

**Talking Points for the Keynote Speech of Dr. Noeleen Heyzer
Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and
Executive Secretary of ESCAP**

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- The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) is the regional arm of the United Nations, playing a unique role as the only intergovernmental forum for all countries and territories of the Asian and Pacific region. Established in 1947, ESCAP today has 53 members and 9 associate members covering over 60 percent of the world's population, or 4.1 billion people.
- ESCAP is committed to a resilient Asia and the Pacific founded on shared prosperity, social equity and sustainability. Our vision is to be the most comprehensive multilateral platform for promoting cooperation among member States to achieve inclusive and sustainable economic and social development in Asia and the Pacific.
- In pursuing this vision, ESCAP provides different forms of assistance to member States:
 - ESCAP promotes rigorous analysis and peer learning through our 7 core areas of work: macroeconomic policy and development, trade and investment, social development, transport, statistics, environment and development, information communications technology and disaster risk reduction;

- ESCAP translates these findings into policy dialogues and recommendations, and;
 - ESCAP provides good development practices, knowledge sharing and technical assistance to member States in the implementation of these recommendations.
- ESCAP's policy work ultimately impacts people's lives in a positive way by assisting countries to shape and implement a more balanced and inclusive development agenda for the region.
 - A core driver of this are the Millennium Development Goals. In September 2000, leaders of 189 countries met at the United Nations in New York and endorsed the Millennium Declaration, a commitment to work together to build a safer, more prosperous and equitable world. The Declaration was translated into a roadmap setting out eight time-bound and measurable goals to be reached by 2015, known as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), namely:
 - MDG 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger**
 - MDG 2: Achieve universal primary education**
 - MDG 3: Promote gender equality and empower women**
 - MDG 4: Reduce child mortality**
 - MDG 5: Improve maternal health**
 - MDG 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases**
 - MDG 7: Ensure environment sustainability**
 - MDG 8: Develop a global partnership for development**
 - Achieving these 8 goals will lead to halving extreme poverty and hunger; universal primary education for all boys and girls; progress towards gender equality; sharply reduced rates of death for children and mothers; a halt and reversal of the spread of HIV and AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis; more sustainable use of natural resources; and stronger partnerships between the nations on issues of aid, trade, debt and technology.

- The region of Asia and the Pacific is experiencing a triple converging economic, resource and ecological crisis. In addition, the region is facing a complex challenge from rapid urbanization. If the region is to overcome these challenges, it needs to improve quality of its economic growth.
- The region of Asia and the Pacific has achieved impressive economic growth over the recent decades, which contributed to reduce poverty (MDG 1), but was achieved at the cost of compromising the environmental sustainability (MDG 7). For the region to continue rapid economic growth, trade off between MDG 1 and MDG 7 has to be turned into a win-win synergy, where economic growth can both reduce poverty and improve environmental sustainability.
- Brown Growth, the current development pattern which is energy, resource and carbon intensive, simply cannot continue, not only because of impacts on climate change but because of the rising price of energy, food and the increasing urbanization of the earth's population – and the growing instabilities of our biggest urban communities. Green Growth, a strategy to achieve sustainable development by improving the efficiency of the way we use our energy, resources, and in particular carbon, is no longer only an ecological conditionality but also an economic strategy – an imperative -- to improve resilience of our economy against energy, food and resource price volatility.
- The region cannot continue to focus on maximizing the GDP and production, but needs to focus on maximizing quality of growth. Economic quality could concentrate on improving resilience to oil price shock, competitiveness, and generation of more employment. Social quality could be to enhance inclusiveness, equitable distribution of income and improve quality of life and well-being. Ecological quality could intensify ecological efficiency and resilience to climate change as well as enhance vibrant and dynamic eco-systems.

