



THE DEMOCRATIC

REPUBLIC OF TIMOR-LESTE

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**Country statement from Timor-Leste during 80<sup>th</sup> session of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific.  
Bangkok and online, 22-26 April 2024**

**Agenda Item 2,**

***“Leveraging digital innovation for sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific”***

Her Excellency Dr. Armida Salsiah Alisjabanah, The Executive Secretary of ESCAP  
Excellency Madam Chair and members of the bureau of the 80<sup>th</sup> session  
Distinguished delegates  
Ladies and gentlemen

**Excellency Madam Chair,**

Technological change is one of the most critical issues facing Timor-Leste. Its strategic plan for digital development aims to achieve a society where all can create and share values and contribute to the digital age and development of a digital economy. In this era of unprecedented connectivity and rapid technological advancement, leveraging digital innovation is not merely an option but a necessity if we are to achieve the ambitious goals set forth in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Digital innovation holds immense potential to accelerate progress towards sustainable development by fostering an inclusive economic, strengthen the health, education and agriculture sectors, promoting social inclusion, and safeguarding our environment. Through strategic cooperation and collaboration, we can harness the full potential of digital technologies to address the most pressing challenges facing our region.

**Excellency Madam Chair**

Allow me to highlight some key areas where digital innovation can drive sustainable development and provide tangible examples of successful initiatives:

**1. Digital Inclusion:** We must strive to ensure that no one is left behind in the digital revolution. By promoting digital literacy and skills development, we can empower individuals and communities to fully participate in the digital economy. For instance, initiatives like community-based digital training programs have proven successful in equipping marginalized populations with the necessary skills to access digital opportunities. Additionally, Timor-Leste is currently exploring opportunities to develop its digital economy, including e-commerce, digital payments, and online services. This in line with Timor-Leste Digital 2032 Strategic plan to develop

technology and ICT, centered on Human and Economic development, to deliver government services e-government to include economic, health and agriculture. Efforts in this area could help drive economic growth, create job opportunities, and improve access to goods and services for citizens. "

2. Digital Infrastructure: Access to reliable and affordable internet connectivity is essential for unlocking the benefits of digital innovation. By investing in digital infrastructure, such as broadband networks and mobile connectivity, we can bridge the digital divide and create an enabling environment for sustainable development. Projects like the installation of solar-powered internet kiosks in remote areas have demonstrated the potential to extend connectivity to underserved communities while promoting renewable energy solutions. Meanwhile, Timor-Leste has been working to improve its digital infrastructure, including expanding internet connectivity and mobile network coverage. However, challenges such as geographic remoteness and limited resources may still hinder progress in this area.

3. E-commerce and Digital Trade: The rise of e-commerce presents new opportunities for inclusive and sustainable economic growth. By leveraging digital platforms, businesses can reach new markets, streamline supply chains, and reduce environmental footprints. Initiatives like digital marketplaces for locally sourced products empower small-scale producers to access global markets while promoting sustainable practices such as fair trade and organic agriculture. Recently, Timor-Leste through the Ministry of Trade and Industry have launched the Trade Information Portal aims to improve the business environment, comprehensively, friendly platform that simplifies the process of navigating Timor-Leste export and import activities.

4. Data-driven Decision-making: Data analytics and artificial intelligence have the potential to revolutionize how we address complex challenges in areas such as healthcare, education, and environmental conservation. By harnessing the power of big data, governments and organizations can make informed decisions, optimize resource allocation, and monitor progress towards sustainable development goals. Projects like predictive analytics for disease surveillance and smart monitoring systems for water quality illustrate the transformative impact of data-driven approaches on public health and environmental management. Investments in digital literacy and skills development are crucial for leveraging digital innovation effectively. Timor-Leste tries to focusing on initiatives to enhance education in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) fields and promote digital skills training among the population.

5. Cross-sectoral Collaboration: Achieving sustainable development requires concerted efforts from governments, businesses, civil society, and other stakeholders. By fostering region-wide cooperation and sharing best practices, we can amplify the impact of digital innovation on sustainable development outcomes. Platforms such as regional digital innovation hubs and multi-stakeholder partnerships provide valuable opportunities for collaboration and knowledge exchange.

### **Excellency Madam Chair**

In conclusion, the accelerated implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development requires bold and innovative approaches to address complex challenges. By harnessing the power of digital innovation and strengthening region-wide cooperation, we can build a more inclusive, resilient, and sustainable future for all. Let us seize this opportunity to unlock the full potential of digital technologies in advancing sustainable development across Asia and the Pacific.

Timor-Leste appreciates partner countries and international organization for the support in *leveraging digital innovation* in Timor-Leste, we seek you continued support for our shared goals of promoting inclusive and sustainable development in the Asia-Pacific region.

Thank you very much.