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Honorable chair, Prime Minister of Bhutan

Madam Executive Secretary of UN ESCAP,

Distinguished Representatives and Delegates of Member States,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is an honour for me to submit my Country Statement before this august gathering for the 70<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission. Let me from the very outset recognize the tall level of efforts and labour put in by the UNESCAP officials and staff to make this event a harbinger of change in the post-2015 development agenda for Asia and the Pacific Region.

Let me also register the unrelenting work of the Secretariat here to pursue and convince all member states in weaving a consensus on a wide tapestry of actions to achieve the goal of sustainable development through the processes of connectivity and integration.

And of course, I would like to specially commend the enlightened leadership of the new Executive Secretary, Dr. Shamshad Akhtar, whose hard work, insightful experience and invaluable contributions and initiatives have been the source of true inspiration to this Commission. Last but not least also wish to appreciate all support extended by the Government of Thailand in hosting the event of such a magnitude.

Ladies and gentlemen,

We all concur that upward growth and improved governance are the cardinal tools to build a strong trajectory. However, we have to understand that to achieve extraordinary from ordinary, we are bound to face various issues and challenges to straddle theory and application. One such challenge of the current epoch is prevalence of syndrome of inequality. This inequality syndrome is spreading like an epidemic from one human need to another, ultimately germinating into wide scale disease of poverty with lesser options for

its eradication. As a consequence, we see continued rise in transnational crime, health care issues and environmental problems. The vulnerable countries are getting more frustrated in search of means to provide basic access to connectivity and convincing market growth. In parallel, we are also witnessing the process of constructive destruction when not all new institutions have the capacity to cope with fresh supply and demand ratio. Similarly, we see this inequality syndrome between the member states in terms of capacities to move upward on the development ladder. We may be exposed to contrasting perspectives on important drivers of development such as transfer of technology, withdrawal from certain commitments by strong players and reluctance to mobilize required resources for a promise towards a shared prosperity.

Let me now move to the optimistic side where the current economic dynamics are hallmark of the Asia Pacific Region. It is driven largely by trade, investment and globalized linkages. This region has the capacity to transform challenges into opportunities. It offers more emerging markets and huge potential in terms of both human capital and productivity to support the goal of sustainable development. The theme of this session is "connectivity for shared prosperity" that commensurate well with regional dynamics and pressing socio-economic imperatives. UNESCAP has provided a timely springboard to all member states to work out a roadmap of strategic activities alongwith an oversight mechanism to measure our concerted progress and connectivity. This is to start within four areas of trade, transport, energy and people-to-people contact. However, our four prong approach is not restricted but encompasses other possible areas of cooperation too. The future prosperity and stability has to be protected against natural and environmental calamities. All these have to be proactive under the covenant of the Bangkok Declaration adopted last year for Regional Economic Cooperation, Integration and sustainable development. This can act as a ferment for the way forward. I am sure that the Declaration will continue to make an impression on this region and UN ESCAP expertise will ensure its translation into equitable growth.

We have to evolve national, regional and global tracks to fight out common challenges and threats. This may entail some sort of relationship with

important international entities to acquire financial and technical inputs from outside the region.

Distinguished guests,

Pakistan has proposed to this eminent regional UN forum adoption of two resolutions in this Session titled as: Strengthening regional cooperation and capacity for enhanced trade and investment in support of sustainable development and secondly on Enhancing Youth participation in sustainable development besides co-sponsoring resolution on Disaster Risk Reduction in Asia and the Pacific. The sole aim lies to unleash the inherent potential to achieve the common task corresponding to tool kit available for the cause. I wish to thank all member states here for their vigorous participation, positive understanding and cooperative approach in adopting these resolutions, which alongwith other resolutions would facilitate addressing some of the pressing challenges facing the region.

Distinguished delegates,

We need greater cooperation and sincere desire to establish bridges to make this region a prosperous and premier geography for its inhabitants. This can be achievable under a flag of well-integrated web of substantial activities built on trade, transport and energy corridors and on many other promising avenues. After all, we are all here today to push our individual sense of responsibility to advance common good and betterment for people of Asia and the Pacific region. We wish all member states of the regional forum, a great success and progress in their individual and joint endeavours towards the achievement of post-2015 development agenda.

I thank you for kind attention!