

Statement by H.E Mr. Khurram Dastgir Khan, Minister for Commerce
Pakistan at the 71st Session of United Nation Economic and Social
Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP)
28 May 2015; Bangkok

Ministerial Segment: Agenda item 9 (a)

Mr. Chairman,

Excellencies, Distinguished delegates

Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the outset, I would like to join other speakers in congratulating the well deserved election of the Prime Minister of Fiji as Chairman of this session. I hope under his able guidance the Commission would lead to a successful conclusion. I would also like to appreciate the efforts of UNESCAP Secretariat in preparing the important documents for this session.

2. I am glad to be participating in this august gathering of Asia Pacific leaders, determined to take forward the sustainable development agenda after culmination of MDGs. We are aware that the processes initiated at Rio+ 20 Conference, will move to fulfillment this year. In this regard our work, at this very important platform of UNESCAP, should be built upon previous experiences from MDG rather than reinventing the wheel.

3. According to UN reports, in the Asia-Pacific region more than 1.4 billion people still live on less than US\$ 2 a day and 1.7 billion people still lack access to improved sanitation. The region's population is expected to reach more than 5 billion in 2050, of which two thirds will live in cities. At sub-regional level, South Asia -- host to one quarter population of the world --has been the least integrated and most natural disaster prone area of the Asia-Pacific.

4. To address these challenges effectively, we need to make joint and concerted efforts to alleviate poverty, reduce inequalities, exclusion and build resilience and environmental sustainability. In this regard economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development must be streamlined in national policies and plan in a coherent and balanced manner.

Mr. Chairman,

5. Pakistan recognizes poverty eradication as the greatest global challenge faced by the world today. It is an indispensable requirement for sustainable development. We believe that poverty can only be brought down through a holistic approach by promoting pro-poor growth, creating employment opportunities, equality of accesses and ensuring benefits to reach all-- at the grass root level.

6. The present government's Vision 2025 provides a comprehensive national long term strategy for achieving inclusive growth and sustainable development. The Vision 2025 comprises of following seven pillars:

- Putting people first
- Achieving sustained, indigenous and inclusive growth,
- Democratic governance institutional reforms, and modernization of the public sector,
- Energy, water and food security,
- Private sector and entrepreneurial led growth,
- Developing a competitive knowledge economy through value addition,
- Modernizing transport infrastructure and greater regional connectivity

7. Good logistics plays a key role in strengthening trade competitiveness by reducing costs. Vision 2025, outlines recently for different sectors, also seeks to establish an efficient and integrated transport system that will facilitate the development of our economy. The targets set forth are to ensure reduction in transport cost, safety, effective connectivity between rural areas and urban areas markets interprovincial high speed connectivity, integrated roads network and transportation corridor connectivity with major regional trade partner countries.

Mr. Chairman,

8. Pakistan aspires to address and adjust economic priorities in the face of changing global scenario of economic slowdown coupled with energy shortage and continued pressure on economy through investment policies.

9. Pakistan as a developing country has special development needs and economic challenges. Pakistan's trade regime is developed to address development challenges, trade & revenue enhancement while adhering to its multilateral and regional commitments. Moody's recent change of Pakistan's credit rating reform is

an indication of growing international confidence towards Pakistan's economic reforms policies.

10. With the objective of increased regional connectivity the present government has taken various initiatives including signing Pakistan-Afghanistan-Tajikistan Trilateral Transit Trade Agreement and revival of Pakistan's accession to the Asia Pacific Trade Agreement. We are also working towards increased engagement with the ASEAN.

Mr. Chairman

11. At the end I would like to emphasis the need for developing greater and innovative partnerships for financing for development. Resources are essential element for implementation. Our past experience of sub-optimal progress on MDGs has suggested that inadequacy of resources was one of the main obstacles in reaching the goals. Now, when we have the opportunity once gain knocking at the door we need to address fully and close these financing gaps.

I thank you Mr. Chairman

