

**ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR
ASIA AND THE PACIFIC**

78th SESSION

**A common agenda to advance sustainable development in
Asia and the Pacific**

**Statement by Director of the Economic and Technological
Development Bureau
Government of the Macao Special Administrative Region**

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**Bangkok, Thailand
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Chairperson,

Executive Secretary of UNESCAP, Madame Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana,

Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the delegation of Macao, China, we are delighted to participate in the 78th Session of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. We would also like to thank the Government of Thailand and the ESCAP Secretariat for their meticulous preparation and thoughtful arrangements.

This year marks the 75th anniversary of the establishment of ESCAP. As a staunch supporter of ESCAP, Macao, China will, as always, support ESCAP in playing an important role in promoting development in the Asia-Pacific region and implementing the 2030 Agenda.

In order to better achieve the goal of sustainable development, the Macao SAR Government has compiled and published the Second Five-Year Plan for the Economic and Social Development of the Macao Special Administrative Region (2021-2025) on the basis of extensive research and listening to the opinions from all sides. The purpose of the Plan is to define the objectives and major initiatives of the economic and social development of Macao, China in the next five years, to formulate a general blueprint for Macao, China's future development, to provide a clear development direction for the society, to guide Macao, China's long-term and sustainable development, to better integrate with the overall national development, and to promote the steadfast and successful implementation of "One Country, Two Systems" with Macao, China's characteristics.

With the release of the Plan, we hope to make substantial progress in moderate economic diversification, sustained improvement in livelihood and improved environment protection by 2025, and to achieve the goal of building a beautiful, happy, peaceful, and harmonious modern Macao, China.

Moderate Economic Diversification

The Government of the People's Republic of China promulgated the Master Plan for the Development of the Guangdong-Macao Intensive Cooperation Zone in Hengqin in September 2021. This provides a new opportunity for Macao, China to participate in the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area and integrate into national development, a new platform to promote Macao, China's moderate economic diversification, a new space to facilitate the living and employment of Macao, China residents, a new way out and a major historical opportunity for Macao, China's long-term sustainable development.

The Cooperation Zone will focus on the development of scientific and technology research and high-end manufacturing industries, traditional Chinese medicine and Macao branded industries, cultural, tourism, convention and exhibition, and commercial and trade industries, and modern finance industry, among others with a view to diversifying Macao, China's industrial structure, while devoting itself to creating a high-quality and convenient business environment to attract global high-end talents and facilitate the flow of goods, capital, investment and trade.

Apart from fully participating in the development of the Cooperation Zone, we will promote the development of a comprehensive tourism and leisure industry that integrates elements of gastronomy, vacation, sightseeing, shopping, entertainment, cultural and creative, medical care and sports by enriching the content of the world tourism and leisure centre. We will improve the institutional and policy environment to facilitate the commercialization of scientific and technological achievements and the development of science and technology industries, and intensify efforts to attract science and technology enterprises, talents and research achievements to establish foothold in Macao, China. We will also continue to promote the high-quality development of existing industries, support the digital transformation of traditional SMEs and enhance their innovation capabilities.

Sustained Improvement in Livelihood

Given that the pandemic has put great pressure on the general public in terms of employment and livelihood, the Macao SAR Government adheres to the principle of not reducing livelihood and welfare spending, extending a number of existing relief measures in the areas of taxation, education, healthcare and social security, as well as easing the financial pressure on the general public through the Wealth Partaking Scheme and the Electronic Consumption Benefit Scheme.

To better address the housing needs of residents, we will speed up the construction of public housing and elderly housing, as well as to continue to provide housing subsidies and rent waivers. To further respond to public's demand for medical services, in addition to building new medical facilities, the supply of specialized medical services will be increased and the level of specialized medical care will be continuously upgraded. On social security, we will implement a regular adjustment mechanism for social security benefits and review the amount of pensions and other benefits in a timely manner. At the same time, we will continue to promote public participation in the non-mandatory central provident fund system and improve the two-tier social security system. On employment, we promote a balance between supply and demand in the job market through training programmes, job matching and job fairs. Financial incentives are provided to encourage persons with disabilities to enter the job market. Also, there is personalized employment support offered to elders aged 65 or above.

We will continue our efforts to solve livelihood issues that are of common concern to residents and provide them with better living and development conditions so as to enhance their sense of well-being.

Improved Environment Protection

Macao, China is augmenting its efforts to deal with the pressure of economic growth on the environment. With the promulgation of the environmental protection plan for the period between 2021 and 2025, we will expedite energy conservation, emission reduction and environmental protection in line with carbon emission reduction targets. Meanwhile, the Macao Solid Waste Resource Management Plan (2017-2026) is being implemented in an orderly manner, and efforts will be made to alleviate the disposal pressure on construction waste landfills. New regulations on the use of landfills and the charging scheme will come into effect this year to strengthen the monitoring and penalty mechanism for illegal disposal of construction waste.

To curb plastic waste, Macao, China has banned the import and transit of disposable foamed plastic tableware, disposable non-biodegradable plastic drinking straws and disposable non-biodegradable plastic beverage stirrers to Macao, China.

Reducing carbon emissions from vehicles is another key task of Macao, China. We will refine the overall emission reduction target and formulate a long-term carbon reduction strategy based on the study completed in 2021. In addition, we will continue to take the lead in promoting the use of electric vehicles by increasing the number of public charging devices.

Conclusion

Promoting moderate economic diversification is critical for Macao, China to achieve long-term prosperity, stability and sustainable development. We will give full play to Macao, China's unique advantages. While consolidating and upgrading traditionally advantageous industries, we will actively cultivate and develop industries suitable for Macao, China's development. At the same time, we will pragmatically promote the construction of Guangdong-Macao Intensive Cooperation Zone in Hengqin, and

gradually realize the various stages of the development of Cooperation Zone. We believe that these multi-pronged measures will foster new economic growth drivers and enable us to achieve sustainable development.

Finally, I sincerely wish this session a great success, and hope that we can successfully achieve the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Thank you.