- Green growth approach is an important strategy for creating the win-win relationship between MDG 1 and MDG 7. Shifting towards green growth requires a fundamental transformation of the way economy and society operate. The “visible structure” of the economy, such as transport or energy systems, urban design or the built environment, which locks societies into unsustainable patterns of energy and resource consumption and GHG emissions, needs to be re-designed and restructured based on the concept of ecological efficiency (eco-efficiency) and low carbon. Likewise, the “invisible” structure of the economy, such as price, lifestyles, technology and regulations also need to be re-aligned and transformed in order to re-orient economies towards eco-efficiency.

- ESCAP has been a pioneer in promoting green growth in the region. Green growth has been on top of our agenda since 2005 and we are now developing a Low Carbon Green Growth Roadmap for the region.

- Economic development of the region needs to follow the 5 key tracks:
 - Shift from ‘quantity’ to ‘quality’ of growth, focusing on employment creation, climate change resilience and social inclusiveness;
 - Integrate ecological prices into market prices;
 - Develop a sustainable infrastructure, in particular in cities;
 - Turn environmental sustainability into a business opportunity;
 - Build and improve climate resilience of people and economies.

- Green growth cannot happen automatically. Governments have to make it happen by closing two major gaps: a price gap between the ecological and the market price and a time gap between the long term benefit and the short term cost. We have to pay the full price of our resource consumption: for instance, we need to pay the climate change cost when we consume fossil fuel.

- Green growth is feasible only if supported by a virtuous cycle of partnership between government, business and people. Governments have to initiate and lead

the processes shifting towards green growth. Private sector needs to grasp environmental sustainability as business opportunity. Public needs to accept the structural transformation and change their lifestyle as well as provide political support to the governmental leadership.

- The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) to be held from 4 to 6 June 2012 in Brazil is a unique opportunity for countries to work together to mobilize political commitment, seize the opportunity for deeper transformation to build more resilient societies and economies for a future based on shared prosperity, social progress and environmental sustainability.
- The United Nations launched a new campaign last month to promote the Rio+20 conference and the need for sustainable development by engaging people in a global conversation on the kind of communities they would like to live in twenty years from now. The new campaign, Rio+20: The Future We Want, will work through public participation to envision how societies in all parts of the world can build a future that promotes prosperity and improves people's quality of life without further degrading our planet's natural environment.
- "We need to imagine a different future," UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said. "What would our world look like if everyone had access to the food they need, to an education, and to the energy that is required to develop? What would our communities look like if we created a vibrant, job-rich, green economy? This is the future we want."
- While climate change presents great challenges to economic and social development in the Asia-Pacific region, it also presents vast new opportunities in the development and adaptation of new technologies. The massive consumer base of the Asia-Pacific region and its adoption of clean energy and clean technology over unsustainable, fossil-based technologies are keys to the viability of these technologies. The engagement of national media players, executive editors and

senior correspondents in affecting mass, sustainable consumption of energy, water and food is crucial for environmentally sustainable economic development. With this in mind, we ask that media leaders devote more production and editorial resources to the coverage of climate change and sustainable development.

- Governments need to create an enabling environment for the private sector by providing incentives and R&D support for green business and technologies. Governments have to minimize the cost of structural change and maximize the potential benefit with a strong political leadership and commitment. Governments also need to support the vulnerable categories of population in this structural shift.
- Green growth is a unique opportunity for the developing countries: it offers a great potential for emerging and developing economies to leapfrog towards inclusive and sustainable growth without repeating the development path, which was in the past followed by now developed countries.
- More specifically, inclusive and sustainable future requires partnership. No stakeholder alone can achieve the future that we envision. We need partnerships between national and local governments, civil society, the private sector, think tanks and other research institutes and media.
- We need to engage civil society and businesses to promote more sustainable lifestyles and consumption patterns. Our private sector needs to embrace the well-being of our people and our planet, while generating profits. Our prosperity must be shared.
- Further and faster movement towards achievement of the MDGs will require a rejuvenated global partnership, more rapid delivery on commitments already made, and an agile transition to a more environmentally sustainable future.