

**Intervention by H.E. Dr. Asad M. Khan for Interactive Dialogue “The Future Starts Now: Enhancing the Global System for Current and Future Generations”**

(September 23, 2024 New York)

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**Excellencies,  
Heads of State and Delegations,  
Distinguished Participants,  
Ladies and Gentleman,**

I am deeply honored for the opportunity to contribute to this collective endeavor to shape a sustainable future for all.

Today, we stand at a critical juncture, an inflection point, where our actions determine the destiny of generations to come. What we chose to do now will echo through the future. It is time we seize this moment with firm resolve to tackle the formidable challenges that threaten our shared future.

The world grapples with a multitude of crisis, from climate change and biodiversity loss to pollution and rising sea levels, from burgeoning inequalities and ballooning developmental disparities to monstrous debt stockpile of most underdeveloped and developing countries. We are uneven and unequal at best. The sub-regions of Asia are acutely vulnerable to these challenges. In this context, the regionalism is more relevant today than ever before.

The SDGs, though ambitious in their targets, can be most effectively achieved by adopting a bottom-top approach where we enhance regional cooperation mechanisms by fostering closer collaboration between regional organizations and UN regional commissions. Regional organizations, with their targeted and specific objectives and ability to improvise and learn from regional success stories and best practices are better positioned to address local challenges while contributing to global solutions. They complement multilateralism by acting as a building blocks for a more inclusive, comprehensive and networked global governance system.

We know that there is no one-size-fits-all solution. We need to customize and prioritize a result oriented approach, which is more practical and less ideological. Full political ownership at the global and local levels and popular embrace by our people will get us the resources so critical to achieving SDGs.

The Economic Cooperation Organization, comprising ten member states- seven of which are landlocked- has been actively fostering collaboration to

achieve the SDGs in the region. We have through our Vision 2025 launched numerous initiatives within our region to promote economic growth, strengthen connectivity, enhance trade linkages, and improve environmental sustainability by integrating cleaner and greener sources of energy into our growth models.

ECO stands ready to collaborate with the UN and its entities, bringing our regional expertise and commitment to the table. Together, we can create a more prosperous and sustainable future. Regionalism when embraced and supported, becomes a powerful catalyst for global progress.

Let us reaffirm our commitment to regional cooperation and multilateralism. Let us work together to protect this planet for present and future generations. Together, we can turn our aspirations into reality and leave a legacy of hope and resilience for those who will inherit this world.

I thank you for your kind attention.