

Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

Seventy-First Session, Bangkok, Thailand

May 25 – 29, 2015

U.S. Delegation Statement at ESCAP

Thank you Mr. Chairman,

As a Pacific nation, the United States remains strongly committed to the development, stability, and prosperity of the Asia-Pacific region. The United States is a longstanding member of the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and appreciates the work of this body to promote sustainable development and regional cooperation. We congratulate Executive Secretary Akhtar for managing a productive session.

The United States supports this year's theme of "Balancing the Three Dimensions of Sustainable Development: From Integration to Implementation." We are firmly committed to greater integration within Asia and believe enhanced connectivity and more open markets can help advance sustainable development.

The United States supports a Post-2015 Development Agenda that articulates clear, ambitious, and measurable goals and targets to advance sustainable development. Committing to a Post-2015 Agenda that drives development, ensures our world is safe and healthy for many generations to come, and works to eradicate extreme poverty and reduce concrete vulnerabilities for the world's poorest is critical to our advancement as a global society. We continue to support this agenda—and its universality—at the highest levels, and are pleased with the progress that we have made over the past two years toward developing this agenda. We believe credible and clear Post-2015 targets will give us a stronger basis to mobilize a full spectrum of actions and investments from public, private, and domestic resources to pull people out of poverty.

We appreciate the positive engagement of all Member States to work together to support the work of ESCAP. Toward that end, we welcome a review of the Commission's conference structure. In an era of financial constraints, we must carefully weigh the impact of increasing demands on ESCAP and its capacity to meet new responsibilities. The burden is on us as members to protect ESCAP's core mandate and niche capabilities to ensure the commission's effectiveness and credibility. We note the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) report highlighting the tension between ESCAP's growing commitments and its limited resources. We must prudently consider new commitments for ESCAP in light of competing demands, and factor in sustainable funding, especially including extrabudgetary sources, to enable ESCAP to effectively respond to member state requests.

While we note the work of the regional institutes and the creation of the new Asian and Pacific Center for the Development of Disaster Information Management, the independent evaluation report on the new center sensibly stressed that the financial responsibility of the center should be borne by the host country. The United States believes that all regional institutes should be funded solely from extrabudgetary sources. We should all make sure that ESCAP's general budget is maintained for use for the commission's primary responsibilities.

The United States remains committed to working with Asia-Pacific economies to promote sustainable economic growth and prosperity. Sustained and inclusive economic growth is critical in laying the foundation for meaningful results, whether in alleviating poverty, providing job opportunities, tackling environmental challenges, or improving education. Pursuing inclusive growth for all populations is a key element of a 21st century economic agenda.

We continue to deepen our historic ties in the region, build new partnerships, and engage with existing multilateral organizations such as ASEAN and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community to pursue shared interests. The United States recognizes

the growing need for effective multilateralism to address common global challenges. We look forward to continued constructive engagement within ESCAP and other multilateral fora as we face today's greatest challenges together.