

Concept Note

Dialogue on Renewed Efforts to Deliver on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): working towards the Summit of the Future

A Joint Initiative of China International Development Cooperation Agency, Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of China to the ESCAP and the UN in China

16:30-18:30, Wednesday 24 April 2024

*Venue: CR-4, Level 1, United Nations Conference Centre (UNCC), United Nations Building,
Rajdamnern Nok Avenue, Bangkok 10200, Thailand*

Background

According to the Sustainable Development Goals Report 2023¹, “Progress on more than 50 per cent of targets of the SDGs is weak and insufficient; on 30 per cent, it has stalled or gone into reverse. These include key targets on poverty, hunger and climate.” Due to challenges such as the COVID-19 and the socioeconomic recovery from it, regional conflicts, and the triple crises of climate change, pollution and biodiversity, countries require more financing than initially estimated to achieve the SDGs. The same report warned that the SDG financing gap in developing countries increased by at least 56% in 2020, from US\$ 2.5 trillion before the COVID-19 to US\$ 3.9 trillion.

The UN Secretary-General warned that the world is “tremendously off track” to achieve the SDGs by 2030. To respond to the urgency to take action, in September 2023 in New York, the UN Secretary-General convened the 2023 SDG Summit and the Climate Ambition Summit, at the half-way point to the deadline set for achieving the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. Leaders adopted a decisive, action-oriented political declaration at the SDG Summit, highlighting their collective commitment to build a sustainable, inclusive and prosperous world by 2030. ¹ The Climate Ambition Summit showcased a way forward: the alignment of sectoral, local national and international plans policies with credible and science-backed targets to accelerate decarbonization, more climate justice and fairness, unprecedented levels of coordination and cooperation, a renewed focus on credibility and accountability. ¹

According to the Asia and the Pacific SDG Report progress report 2024 commissioned by ESCAP, ¹ achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific will take an extraordinary collective effort. On its current trajectory, the region will not meet any of the 17 SDGs by the agreed deadline. Current estimates show these will not be reached before 2062, at least 32 years behind schedule.

In the upcoming September, the UN Secretary-General will convene the Summit of the Future, to enhance cooperation on critical challenges and address gaps in global governance, reaffirm existing commitments including to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the United Nations Charter, and move towards a reinvigorated multilateral system that is better positioned to positively impact people's lives. ¹

In April 2023, the United Nations (UN) in China, at the invitation of China International Development Cooperation Agency (CIDCA), Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of China to the UN, co-hosted a high-level event titled “*New Progress of the Global Development Initiative, New Actions to Support the 2030 Agenda*”. The event held at UN Headquarters in New York was attended by representatives of the UN System, Member States, Permanent Observers and other relevant entities. The event was organized during the occasion of the 2023 Economic

and Social Council (ECOSOC) Financing for Development Forum, where Member States discussed difficult economic policy trade-offs and recent shocks that have threatened to further reverse progress on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the need for both immediate and long-term measures to effectively finance responses to multiple overlapping crises while scaling up essential investments in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Given this context and building on the event in April last year, CIDCA, Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of China to the ESCAP and the UN in China will co-host a Dialogue on the margins of the eightieth session of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), on 24 April 2024 at the ESCAP's premises, with the theme of *Renewed Efforts to Deliver on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): working towards the Summit of the Future*.

Objectives

This Dialogue will convene a broad range of development partners including members and associate members of ESCAP, international organizations, private sector, academic institutions and foundations, to share their views and actions on how to accelerate the SDGs, including specific measures and initiatives from the country, regional and global perspectives. There will be a substantive discussion on how to mobilize financing and partnerships, and craft pathways to enable the six transitions that can have catalytic and multiplier effects across the SDGs, respectively: (1) food systems; (2) energy access and affordability; (3) digital connectivity; (4) education; (5) jobs and social protection; and (6) climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution.¹

Participants

Participants will include Chinese ministries and departments, members and associate members of ESCAP (including members of their delegations to the eightieth session of the ESCAP as well as representatives from their permanent mission to the ESCAP), UN entities (via their regional offices based in Bangkok) and the UN in China, research institutes, academia, the private sector, and foundations, etc.

Format

This dialogue will be held in person, with opening remarks, and keynote speeches by member states, regional groups as well as regional and multilateral development banks (MDBs), with a focus on Country, Regional and Global Efforts to Accelerate the SDGs, framed around the six transitions.

Outcomes from the dialogue will be formulated in the form of a substantive summary, to be shared with UN Headquarters, member states and a broad range of development partners for follow-up discussions and actions as well as forging and consolidating the partnerships needed to deliver on the SDGs. These could also serve as substantive inputs to the outcomes of the Summit of the Future, mainly from the Asia-Pacific perspective.