP's largest donor country, to whom I express our sincere thanks, as well as discussions with numerous other existing and potential donors.

Second, the secretariat continued to develop and improve tools to enhance its visibility with and outreach to development partners, including through an internal donor profile system and the ESCAP website.

Third, in recognition of the growing importance of the private sector as a key partner of the secretariat in delivering capacity development, the secretariat established a Task Force on Private Sector Partnerships and Resource Mobilization, which is working towards completing a strategy on collaborating with the private sector by the middle of this year.

Madame Chair, Distinguished delegates,

The documents before you also summarise the financial resources received by the secretariat in 2012 for its technical cooperation programme. The total annual cash contributions for this purpose amounted to approximately US\$ 17.6 million, an increase of 14.9 per cent on 2011, of which bilateral voluntary cash contributions (comprising +/- 50%) by member States remained the main extra-budgetary source of funding. I thank all of our member States for these contributions.

The resources for technical cooperation were applied to a diverse range of work, ranging from policy dialogues, advocacy events and campaigns, training workshops, to studies and technical advice. Knowledge sharing, peer learning, and networking continued to play a vital role in our work.

I would like to take this opportunity to record the secretariat's deep appreciation to our member States and other development partners who have provided extrabudgetary funding

and other forms of crucial support to implement our work programme, especially during this time of austerity.

Madame Chair, Distinguished delegates,

Conclusion

In conclusion, I look forward to the continuing engagement and support of member States, and of all our partners and donors, as we strive together to ensure that the results we aspire to achieve will lead to a resilient Asia-Pacific founded on shared prosperity, social equity and sustainability.

Thank you and my staff and I look forward to your guidance on these issues.