

**Statement delivered by the Philippines
On behalf of the Asian Group
At the 68th Session of the Working Party on the
Strategic Framework and Program Budget
Geneva, 3 September 2014**

Mr. Chairman,
Mr. Deputy Secretary-General,
Distinguished delegates,

I have the honor of speaking on behalf of the Asian group. At the outset allow me, on behalf of my group, to congratulate you and other members of the Bureau on your election. I would like to assure you of our full support to your chairmanship. The Asian Group aligns itself with the statement delivered by the Philippines on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Mr. Chairman,

The Asian Group would like to comment on agenda item 4. We express our appreciation for the considerable work undertaken by UNCTAD in the area of international investment and its lead role in international investment policy-making. The Group acknowledges the work carried out in producing the World Investment Report, which provides relevant analysis and recommendations. We look forward to its presentation every year and appreciate the Secretariat's efforts to involve countries of the Region with its launch. We compliment the assistance provided by UNCTAD in the preparation of the ASEAN Investment Report 2012 and look forward to the publication of the upcoming 2013 Report.

The Group recognizes the importance of the Secretariat's capacity and awareness-building programs in the area of FDI statistics, which are at the core of informed decision-making in investment policies. The Group appreciates the assistance provided to Myanmar in 2013 and notes with satisfaction that assistance is planned in 2014 for several countries in the region. The findings of the Evaluation of Subprogram 2 highlight UNCTAD's work on FDI statistics and confirm its relevance for our economies. The Group therefore encourages the donor community to further support UNCTAD's programs in this area.

The technical assistance provided by UNCTAD's Investment Policy Reviews offers concrete and policy-oriented recommendations. The program plays a pivotal role in fostering economic diversification and structural transformation to enhance growth and development.

Mr. Chairman,

We would like to commend UNCTAD on its capacity-building work done for Asian countries on issues related to International Investment Agreements (IIAs) and investor-State disputes, an area of critical importance to the Group. We acknowledge the organization of regional workshops and regional seminars on UNCTAD's Investment Policy Framework for Sustainable Development. In this regard, we call upon UNCTAD to further its assistance to the region through capacity-building activities on regional IIA rulemaking.

Mr. Chairman,

The Group looks forward to the launching of the Investment Guide to the Silk Road, scheduled to take place during the World Investment Forum 2014. UNCTAD has updated and expanded the Guide's coverage, which now includes Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, as well as the four western provinces of China. We also praise the recent launching of iGuide for Nepal and express the hope that it will experience the same success as the iGuides of Rwanda and Burundi.

The Asian Group values the completion of the MDG Joint Program, which strengthened the capacities of rural entrepreneurs in Vietnam. The Group notes with satisfaction opportunities of knowledge sharing and South-South cooperation in the implementation of the Entrepreneurship Policy Framework of Ghana as experts from Malaysia joined the UNCTAD team. We look forward to regional initiatives to integrate SMEs in regional and global value chains through business linkages. The Group also acknowledges the work conducted by UNCTAD regarding youth economic empowerment.

The Asian Group believes that high-quality corporate reporting fosters a stable investment environment. The Group is particularly pleased to note the participation of China and Vietnam in the Accounting Development Tool (ADT) pilot-tests. We also appreciate the work of UNCTAD in preparing a study of human capacity for high quality corporate reporting in Malaysia.

Mr. Chairman,

In the context of UNCTAD's renewed cooperation with the ASEAN in the area of e-commerce and law reform, we are pleased that the review of e-commerce legislation harmonization published in September 2013 will support the implementation of the ASEAN ICT Masterplan 2015 and the creation of a harmonized legal framework for e-commerce in the region.

In closing, allow me to reiterate the Asian Group's full support to your leadership.