

In The Name of Allah

Statement by H.E. Seyed Masoud MIRKAZEMI

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**To the Opening Segment of 78th Session of the Economic and Social Commission
for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP),**

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بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

Honorable Chair,

H.E. Madam Executive Secretary of ESCAP,

Excellencies,

Distinguished delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is an honor to address the 78th Session of ESCAP and all distinguished delegates.

The seventy-eighth session of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) commemorates the seventy-fifth anniversary of the establishment of ESCAP. I would like to congratulate the countries of Asia and the Pacific and ESCAP leadership and staff in Bangkok and its subregional offices and regional institutions on this landmark occasion in the history of our region.

The seventy-eighth session of ESCAP is being held guided by the overall inspirational theme “A common agenda to advance sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific”. The theme highlights the need for a common agenda, a common vision as well as concerted actions if we are to achieve the sustainable development goals in a tangible and measurable way.

The Islamic Republic of Iran firmly holds to the opinion that ESCAP should continue as a regional platform for dialogue and policy coordination for sustainable

development, prosperity and wellbeing of its members and the people, based on multilateralism, justice and fairness for all. To this end, we need collectively do much more, in particular:

First, Development gaps in the region should be bridged. The gaps in various fields including technology levels, access to financial resources and trade markets, investments and financing for development, connectivity, digital economy, food security, as well as environmental protection and social development. To achieve this goal, the right to development should be recognized by ESCAP members as a basic right of the people and a requirement for realization of sustainable development.

Second, We, the nations and the governments in the region need, more than before, to work together to build the Asia and the Pacific a region of peace and prosperity along with the other parts of the globe. For this purpose the members should avoid politicizing development processes and strengthen coherence and solidarity. Without such a determination we would not be able to achieve our lofty goals of peace, prosperity and wellbeing.

Third, Collective endeavor and multilateralism as well as regional and international cooperation should be considered as a very basic principle and the fundamental mechanism for political, economic and social life in the region. Unilateralism, self-interest foreign policy agendas and Unilateral Coercive Measures proved to be against the collective will and interest of people and countries. Unilateral Coercive Measures, which infringe the fundamental principles of international law and principles set forth in the Charter of the United Nations, remains one of the most pressing challenges and hindrances in ensuring effective international cooperation and multilateralism. It also denies nations of their inherent rights to development, the right to health and life, and deprives governments, of essential means for sustainable development and hinders international cooperation in the related areas. The people of my country have been a victim of such coercive unilateral sanctions applied by another member state as a tool of economic terrorism. Hence, application of these inhumane acts and measures should be ceased and condemned by all.

Fourth, Our region is exposed to various types of challenges and risks, and in order to achieve inclusive, resilient and sustainable development, we need

enhanced regional cooperation to tackle them like never before. The environmental crisis, including, climate change affects, degradation, water scarcity, food security, desertification, and finally the most terrible phenomenon of sand and dust storms especially in the west Asia that has become a huge and serious crisis jeopardized the health and life of the people and has impacted heavily the economies of the affected countries. We believe that the people in the region deserve a healthy and sound environment and a protected ecosystem. Therefore, such challenges need to be considered as common responsibility and addressed collectively. We also believe that the ESCAP could provide a state of art platform to this end.

Fifth, The Islamic Republic of Iran despite facing challenges such as illegitimate unilateral sanctions, COVID-19, drought, sand and dust storms, and other natural disasters, has been successfully advancing its social and economic development policies and plans in different sectors. It has been in the spirit of multilateralism and regional cooperation that the Islamic Republic of Iran hosted the ESCAP Asia and the Pacific Centre for Development of Disasters Information Management (APDIM) and provided financial and non-financial contributions including the premises of the Centre. The Centre despite being established in 2018 has already been able to take effective measures and provide valuable services in enhancing disaster information and knowledge management and promoting regional cooperation to reduce the risk and negative impacts of disasters and thereby contribute to achieving sustainable development in our region. Up until now, my government has contributed to the work of APDIM more than 6 million dollars and is committed to continue providing financial and in-kind contributions and support to APDIM for its functioning and realization of its goals and objectives for the benefit of all the nations in the region. In this regard, I would like to appreciate the trust which has been vested in my country. To conclude, I would like, once again, to express my gratitude and wish all the best, good health, prosperity, and ever success for all nations throughout the region as well as the globe.

Thank you for your attention