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**Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific**  
Committee on Trade, Investment, Enterprise and Business Innovation**First session**

Bangkok and online, 22–24 February 2023

**Report of the Committee on Trade, Investment,  
Enterprise and Business Innovation on its first session****I. Matters calling for action by the Commission**

1. The following recommendations of the Committee on Trade, Investment, Enterprise and Business Innovation are brought to the attention of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) for its consideration and possible action:

**Recommendation 1**

The Committee on Trade, Investment, Enterprise and Business Innovation, recognizing the role of trade as central to implementing efforts towards sustainable development and to moving forward from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, recommends that an increased focus be placed on making trade in the Asia-Pacific region more competitive, sustainable and inclusive, with a view to achieving the targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In this context, the Committee also recommends that the secretariat continue and expand its analytical research, capacity-building and technical assistance efforts in relation to matters of common concern, including e-commerce and digital trade, trade digitalization, climate-smart trade, trade resilience in times of crisis, graduation from least developed country status and trade agreements, as appropriate.

**Recommendation 2**

The Committee on Trade, Investment, Enterprise and Business Innovation recommends that cooperation on cross-border paperless trade be further enhanced and encourages States that have not yet acceded to the Framework Agreement on Facilitation of Cross-border Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific to consider doing so as soon as possible, in accordance with national circumstances.

**Recommendation 3**

The Committee on Trade, Investment, Enterprise and Business Innovation, recognizing the important role of the business sector in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, recommends that the secretariat continue to engage the private sector through the ESCAP Sustainable Business Network and the Asia-Pacific Business Forum. It also recommends that the secretariat promote the adoption and implementation of initiatives such as the Asia-Pacific Green Deal for Business and internationally recognized principles and standards of responsible business conduct such as those contained in the United Nations Global Compact. Acknowledging the importance of public-private partnerships as a modality for implementing the 2030 Agenda, the Committee further recommends that the secretariat enhance its capacity-building activities to facilitate sustainable and resilient infrastructure projects, as appropriate.

**Recommendation 4**

The Committee on Trade, Investment, Enterprise and Business Innovation, recognizing the importance of mobilizing impact investment and foreign direct investment in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, recommends that the secretariat continue to support members and associate members on these agendas, in particular in promoting gender equality, bridging the widening digital divide and addressing social and environmental considerations, including climate change. In this context, the Committee supports the secretariat's initiatives to provide technical assistance and capacity-building to members and associate members to promote impact investing and foreign direct investment for sustainable development.

**Recommendation 5**

The Committee on Trade, Investment, Enterprise and Business Innovation, recognizing the importance of enterprise and business innovation for inclusive and sustainable development, recommends that the secretariat continue to support members and associate members in the promotion of enterprise and business innovation, in particular in promoting inclusive and socially responsible businesses and women-led enterprises, building the evidence base of effective policies and facilitating knowledge-sharing and regional cooperation on these agendas.

**Recommendation 6**

The Committee on Trade, Investment, Enterprise and Business Innovation, recognizing the importance of new and emerging technologies for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, recommends that the secretariat enhance its provision of support to members and associate members through policy and analytical support, capacity-building and technical assistance, technology demonstration and market intelligence for the scaling up of innovations and commercialization of technologies, as appropriate. It also calls for enhancing cooperation for the development, diffusion and scaling up of new and emerging technologies in the region.

## II. Organization

### A. Opening, duration and organization of the session

2. The Committee held its first session in Bangkok and online from 22 to 24 February 2023. The session was opened by the Executive Secretary of ESCAP. Statements were made by the Minister of Commerce of Bangladesh, Mr. Tipu Munshi; the Minister Delegate attached to the Prime Minister and Secretary of State of the Ministry of Industry, Science, Technology and Innovation of Cambodia, Mr. Chhem Kieth Rethy; the Minister of Cooperatives and Small and Medium Enterprises of Indonesia, Mr. Teten Masduki; the Deputy Minister of Economy and Development of Mongolia, Mr. Gantumur Tuvdendorj; the Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of Invest India, Mr. Deepak Bagla; and the Chair of the first session.

