

**General Assembly
Economic and Social Council**Distr.: General
24 October 2023

Original: English

**General Assembly
Seventy-eighth session
Agenda item 18 (i)
Sustainable development: combating sand and
dust storms****Economic and Social Council
2024 session
27 July 2023–24 July 2024
Item 18 (d) of the provisional agenda
Economic and environmental
questions: environment****Letter dated 19 October 2023 from the Permanent Representative
of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to
the Secretary-General**

Referring to our previous letters dated 5 and 13 October 2023, I would like to send the amended letter as follows:

In line with General Assembly resolution [77/171](#), the Islamic Republic of Iran hosted the International Conference on Combating Sand and Dust Storms in Tehran on 9 and 10 September 2023, with the cooperation of the United Nations. The final report, list of participants, programme of work and ministerial declaration are attached (see annexes I–IV).*

I would be grateful if you would circulate the present letter and its annexes as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 18 (i), and of the Economic and Social Council, under agenda item 18 (d).

(Signed) Amir Saeid **Iravani**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

* Circulated in the language of submission only.



Annex I to the letter dated 19 October 2023 from the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Report

of the “International Conference on Combating Sand and Dust Storms”

Tehran – the Islamic Republic of Iran

(9-10 September 2023)

1. The “International Conference on Combating Sand and Dust Storms” was held in Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran on 9-10 September 2023 in line with provisions of the UN General Assembly Resolution A/RES/77/171. The Conference was jointly organized by the Islamic Republic of Iran and the United Nations. (a copy of Joint Invitation Letter is attached as Annex I).
2. Ministers and high-level representatives from Armenia, Austria, Australia, Bangladesh, Brazil, Chile, China, Cuba, Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Finland, France, India, I.R. Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Germany, Greece, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Mauritania, Mexico, Mongolia, Netherland, Nicaragua, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Spain, South Africa, Republic of Korea, Switzerland, Syria, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, UAE, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, as well as the head, senior officials and experts of the UN United Nations system and other international and regional organizations including the UNDESA, UNCCD, UNDP, UNDRR, UNEP, UNESCAP, UNESCO, UNESCWA, UNAMI, UNFPA, UNHABITAT, UNHCR, UNIC, UNICEF, UNRC, FAO, WFP, WHO, WMO, ECO, IOM, and ROPME attended the Conference. (List of participants is attached as Annex II).
3. The Conference provided an opportunity to address the key challenges posed by sand and dust storms; to share knowledge and best practices to combat this phenomenon, to identify practical solutions and concrete actions in order to increase resilience; and to promote regional and international cooperation and partnerships to combat sand and dust storms as a major global concern.
4. The Conference was held in eight sessions, comprising Inaugural Ceremony, Closing meeting as well as High-level Segments and 5 Thematic Interactive sessions. (The Work Program of the Conference is attached as Annex III).

Opening of the Conference:

5. Following the welcoming remarks by the Vice-President and Head of Department of Environment of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Mr. Ali Salajeghe, the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, H.E. Dr. Ebrahim Raisi made an opening statement. The President emphasized on the importance of environment as a major concern which is not confined to a specific country or region. He stated that protecting the environment is essential for all countries and regions and expressed hope that Tehran Conference on SDS will contribute to further inclusive consultations, convergence and concrete decision of countries to preserve the environment. The President stressed that industrial

development should not come at the cost of environmental degradation and improper use of water resources. The President reiterated that Iran is constitutionally bound to make development contingent upon respecting the environment and in this regard, convergence and cooperation within the UN framework are solutions to this common challenge. He emphasized that the environmental preservation and protection should not be affected by political motives, and unilateralism in international relations is an impediment to protecting the environment. He indicated that the scientific and research-based knowledge should drive the environmental protection efforts in which area Iranian scientific, academic and research centers enjoy a rich experience, and are ready to share them with the interested parties. Similarly, the President reiterated that the establishment of a joint fund, to be tentatively called the Implementation Measures Support Fund, was proposed to cover the costs of the initiative in support of environmental protection and combating SDS.

6. The pre-recorded video speech of H.E. Mr. Antonio Guterres, the Secretary-General of the United Nations was delivered. In his remarks the Secretary General highlighted that as a result of human activities, we are facing a full-scale storm causing irreversible damage to life on Earth. He emphasized that increased support and investment by all to improve early warning systems is a necessity as we are dealing with a transboundary issue of global reach. UN initiatives, e.g., Decade for Ecosystem Restoration, provides us with a road map until 2030 to protect and restore our degraded lands and ecosystems, and help foster global climate solidarity. The Secretary-General also made reference to “Accelerator Agenda” as a further step in taking measures to combat climate change.
7. In her opening remarks, H.E. Ms. Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Secretary of UNESCAP, emphasized that SDSs threaten the health and wellbeing of the population, as well as economies. The Under Secretary General, reiterated that, ESCAP is committed to combat SDSs, and APDIM has prepared the first plan of action in this area and ESCAP, in cooperation with ESCWA, is ready to transfer knowledge and share best practices.
8. Similarly, Mr. Abdulkarim Elwaer Assistant Director General of FAO, addressed the conference on behalf of the UN Coalition on Combating Sand and Dust Storms. In his remarks he stressed that the SDSs constitute a transboundary issue, affecting health, energy, transportation and agriculture and challenging food security which related to 11 SDGs. He also underscored that the Coalition noticed Iran’s proposal to establish a joint fund to combat SDSs, and together with FAO is committed to transfer knowledge and methodology and to share best practices for mitigating SDSs and increasing food security.

