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Regional cooperation to address the socioeconomic effects of the global health crisis**Letter dated 6 May 2020 from the Minister Counsellor and Deputy Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific addressed to the Secretary of the Commission**

With reference to agenda item 4 “Regional cooperation to address the socioeconomic effects of the global health crisis” of the seventy-sixth session of the Commission, I have the pleasure to ask you to circulate among all member States of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) a statement of the Chairman of the Committee on International Affairs of the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation Leonid Slutsky and a Joint Statement of the Supreme Eurasian Economic Council Members on the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic as an information document on behalf of the Russian Federation.

(Signed)

Oleg A. Shamanov
Minister Counsellor
Deputy Permanent Representative
of the Russian Federation to ESCAP

* ESCAP/76/L.1/Rev.1.

Annex I to the letter dated 6 May 2020 from the Minister Counsellor and Deputy Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific addressed to the Secretary of the Commission*

Statement

Chairman of the Committee on International Affairs of the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation

Mr. Leonid Slutsky

1. Humanity faces an unprecedented challenge - COVID-2019. The pandemic, which has spread to virtually every country and continent, continues to claim human lives. It's extremely negative "side effect" is the impending global economic crisis.

2. I believe that the virus can only be defeated by joint effort. In this context, I would like to express my regret that no consensus has been reached on the UN General Assembly platform on the draft Declaration on Solidarity in Countering the Coronavirus Pandemic, which was intended to reaffirm the commitment of international community to the principle of the UN Charter on cooperation among states. The document stressed the need to provide assistance to affected countries, as well as proclaimed the abandonment of trade wars and unilateral sanctions adopted by passing the UN Security Council in order to ensure the urgent access of the population to food and medical supplies. However, the project was blocked by the United States, the European Union, Great Britain, as well as Ukraine and Georgia, which joined them solely for political reasons, despite the call of UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres addressed to the G20 countries to abandon restrictions.

3. Western countries, which call themselves "democracies", have imposed various kinds of sanctions on almost a third of the global population and do not intend to reduce them amid the fight against the coronavirus. Such a dehumanized course of action makes it difficult to obtain quality health care for citizens of countries such as Iran and Venezuela, and does not contribute to the effective recovery of national economies, including those of the European continent.

4. As head of the Russian Peace Foundation and Chairman of the Russian State Duma Committee on International Affairs, I appeal to all sensible policy makers in the leadership of the European Union, the United States, Great Britain, leading international, inter-parliamentary and public organizations to abandon the destructive sanction policy. In the face of the global epidemic threat, it is time to stop thinking in the paradigm of deterrence that currently puts ordinary people on the brink of survival.

5. For its part, the Russian Peace Fund will continue to provide assistance to states affected by the COVID-2019 pandemic by all possible means.

Leonid Slutsky

Chairman of the International Public Foundation "Russian Peace Foundation"
Chairman of the Committee on International Affairs of the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation

* The present annexes are being issued without formal editing.

Annex II to the letter dated 6 May 2020 from the Minister Counsellor and Deputy Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific addressed to the Secretary of the Commission*

Joint Statement of Supreme Eurasian Economic Council Members on COVID-19 Pandemic

1. We, Members of the Supreme Eurasian Economic Council, given the close political, economic, social and historical ties between our countries, confirming our commitment to the goals and principles enshrined in the Treaty on the Eurasian Economic Union dated May 29, 2014, taking into account that coronavirus infection COVID-19 declared as a pandemic by the World Health Organization and characterized as an emergency of international concern, leads to significant reduction of population mobility, complicates trade of goods and services, causes volatility in global financial and commodity markets, creates disintegration risks for global and regional economies, emphasizing the importance of supporting citizens of our States and collective efforts of the world community to ensure the health and well-being of people amid the COVID-19 pandemic and mitigate the negative effects on the economy, expressing determination to join forces for countering this common threat, declare the following:

2. We confirm our readiness to continue our united work to eliminate the negative consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, maintain the achieved level of integration cooperation and further economic development of the Eurasian Economic Union Member States, ensure social and macroeconomic stability in our countries and maintain business and investment activity.

3. We are convinced that the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic should not lead to the breakdown of established cooperative ties, suspension of international trade and cessation of investment activity.

4. We urge all States to maintain international cooperation, build confidence, end armed conflicts, trade wars, unilateral financial and economic sanctions and strictly abide by international law.

5. We stand for the unity of the international community and the stability of the global economy, preserving the principle of free movement of goods, including socially important goods, food, medical equipment and medicinal products and personal protective equipment. The operational and systemic measures taken by our States are aimed at mitigating the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on economies of our countries' and ensuring the functioning of a single economic space. We presume that the restrictions introduced worldwide caused by the COVID-19 pandemic are a coercive measure and will be lifted with the removal of threats to human life and health. As part of the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic, we aim to continue to provide the necessary assistance to each other, strengthen health systems, conduct joint research in the sphere of developing means for prevention, diagnosis and treatment of infections and improve interaction algorithms in responding to epidemics.

6. We instruct governments, central (national) banks of the Eurasian Economic Union Member States and the Eurasian Economic Commission to take coordinated measures to prevent spreading the coronavirus infection COVID-19, strengthen our economic cooperation, maintain stable functioning of domestic markets, including food markets, support citizens of our states and business to overcome the negative consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic.

7. We are absolutely sure that the benefits of integration will help our countries and peoples to adequately cope with this global challenge.

President of the Republic of Belarus, Chairman of the SEEC A.G. Lukashenko

Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia, Member of the SEEC N.V. Pashinyan

President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Member of the SEEC K.K. Tokayev

President of the Kyrgyz Republic, Member of the SEEC S.Sh. Jeenbekov

President of the Russian Federation, Member of the SEEC V.V. Putin
