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Agenda item 4 (c)

Resolution adopted by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific on 19 May 2023

79/7. Advancing regional cooperation for sustainable urban development and localization of the Sustainable Development Goals in Asia and the Pacific

The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific,

Inspired by the transformative role of national, subnational and local governments in designing, planning and managing sustainable urban development,

Emphasizing the positive contributions of national, subnational and local governments to implementing and localizing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,¹ in particular Sustainable Development Goal 11, in the spirit of unity, solidarity, multilateralism and international cooperation,

Recognizing the significant adverse health, social and economic effects of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic on cities and towns in Asia and the Pacific, especially on vulnerable urban communities, which often live in informal settlements, and the need to build resilience for a sustainable recovery at all levels of government and society against future pandemics and other interlinked crises,

Recalling the outcomes of and the global commitments made at the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III),² a critical milestone for realizing sustainable urban development in an integrated and coordinated manner at the global, regional, national, subnational and local levels, with the participation of all relevant actors,

Recalling also its resolution 70/12 of 8 August 2014 on strengthening efforts on human settlements and sustainable urban development for the Asia-Pacific region, and its resolution 78/1 of 27 May 2022, entitled “Bangkok Declaration Commemorating the Seventy-fifth Anniversary of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific: a Common Agenda to Advance Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific”, in which the

¹ General Assembly resolution 70/1.

² General Assembly resolution 71/256, annex.

Commission committed itself to promoting sustainable urban development to enhance the quality of life, develop healthy environments and better manage environmental risks and resources,

Acknowledging with satisfaction the outcomes of the Seventh Asia-Pacific Urban Forum, held in Penang, Malaysia, in 2019, which resulted in the establishment of the Penang Platform for Sustainable Urbanization, a regional multi-stakeholder partnership that supports local, subnational and national governments in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and the New Urban Agenda³ in Asia and the Pacific,

1. *Encourages* members and associate members to work together closely and to develop impactful initiatives that are aimed at achieving the localization of the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goal 11, at the national, subnational and local levels, including through the Penang Platform for Sustainable Urbanization, as appropriate, to accelerate the implementation of sustainable urban development in Asia and the Pacific;

2. *Welcomes* the opportunities that will be provided by the Eighth Asia-Pacific Urban Forum, which is to be held in Suwon, Republic of Korea, in October 2023 – to coincide with the global commemoration of World Cities Day,⁴ which has been designated to promote cooperation among countries in facing the opportunities and challenges of urbanization and urban sprawl and contributing to sustainable urban development around the world – to focus on local actions for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals so as to aid in ensuring a sustained recovery and enhance the resilience of the region's human settlements, towns and cities to future pandemics and other interlinked crises;

3. *Invites* all members and associate members and representatives of international organizations, civil society, the private sector and other stakeholders, as appropriate, to participate actively in the Eighth Asia-Pacific Urban Forum;

4. *Expresses appreciation* for the ongoing efforts of all members and associate members to promote sustainable urban development as an accelerator of social, economic, environmental and balanced territorial development in the Asia-Pacific region;

5. *Reaffirms* the vital role of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific in fostering regional and subregional cooperation for sustainable urban development, as well as in directly assisting members and associate members in their efforts to localize the Sustainable Development Goals and the New Urban Agenda through active partnerships, including with the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) and organizations across the United Nations system;

6. *Encourages* all members and associate members:

(a) To strengthen regional cooperation on sustainable urban development through, among other modalities, the sharing of evidence-based knowledge, good practices and lessons learned, including but not limited to supporting voluntary subnational and local reviews and reporting on the

³ Ibid.

⁴ General Assembly resolution 68/239.

Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goal 11, in close alignment with and guided by voluntary national reviews;

(b) To enhance the role of multi-stakeholder urban forums and dialogues, as needed, which support the inclusive design, implementation and review of national, subnational and local urban policies and strategies, promoting a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach to the localization of the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goal 11;

7. *Requests* the Executive Secretary:

(a) To continue to support policy and technical cooperation for members and associate members on sustainable urban development and the localization of the Sustainable Development Goals, as appropriate, in collaboration with regional and subregional intergovernmental bodies and international organizations, regional local government associations, civil society networks, the private sector and organizations within the United Nations system, including at regional ministerial conferences on housing and urban development;

(b) To assist members and associate members, upon request, with the provision of policy studies and capacity-building activities, to inform their efforts to promote sustainable urban development, including policy and planning support to accelerate progress towards the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 11 in the Asia-Pacific region;

(c) To report to the Commission at its eighty-first session on the progress made in the implementation of the present resolution.

*9th plenary meeting
19 May 2023*