### B. Attendance

3. Representatives of the following members and associate members attended: Armenia; Australia; Azerbaijan; Bangladesh; Bhutan; Brunei Darussalam; Cambodia; China; Democratic People's Republic of Korea; Fiji; French Polynesia; India; Indonesia; Iran (Islamic Republic of); Japan; Kazakhstan; Kiribati; Macao, China; Mongolia; Nepal; Pakistan; Philippines; Republic of Korea; Russian Federation; Singapore; Sri Lanka; Tajikistan; Thailand; Timor-Leste; Turkmenistan; United States of America; Uzbekistan; Vanuatu; and Viet Nam.

4. Representatives of Guatemala, a Permanent Observer to ESCAP, also attended.

5. Representatives of the following United Nations bodies, specialized agencies and funds also attended: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations; and International Labour Organization.

6. Representatives of the following intergovernmental organizations also attended: Eurasian Economic Commission; and South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation.

7. A representative of the ESCAP Sustainable Business Network attended.

8. In accordance with rule 12 of the ESCAP rules of procedure, the bureau examined the credentials of the representatives of member States and reported upon them to the Committee. The credentials of the representatives of 32 member States were found to be in order. Acknowledging the report of the Credentials Committee to the General Assembly at its seventy-seventh session,<sup>1</sup> and in line with Assembly resolution 396 (V) of 14 December 1950, the bureau decided to defer any action on the credentials pertaining to the representatives of Myanmar at the first session of the Committee pending a decision by the Assembly on the representation of Myanmar.

9. The Committee took note of the oral report of the bureau on credentials.

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<sup>1</sup> A/77/600.

**C. Election of officers**

10. The Committee elected the following officers:

Chair: Mr. Amarsanaa Tumor (Mongolia)

Vice-Chairs: Mr. Noor Md. Mahbubul Haq (Bangladesh)  
Mr. Nurbolat Alimbayev (Kazakhstan)

**D. Agenda**

11. The Committee adopted the following agenda:

1. Opening of the session:
  - (a) Opening addresses;
  - (b) Election of officers;
  - (c) Adoption of the agenda.
2. Making trade in Asia and the Pacific more competitive, sustainable and inclusive.
3. Advancing public-private partnerships and private sector networks to accelerate climate action and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
4. Mobilizing impact investment and foreign direct investment for sustainable development.
5. Enabling business innovation for inclusive and sustainable development.
6. Promoting regional cooperation in new and emerging technologies to achieve sustainable development.
7. Other matters.
8. Adoption of the report of the Committee on its first session.

**E. Other events**

12. The following seminars, side events and special sessions were held in conjunction with the Committee session:

(a) 21 and 22 February 2023: regional investment promotion agency conference, co-hosted with the World Association of Investment Promotion Agencies;

(b) 21 and 22 February 2023: high-level policy dialogue on trade facilitation through international standards and mutual recognition of agricultural machinery testing;

(c) 22 February 2023: signing of the ESCAP-World Association of Investment Promotion Agencies memorandum of agreement;

(d) 22 February 2023: launch of the *Policy Guidebook on Promoting FDI in the Digital Economy in Asia and the Pacific*, co-hosted with the World Association of Investment Promotion Agencies;

(e) 22 February 2023: capacity-building workshop on promoting sustainable FDI, co-hosted with the World Association of Investment Promotion Agencies;

(f) 22 February 2023: “Accelerating sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific: harnessing networks, finance and technology to develop capacity to achieve the SDGs”;

(g) 22 February 2023: “Framework Agreement on Facilitation of Cross-border Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific: the way forward”;

(h) 22 February 2023: expert group meeting on promoting inclusive business across Asia and the Pacific;

