Remarks by Assistant Foreign Minister Zhang Jun at the 75th Session of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

27 May 2019, Bangkok

Mr. Chair,

Mdm. Executive Secretary,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, on behalf of the Chinese government, I wish to congratulate on in of its 75th session. I thank the government of Thailand and the ESCAP Secretariat for their thoughtful arrangements.

ESCAP is the most influential regional economic and social development institution of the United Nations with an important mission. Against the backdrop of a complex international situation, the position and role of ESCAP are now all the more important. China is ready to work with all parties for positive and pragmatic outcomes from this session.

China is a firm supporter of ESCAP. We staunchly support Mdm. Executive Secretary Alisjahbana's work, and support ESCAP in playing its important role in implementing the 2030 agenda in the Asia-Pacific region. We will continue to support ESCAP in areas such as policy and finance. We will also contribute more to promoting Asia-Pacific's sustainable development and its people's well-being.

Our world today sees great opportunities and space for development. Nevertheless, it also faces serious challenges and uncertainties. Unilateralism and protectionism cause serious harm to the world economy, the international order as well as international fairness and justice. These new circumstances require that ESCAP firmly bear its mission in mind, and take firm action to steer the course of cooperation in the right direction with a view to fostering an open, inclusive and favorable
environment for development in this region.

First, we must be more committed to upholding multilateralism and deepening partnership. History has shown time and again that unilateralism and bullying is a one-way ticket to a dead end and offers no way out for settlement of any problem. Next year we will celebrate the 75th anniversary of the United Nations, a symbol of multilateralism. We must firmly uphold the purposes and principles of the UN charter, safeguard the international system with the UN at its core, and support the important roles of ESCAP and other UN regional commissions. We must remain committed to openness and inclusiveness, meeting only challenges through reform rather than self-isolation, which would undermine our path forward. We must remain committed to win-win cooperation to create greater opportunities and achieve common development. We must remain committed to equality and mutual benefit, reject seeking self-supremacy, and ensure the equal rights, equal opportunities, and equal rules for all countries.

Second, we must be more committed to building an open economy and promoting inclusive development. We must stay on the course of building an open Asia-Pacific economy, promote free and open trade and investment, firmly uphold the open, free, and non-discriminatory multilateral trading regime, oppose economic bullying and trade protectionism, and make economic globalization more open, inclusive, balanced and beneficial to all. We should join efforts to build a regional cooperation framework featuring equal consultation, joint participation, and universal benefits, push for early conclusion of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, and steadily promote the Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific.

Third, we must be more committed to advancing connectivity to contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. One of major aims of the Belt and Road Initiative proposed by China is to help developing countries break the bottleneck of development, integrate into global industrial and value chains, and achieve coordinated and interconnected growth
through connectivity and infrastructure development. This is in line with the 2030 Agenda in both the objectives and the approaches.

Last month, chaired by President Xi Jinping, the Second Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation was successfully held, and the Belt and Road Initiative received more extensive support and warmer response. The participants decided to uphold the principle of extensive consultation, joint contribution and shared benefits, adhere to the concept of pursuing open, green, and clean cooperation, work towards high-standard, people-centered and sustainable development, foster global partnership on connectivity, and promote high-quality Belt and Road cooperation. ESCAP is a natural partner in Belt and Road cooperation. We should advance connectivity projects such as the Asian Highway Network, the Trans-Asian Railway Network, and the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway, and support a bigger role of the UN and ESCAP in tackling climate change, fully unleashing the potential of the Belt and Road Initiative in driving sustainable development, and injecting strong and impetus into the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in the Asia-Pacific region.

Fourth, we must be more committed to spearheading innovation-driven development and unlocking growth momentum. Innovation empowers new growth and provides the only solution to the difficulties confronting the development of the Asia-Pacific. We must seize the development opportunities of digitization, the Internet and smart development, and support the innovation of technology, business and development models, and explore new drivers of growth. We should attach importance to the new opportunities and challenges brought by technological change and promote the dissemination and application of new technologies. We strongly oppose the practice of abusing state power to suppress business innovation in other countries, interfere with business operations and distort global markets. We strongly call for a fair, just and non-discriminatory environment for international scientific and technological cooperation and business innovation.
Mr. Chair,

This year marks the 70th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China. Over the past seven decades, China has made remarkable achievements in social and economic development, creating a miracle in the history of human development.

The past 70 years has witnessed the historical process of China's own development and its contributions to the world. China has grown from an impoverished country into the world's second largest economy. We owe these achievements and contributions to the wisdom and diligence of the Chinese people, and our self-reliant and relentless efforts. The past 70 years has witnessed the important role played by China, as a responsible major country, joining hands with other countries to meet global challenges. China has actively participated in international political, economic, security, environmental and climate undertakings with a keen sense of responsibility. The past 70 years has witnessed China's significant contributions to world development by sharing development dividends and creating opportunities for the world.

As China continues to open-up, the ties between China and the Asia-Pacific and beyond are getting closer and stronger. The high-quality development of the Chinese economy will bring greater vitality to its investment and consumer markets, and create more opportunities for countries in the Asia-Pacific and beyond.

In the face of the changing international landscape, China as a responsible major country will remain committed to further opening-up, remain committed to win-win cooperation, and remain committed to keeping to the path of socialism with Chinese characteristics. We will not yield in face of the containment or coercion by external forces. At the same time, China will firmly safeguard its own lawful rights and interests, uphold principles, and protect international justice and fairness. Looking ahead, China will work together with all countries in the Asia-Pacific and the world to strive for a brighter future.

Thank you.