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Opening Statement

of

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Her Excellency Executive Secretary, UN-ESCAP,

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen.

I am pleased to address the 80th Annual Session of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. At the outset, I wish to thank Madam Alisjahbana, Under-Secretary-General of United Nations and Executive Secretary of ESCAP for her excellent leadership to support the advancement of sustainable development in the region and for successful organization of this annual meeting.

Excellencies,

Iran has just initiated to set-up its own national information network covering all parts of the country with high quality services in different layers of the network. Fiber optic in Iran now covers 5 million households representing a quarter of the whole population. However, our ambition is to increase it to 20 million households in only 1.5 year. The market share of Iran's digital economy is 7.5 percent of the

total GDP, but it has been planned to be doubled in the 7th five years national development plan starting after two months.

In the digital era, using new tools, platforms and methods for lifelong and continuous learning has got much more importance. Currently, 76,000 schools are connected to the National Information Network and more than 95% of them receive free services. Iran has taken valuable steps in research and development through 149 universities and higher education centers, 50 science and technology parks, 62 creative and innovative houses, 195 incubators (business growth centers) and 350 innovation centers.

Iranians use their own local digital platforms such as e-hailing, messengers, social media, Video content, e-commerce and other online nationwide services; on the other hand, we launched the first phase of the national E-Government platform that connects so far 99% of public entities with 3000 services to promote digital governance. In addition, online authentication by artificial intelligence with high accuracy is used for government services. The new law of "National Data and Information Management" has paved the way for the development of a smart government as well as provision of government data to the private sector through a special framework.

Excellencies,

Given the existing capacities in UN-ESCAP member countries, it is supposed that the working group on digital economy under leadership of UN-ESCAP take a more efficient role to:

1. Encourage and facilitate the investment of member countries in digital economy

2.Development of digital platforms and data parks

3.Expansion of small and medium-sized digital businesses

4.Cooperation between startups, talents and freelancers in digital projects

5.Exchange of experiences for the development of human rights in the cyberspace, especially children and families right in the digital world, according to the Global Digital Compact

6.Developing e-commerce and regional digital markets

I wish you a very successful session. Thank you