High-Level Segment:

9. The High-Level Segment of the Conference started after the Opening Session. During the High-Level segment, Ministers, vice-Ministers, Director Generals, and Heads of Delegations as well as the senior representatives of UN agencies delivered their statements, which were focusing on several key issues as follow:
10. The major issues raised in the statements include: SDSs should be a priority within developed and developing countries alike; SDSs are common meteorological hazards in arid and semi-arid regions; importance of regional and international cooperation for a collective response to SDSs; the need for a comprehensive approach to address this multifaceted challenge; no nation can combat SDSs in

isolation; knowledge and data sharing, transfer of technology and exchange of best practice; enhancing early warning systems; research-based works and collaborations; Unilateral Coercive Measures and sanctions as a major obstacle to implementing environmental plans at the national level; climate change challenges, desertification, deforestation, global warming, scarcity of water resources, dried-up rivers, lakes and wetlands, and proximity of countries to deserts are among factors leading to further SDSs; Socio-economic impacts of SDSs; establishment of a specialized fund to support countries in West Asia in implementing SDS-related transboundary plans and programs; several delegations proposed the establishment of regional early warning centers and the exchange of technology and expertise; similarly the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia highlighted the initiatives in combating Sand and Dust Storms through the implementation of Saudi Green Initiative and Middle East Green Initiative, as well as the establishment of WMO SDS Warning Advisory and Assessment Node, and the establishment of the Regional Climate Change Center in Jeddah.

Thematic Interactive Sessions:

11. Five Thematic Interactive Sessions were held during the Conference with the following topics and outcomes:

Session 1: Socio-economic impacts of sand and dust storms

Session 2: Accelerating Regional and International Cooperation to combat sand and dust storms

Session 3: Implementation of regional plans of action to combat sand and dust storms: the example of the Regional Plan of Action on Sand and Dust Storms in Asia and the Pacific

Session 4: Enhancing Regional Cooperation

Session 5: International Cooperation on Sand and Dust Storms: The Work of the United Nations; and Main Components for an Integrated Global Actions to Combat Sand and Dust Storms

12. The detailed account of discussions and major points raised during the abovementioned sessions is attached to this report.

Conclusion of the Conference:

13. At the closing meeting, on 10 September, the Final Declaration of the Conference was adopted by the Conference. (A copy of Tehran Declaration is attached as Annex IV).
14. The representatives of Brazil, Chile, Germany and Mexico expressed reservation on the declaration to allow them proper consultations with all their respective authorities. The representative of the Arab Republic of Egypt has stated that the text of the Declaration would be sent to the other relevant Egyptian ministries and agencies for internal consultations before its final adoption. The representative of the People's Republic of China has requested that the text of the Declaration be sent through diplomatic channels.
15. The UN Resident Coordinator in the I.R. of Iran, Mr. Stefan Priesner made his concluding remarks.
16. The Vice-President and Head of Department of Environment of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Mr. Ali Salajeghe, made his closing statement.

17. At the conclusion of the meeting, participants were duly acknowledged for their active and meaningful engagement throughout the proceedings. The delegations expressed their sincere and profound gratitude to the Islamic Republic of Iran for the meticulous planning and organization of this pivotal event.

Thematic Sessions:

Report of Moderators and major recommendations:

Session 1: Thematic Interactive Discussion on Socio-economic impacts of sand and dust storms.

| | | |
|-------------|------------------------|--|
| Moderator : | Mr. Ba Baidy | Ministry of Environment and Ecological Transition, Senegal |
| Speaker 1: | Mr. Koulivand | Head of Iranian Red Crescent Society |
| Speaker 2: | Ms. Kim Hyo Eun | Ambassador and deputy minister for climate change, Republic of Korea |
| Speaker 3: | Mr. Hernan Toro | Ambassador and deputy minister for climate change, Venezuela |
| Speaker 4: | Mr. Mazen Almalkawi | Advisor, Environmental Health Exposures, WHO |
| Speaker 5: | Ms. Elizabeth Sellwood | UNEP |
| Speaker 6: | Mr. Kishan Khoday | Regional Coordinator & Team Leader, UNDP |
| Speaker 7: | Ms. Lalini Veerassamy | IOM |

The session delved into the extensive and far-reaching consequences of Sand and Dust Storms (SDS) across multiple sectors, including health, transportation, agriculture, air and water quality, and industrial production.