(i) 22 February 2023: capacity-building workshop on promoting FDI in the digital economy, co-hosted with the World Association of Investment Promotion Agencies;

(j) 22 February 2023: workshop on the regional digital trade integration index – findings and implications from Asia and the Pacific, Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean, co-hosted with the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC);

(k) 23 February 2023: workshop on the digital trade regulatory landscape in Africa, co-hosted with ECA;

(l) 23 February 2023: workshop on the digital trade regulatory landscape in countries of the Forum for East Asia-Latin America Cooperation, co-hosted with ECLAC;

(m) 23 February 2023: “*Asia-Pacific Sustainable Development Journal*: ‘from lab to job’”;

(n) 24 February 2023: round-table consultation on the regional digital trade integration index methodology and technical assistance needs, co-hosted with ECA and ECLAC;

(o) 24 February 2023: launch of the joint report of ESCAP and the International Trade Centre on company perspectives on non-tariff measures in Asia and the Pacific;

(p) 24 February 2023: live demonstration and launch of new and advanced features of the ESCAP Trade Intelligence and Negotiation Adviser.

### **III. Account of proceedings**

13. The discussions held during the session have been summarized in an account of proceedings (see annex II).

## Annex I

### List of documents

<i>Symbol</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Agenda item</i>
<i>General series</i>		
ESCAP/CTIEBI(1)/1/Rev.1	Provisional agenda	1 (c)
ESCAP/CTIEBI(1)/1/Add.1	Annotated provisional agenda	1 (c)
ESCAP/CTIEBI(1)/2	Making trade in Asia and the Pacific more competitive, sustainable and inclusive	2
ESCAP/CTIEBI(1)/3	Towards a model chapter on trade in crisis situations in regional trade agreements	2
ESCAP/CTIEBI(1)/4	Advancing public-private partnerships and private sector networks to accelerate climate action and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development	3
ESCAP/CTIEBI(1)/5	Mobilizing impact investment and foreign direct investment for sustainable development	4
ESCAP/CTIEBI(1)/6	Enabling business innovation for inclusive and sustainable development	5
ESCAP/CTIEBI(1)/7	Promoting regional cooperation in new and emerging technologies to achieve sustainable development	6
ESCAP/CTIEBI(1)/8	Report of the Committee on Trade, Investment, Enterprise and Business Innovation on its first session	8
<i>Limited series</i>		
ESCAP/CTIEBI(1)/L.1	Draft report	8
<i>Information series</i>		
ESCAP/CTIEBI(1)/INF/1	Strengthening infrastructure financing and public-private partnerships in Asia and the Pacific	3
ESCAP/CTIEBI(1)/INF/2	Outcome of the Asia-Pacific Business Forum 2022	3
<i>Information available online</i>		
<a href="http://www.unescap.org/events/CTIEBI1-2023">www.unescap.org/events/CTIEBI1-2023</a>	Information for participants	
<a href="http://www.unescap.org/events/CTIEBI1-2023">www.unescap.org/events/CTIEBI1-2023</a>	List of participants	
<a href="http://www.unescap.org/events/CTIEBI1-2023">www.unescap.org/events/CTIEBI1-2023</a>	Tentative programme	

## Annex II

### Account of proceedings

#### I. Introduction

1. The account of proceedings contains a summary of the discussions and proceedings of the first session of the Committee on Trade, Investment, Enterprise and Business Innovation.

#### II. Summary of discussions

##### A. Making trade in Asia and the Pacific more competitive, sustainable and inclusive (agenda item 2)

2. The Committee had before it the notes by the secretariat on making trade in Asia and the Pacific more competitive, sustainable and inclusive (ESCAP/CTIEBI(1)/2) and on a model chapter on trade in crisis situations in regional trade agreements (ESCAP/CTIEBI(1)/3).

3. Representatives of the following members of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) made oral statements or submitted written statements: China; India; Indonesia; Japan; Republic of Korea; Russian Federation; Tajikistan; Timor-Leste; and United States of America.

