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**Statement at: Expert Group Meeting on "Green Technology
Investments and Access to Sustainable Financing in the Arab Region"**

**Beirut – Lebanon
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H.E. Dr. Mouin Hamze, Secretary General, National Council for Scientific Research in Lebanon, CNRS-L

Mr. RAJIV GARG, Regional Director - Climate Technology Center and Network (CTCN), Nairobi

Esteemed participants and colleagues,

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you all today in Beirut and in the UN-House for this important Regional Meeting on “Green Technology Investments and Access to Sustainable Financing in the Arab Region”, organized by UN-ESCWA in cooperation with Climate Technology Centre and Network (CTCN) and the National Council for Scientific Research in Lebanon (CNRS-L). Sirs, we value our on-going partnership with you and look forward to strengthening it further on the topic of our meeting today.

We are also fortunate to have among us seasoned professionals and researchers working in the fields of science, technology and finance for development, from governments and academic institutions as well as regional and international organizations.

The three-day meeting will discuss technology and investments as key drivers for implementing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) in the Arab region, within the framework of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and the Paris Agreement. We will also deliberate on how environmentally-friendly, green and appropriate technology can address the climate and environmental challenges in the region, and in particular, how climate technologies can play a leading role to achieve sustainable and integrated management of natural resources, and hence, economic and social well-being and prosperity for present and future generations.

We will focus on the transfer of green technology and its localization, and the related requirements in capacity building, and for mobilizing financing and institutional partnership at regional and global levels, in order to translate the stated goals and objectives under the SDGs and NDCs into national policies, actions and tools that emanate from the priorities and aspirations of the people in our region.

Ladies and gentlemen...

There is tangible evidence from developed and emerging economies as well as some developing countries that investment in technology has a positive multiplier effect on

economic, social and environmental development and we will be able to share and discuss some of these examples during our meeting.

Nonetheless, our region remains so far one of the least developed regions in the world of science, technology and innovation, and to give some examples:

- Patents submitted by Arab countries do not exceed 0.2% of the total number of international patents (while other countries such as Israel submitted 1.2% and South Korea 5.3%).
- One of the Arab countries took the final position in the Global Innovation Index (2018), while most Arab countries witnessed less than expected performance and some Arab countries were not even listed in this Index.

The Arab region is in dire need for a transformational development track, that addresses the root causes of development obstacles, through a holistic and integrated lens, where R&D, and Science, Technology and Innovation can be agents of change and duly mainstream appropriate green technologies into our development paths.

Esteemed participants,

A good number of Arab countries have already developed national policies and initiatives for promoting R&D and STI in development, including means for upscaling technologies

for the agriculture, water and energy sectors to deal with scarce natural resources. This has been well documented in the Reports and technical papers of the Governing Council and the Technical Committee of the ESCWA Technology Center, which have set clear priorities for moving forward, building on local knowledge and capacity and supporting on enabling institutional and legislative environment through the National Technology Transfer Offices (NTTOs).

However, the shift towards adopting, localizing and sustaining appropriate green technologies requires huge investments, which are not usually readily available to middle- or lower-income countries in the region, particularly those facing crises or emerging from them. While innovative private finance, can provide part of the solutions, accessing green funds, such as the Global Environment Facility, the Green Climate Funds and others, has never been more urgently needed by countries in our region, particularly in the areas of adaptation. Here again capacity building in how to present solid project proposals for green funding and sustaining them with a well-coordinated institutional set-up are *sine qua non* for our Member States to capture this window of opportunity.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Since its establishment in 1973, ESCWA has been supporting Member States in their development endeavors, through a multi-disciplinary and a Rights-Based Approach, building on knowledge sharing and regional complementarities.

In 2010, ESCWA established the ESCWA Technology Center in Amman, hosted by the Royal Scientific Society of Jordan, to support pioneering initiatives in the use of environmentally, economically and socially sustainable green technologies through science parks and incubators and to foster partnership and collaboration between research and technology centers in view of up-scaling innovative ideas.

ESCWA through its different substantive Divisions has significantly mainstreamed technology for development in its work program addressing technology to protect and sustainably manage natural resources, enhancing information and communication technology, knowledge economy, and technology for social inclusion and gender parity. In June 2018, ESCWA organized the 30th Ministerial Session under the theme "Technology for Sustainable Development in the Arab Region". The session issued the "Beirut Consensus", which called on all regional and national stakeholders to commit to the development of technology and innovation as a pillar and accelerator for inclusive

development, “leaving no one behind”, particularly youth and vulnerable groups in the Arab region. The ministerial session also resulted in the establishment of the Arab Center for Climate Change Policy.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

My colleagues and I look forward to a fruitful dialogue that will enhance knowledge sharing and identify and prioritize areas for up-scaling technology transfer that will improve the lives of millions of people in this region on economic, social and environmental grounds.

I reiterate my appreciation to our partners in organizing this meeting, the CTCN Centre and CNRS-L, as well as my colleagues at ESCWA and the team of ESCWA Technology Centre for their diligent and hard work to ensure the success of this meeting. I would like to wish you all fruitful deliberations and a pleasant stay in Beirut.

Thank you.