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Agenda Item 14 (A): Matters pertaining to the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific: policy perspectives on the environment and development in Asia and the Pacific

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Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact

Thank you madam Chair!

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates and Ladies and Gentle Men

Here I am speaking on behalf of indigenous peoples' major group.

Resource efficiency has unmistakable centrality in recent global policy frameworks including the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Paris Agreement and the New Urban Agenda. Now we have global frameworks, the next important task is to translate and operationalize these frameworks at national and local level.

The nationalization and integration of the sustainability framework should have clear policy tools that recognize and respect the economic, social and cultural beliefs of indigenous peoples, who have the first charge in the principle of Leave No One Behind. They are the ones mostly dependent on natural resources their ancestral land and territories, which forms a part of their identity, culture and economy. The resource efficiency principles must recognize the contribution of these communities for their ability to live within the ecological limits and ensure that they are compliant of the basic principles of non-discrimination, equality and equity, full and effective participation, self-determination and identity. It is also equally important to respect, promote and implement the Free and Prior Informed Consent (FPIC) as enshrined in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

There is need for enabling policy frameworks that recognizes social innovation and social enterprises and especially those by the indigenous people towards promoting resource efficiency.

We have some important recommendations to the Asia-Pacific countries;

- Indigenous people are known for their contribution to natural conservation and resource efficiency therefore formulate, develop and build upon integrated national development policy and plans that recognize, respect and promote development of indigenous peoples based on their needs, skills, resources and aspirations with full participation of the Indigenous peoples themselves. For example; in Malaysia, indigenous peoples practice a traditional system known as 'Tagal' to manage and promote sustainable use of rivers, forests and watersheds. In Indonesia, indigenous peoples have customary rules known as 'Sasi law' to manage natural resources including seas and rivers
- All the development projects and especially those in indigenous peoples territories should stringently undertake Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and Social Impact Assessment (SIA) as indigenous peoples are impacted differently and more disproportionately from these projects.
- Respect, protect and promote our right to Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) in all development projects to sustain the long-term protection of our homes, lands and forests
- The policy perspectives should incentivize use of more resource-efficient agricultural practices and facilitating knowledge exchange of the best. A number of researches have proved that shifting cultivation with the fallow period of 6 to 10 years is sustainable and contributes to the food security, livelihood, biodiversity conservation and well beings of indigenous peoples. We encourage governments' representatives to acknowledge, respect and recognize shifting cultivation as a sustainable agriculture practice wherever it is in practice.
- Manufacturing sector policies should be designed to mainstream resource efficiency and ensure the minimum impact on the environment.
- Public-private partnerships (PPP) which are supposed to mobilize resources for achieving agenda 2030 have had a very adverse impact on sustainability in general and the indigenous communities in particular. We demand that PPPs should be made more transparent and accountable to the communities and should be undertaken only on the condition of the best interest to the peoples and planet.
- The policy perspective towards resource efficiency must encourage to the 4Rs approach – reduce, refuse, reuse and recycle. It should also promote to the resource-efficiency-financing frameworks and macroeconomic policy framework that promote resource efficiency

Last but not the least, partnership with the indigenous peoples and local communities is vital to achieve the resource-efficient vision of the region. Indigenous peoples are ready for PARTNERSHIP. LET'S WORK TOGETHER AND REACH TOGETHER.

Thank you Madam Chair