4. The representative of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation made a statement.

5. The Committee noted that global economic and trade development and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals faced multiple challenges. It was necessary to accelerate the digitalization of trade and trade processes, green development and support for businesses in relation to trade, in order to promote more inclusive and sustainable development. The secretariat was encouraged to provide support to members and associate members on these topics.

6. It was recognized that, in addition to playing a role in economic development overall, digitalization played an important role in enhancing market access, reducing trade costs, integrating businesses into supply chains, ensuring continuity of trade flows and cutting carbon emissions. Addressing the digital divide was therefore vital to enabling the benefits of digitalization to be shared by all.

7. The Committee was informed about various efforts undertaken and policies adopted by Governments in the region with regard to trade, economic development and the recovery from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. Measures had also been put in place in various countries to support businesses, particularly micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises.

8. Noting the importance of the Framework Agreement on Facilitation of Cross-border Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific in facilitating digital trade, some representatives reported that their countries were in the midst of national processes to consider accession to the Framework Agreement and that they looked forward to seeing more countries joining it.

**B. Advancing public-private partnerships and private sector networks to accelerate climate action and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (agenda item 3)**

9. The Committee had before it the note by the secretariat on advancing public-private partnerships and private sector networks to accelerate climate action and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (ESCAP/CTIEBI(1)/4). It also had before it the information documents on strengthening infrastructure financing and public-private partnerships in Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP/CTIEBI(1)/INF/1) and on the outcome of the Asia-Pacific Business Forum 2022 (ESCAP/CTIEBI(1)/INF/2).

10. The secretariat delivered a presentation. A special address was delivered by the Chair of the ESCAP Sustainable Business Network, Mr. George Lam, and the Deputy Director General of the China Public-Private Partnerships Centre of the Ministry of Finance of China, Ms. Yang Jianmin.

11. Representatives of the following members of ESCAP made statements: China; Japan; and Russian Federation.

12. A representative of the Eurasian Economic Commission made a statement.

13. The Chair of the ESCAP Sustainable Business Network made a statement.

14. The Committee recognized the important role of the private sector in promoting sustainable development and in achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It stressed the need to strengthen private sector engagement.

15. The Committee acknowledged the role of platforms, such as the ESCAP Sustainable Business Network and the Asia-Pacific Business Forum, and of initiatives, including the Asia-Pacific Green Deal for Business, in promoting corporate social and environmental responsibility and facilitating sustainable development.

16. Acknowledging the importance of public-private partnerships as a modality for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Committee further recommended that, as a means of supporting sustainable development, the secretariat enhance its capacity-building activities to facilitate sustainable and resilient infrastructure projects, as appropriate, such as through the ESCAP-led Infrastructure Financing and Public-Private Partnership Network of Asia and the Pacific.

**C. Mobilizing impact investment and foreign direct investment for sustainable development (agenda item 4)**

17. The Committee had before it the note by the secretariat on mobilizing impact investment and foreign direct investment for sustainable development (ESCAP/CTIEBI(1)/5).

18. Representatives of the following members of ESCAP made oral statements or submitted written statements: Bangladesh; Bhutan; China; Fiji; India; Indonesia; Kiribati; Mongolia; Pakistan; Russian Federation; Sri Lanka; Tajikistan; and Uzbekistan.



19. The Committee highlighted the importance of mobilizing impact investment and foreign direct investment in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

20. Representatives shared national experiences in aligning investment strategies to the Sustainable Development Goals.

21. The Committee expressed its appreciation to the secretariat for the support it had provided to member States on promoting impact investment and encouraging foreign direct investment for sustainable development. It recommended that the secretariat continue to provide such support, in particular in promoting gender equality, bridging the widening digital divide and addressing social and environmental considerations, including climate change. In that context, the Committee expressed its support for the secretariat's initiatives to provide technical assistance and capacity-building to members and associate members to promote impact investing and foreign direct investment for sustainable development.

