

## Opening Remarks

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Virtual Training on Enhancing Capacities of SACEP member countries on provisions for new/updated NDCs and Katowice guidance on ICTU for NDCs - 15-17 June

Dear colleagues at UNFCCC secretariat,

Participants from SACEP member countries and international partners,

Good morning,

Good afternoon,

And welcome!

As the Director General of South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP), it is my great pleasure to welcome you all to this ‘ **Virtual Workshop** ’ which is jointly organized by SACEP and UNFCCC secretariat with the objective to assist the SACEP member countries in South Asia in preparing new/updated Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) which will become the basis for the climate regime under the Paris Agreement, including the enhanced transparency framework (ETF) and the global stock take (GST).

Our initial plan was to conduct this workshop in Thimphu, Bhutan last May, but due to Covid 19 pandemic situation where the countries adopted travel restrictions and social distancing policies to slow down the spread of the disease we were compelled to postpone the face to face training.

### **Ladies and Gentlemen**

As we know, 2015 has been a momentous year for all of us. In the face of extraordinary challenges, the world came together in two unprecedented agreements: the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** within the 2030 Development Agenda adopted in September, and the **Paris Climate Change Agreement** adopted in November.

Even though the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development resulted from separate negotiations, both reflect an understanding that development does not take place in a vacuum: the steps we take to reach one development goal can have significant implications for our other development ambitions.

The 2030 Agenda and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) cover many climate-related actions, including the national climate action plans (NDCs) that set out countries' individual commitments to achieve the Paris targets. Notably, implementing NDCs on the other hand can support the achievement of the Sustainable

Development Goals (SDGs) across all sectors and levels of government.

NDC implementation requires coordinated action across the five distinct—but intrinsically linked – areas which include governance, adaptation, mitigation, finance, measuring, monitoring and verification. To implement the NDCs, we need to identify Key activities that countries can undertake to strengthen governance arrangements and long-term mitigation planning, and to implement the adaptation measures contained in countries’ NDCs. Finance is critical for implementing the mitigation and adaptation actions. International public financing sources, such as the Green Climate Fund, will not be able to meet the mitigation and adaptation needs alone; mobilizing other financing sources such as the private sector and domestic fiscal budgets and identifying Key activities that countries can undertake to strengthen financing of their NDC will therefore be needed.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

As the Secretary-General of the United Nations, António Guterres, indicated, **‘threat of COVID-19 is temporary, meanwhile, the threat of droughts, floods, and extreme storms linked to climate change will remain for years and will require constant action’**. While Covid-19 has resulted in the COP26 postponement, it has not postponed the need for Parties to accelerate work towards fulfilling

commitments they have already made. Nor does it postpone the requirement for nations to submit or revise their national climate action plans—known as NDCs—in 2020. Therefore, this is a crucial time for us to ensure that all countries not only meet their NDC commitments, but are also able to raise their ambition, thereby avoiding catastrophic climate change events.

Before I conclude, I would like to thank UNFCCC Secretariat for extending its support to SACEP by offering to conduct this very timely important training to our member states and also the National Focal Points of our member countries, for extending their cooperation in this difficult time where the governments are necessarily focusing on controlling the spread of the coronavirus and providing immediate medical and income support to those affected.

Finally, on behalf of SACEP, I assure the highest consideration and cooperation and would like to thank you all for your invaluable contribution to this amazing programme. Thank you