**D. Enabling business innovation for inclusive and sustainable development (agenda item 5)**

22. The Committee had before it the note by the secretariat on enabling business innovation for inclusive and sustainable development (ESCAP/CTIEBI(1)/6).

23. Representatives of the following members of ESCAP made oral statements or submitted written statements: Cambodia; China; Indonesia; Mongolia; Russian Federation; Singapore; Thailand; and Viet Nam.

24. The Committee highlighted the importance of enterprise and business innovation for inclusive and sustainable development.

25. Representatives shared national experiences in promoting enterprise and business innovation for inclusive and sustainable development.

26. The Committee expressed its appreciation to the secretariat for the support it had provided to member States on promoting enterprise and business innovation for inclusive and sustainable development. It recommended that the secretariat continue to provide such support, in particular in promoting inclusive and socially responsible businesses and women-led enterprises, building the evidence base of effective policies and facilitating knowledge-sharing and regional cooperation on these topics. In that context, the Committee expressed its support for the secretariat's initiatives to provide technical assistance and capacity-building to members and associate members to promote enterprise and business innovation for inclusive and sustainable development.

**E. Promoting regional cooperation in new and emerging technologies to achieve sustainable development (agenda item 6)**

27. The Committee had before it the note by the secretariat on promoting regional cooperation in new and emerging technologies to achieve sustainable development (ESCAP/CTIEBI(1)/7).

28. Representatives of the following members of ESCAP made oral statements or submitted written statements: Azerbaijan; China; India; Philippines; Tajikistan; and Thailand.

29. Representatives emphasized the importance of new and emerging technologies for sustainable development. They expressed their appreciation to the secretariat for its role in promoting these technologies, including through the Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology. In that regard, they called for the enhancement of effective regional cooperation.

30. The expert from Uzbekistan emphasized the need to strengthen regional cooperation with regard to technology and innovation in order to achieve sustainable development, urging that a special focus be placed on agriculture and food security. The expert from India noted that ESCAP, through its Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology, could play a catalytic role in strengthening regional cooperation through the provision of policy and advisory support; research and analytical support; strategy and road map development; skill development and capacity-building; and knowledge dissemination. The expert from Thailand highlighted the need to improve linkages between research and decision-making by developing partnerships with action-oriented programmes, and through capacity-building, commercialization, technology adoption and long-term investment.

31. The Committee highlighted the importance of prioritizing new and innovative technologies by countries in the region and commended the Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology for its work in spearheading initiatives to facilitate regional technology cooperation and transfer, the adoption of technologies, capacity-building and the sharing of know-how and intellectual property.

32. The Committee underscored the importance of capacity-building; sharing best practices; enhancing market intelligence, including improved access to market databases of members and associate members; sharing regulatory information on the international commercialization of technologies; establishing collaboration to pitch local technologies; and developing and sharing effective technology transfer models or policy frameworks that may be replicated and adapted by member States, as appropriate. The Committee also stressed the need to facilitate cooperation among members and associate members in critical areas, including digital economy measurements; regulatory sandboxes; digital skills; and the application of fourth industrial revolution technologies in local economies. The significance of promoting regional cooperation to create new opportunities for environmental sustainability, economic growth and the achievement of sustainable development was also emphasized.

33. The Committee noted the importance of enabling developing countries to move to higher segments of the value chain through appropriate technology transfer and the creation of an open Asia-Pacific ecosystem that encouraged innovation and the realization of associated benefits through multilateral efforts and regional cooperation.

34. The Committee also noted the role of new and emerging technologies in delivering innovative solutions to address developmental challenges, and it highlighted circular economy models as a means of addressing climate change mitigation and sustainable development.

**F. Other matters (agenda item 7)**

35. On behalf of the bureau, the Chair made an oral statement on credentials. The Committee took note of it.

**G. Adoption of the report of the Committee on its first session (agenda item 8)**

36. On 24 February 2023, the Committee adopted the report on its first session.

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