It emphasized the importance of adopting a proactive and preventive approach, highlighting the need for community-level capacity building, utilizing trained volunteers, and engaging elite individuals in prevention and rescue efforts.

Universal education and self-help training were identified as essential tools for enhancing people's resilience during emergencies. Additionally, participants stressed the significance of information sharing, technology transfer, and the exchange of best practices. A whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach was advocated, urging the involvement of all relevant stakeholders, such as government entities, civil society organizations, and the private sector. Furthermore, the discussion emphasized that SDS is not merely an environmental issue; it profoundly impacts various socio-economic aspects, particularly health, economy, and food security. Strengthening monitoring and early warning systems was deemed crucial in mitigating and preventing SDS challenges.

The session called for comprehensive and inclusive strategies and programs at both regional and sub-regional levels. Recognizing anthropogenic sources of SDS was underscored, necessitating actions like restoring the natural dust cycle, achieving land degradation neutrality, and enhancing climate adaptation in vulnerable areas.

Nevertheless, it was noted that our understanding of the economic and development impacts of SDS remains limited, with a need for broader assessments that encompass ecosystems, ecosystem services, and their social costs. Challenges related to assessing the economic impact of SDS were acknowledged, including the lack of data. This constraint extends from the areas impacted by SDS deposition to the source regions, where soil and sand losses result in reduced productivity and income. Participants recommended utilizing the SDS Toolbox, designed to address various aspects of SDS management, from source identification to mitigation strategies.

Additionally, the session highlighted the alarming environmental risks exacerbated by climate change in the Eastern Mediterranean Region (EMR), where more than 717 million people reside. These risks account for over one million premature deaths annually. Furthermore, the lack of comprehensive studies on the long-term health effects of SDS was emphasized, requiring further collaboration to assess its impacts on health. The session addressed SDS implications for human mobility, displacement, and migration, as well as its environmental ramifications, including soil loss, degradation, desertification, deforestation, and their consequences for food security and agricultural productivity. Finally, the necessity of addressing global warming and gas emissions through mitigation and adaptation plans was underlined as a critical step in combating the challenges posed by SDS.

Session 2: Thematic Interactive Discussion on Accelerating Regional and International Cooperation to Combat Sand and Dust Storms.

| | | |
|-------------|---------------------|--|
| Moderator : | Mr. Masoud Moradi | Director of the Atmospheric Science Research Center, I.R. Iran |
| Speaker 1: | Dr. Sahar Tajbakhsh | Head of I.R. of Iran Meteorological Organization |
| Speaker 2: | Mr. Guoji Sun | Director General of the Department of Combating Desertification of the National Forestry and Grassland Administration, China |
| Speaker 3: | Mr. Ali KUÇUME | General Directorate of Combating Desertification and Erosion, Türkiye |
| Speaker 4: | Mr. Ata Hussain | WMO (SDS-WAS) |
| Speaker 5: | Mr. Marco Toscano | UNDRR |
| Speaker 6: | Mr. Husnu Tekin | Director for Human Resources and Sustainable Development, ECO |

During the second session, participants emphasized several key avenues for enhancing international and regional cooperation in the fight against Sand and Dust Storms (SDS). These included: Sharing vital knowledge and technical data, notably satellite information, to bolster forecasting and risk assessment capabilities, Engaging in capacity-building programs and disseminating best practices while emphasizing the importance of public awareness and societal measures to address the underlying causes of SDS, Advocating for the establishment of common protocols for joint international early warning systems, aligning with the United Nations' "Early Warning for All by 2027" initiative proposed by the Secretary-General.

The representative of the People's Republic of China highlighted the significance of data gathering for risk assessment and frequency forecasting. They underlined continuous efforts to implement advanced early warning systems using cutting-edge technologies. China's successful endeavors to combat desertification, soil erosion, and droughts, including the creation of a massive green belt spanning over 940 kilometers, were highlighted, with a commitment to sharing experiences with other nations.

The Islamic Republic of Iran stressed its collaboration with United Nations Agencies to support the Secretary-General's EW4ALL initiative, emphasizing the gathering of data for Multi-Hazard early warning systems. Iran also detailed extensive educational and capacity-building programs involving specialists from over 40 countries, joint projects aimed at identifying SDS root causes in 25 countries, and cooperation with Türkiye to establish a WMO regional node for SDS observation and mitigation.

Republic of Türkiye highlighted workshops conducted in collaboration with active UN agencies and emphasized the need for standardized methods to monitor and assess the

impact of SDS and related hazards, such as droughts and desertification. They discussed joint projects to identify and assess SDS impacts with countries including Qatar, Syria, and Iran, expressing readiness to intensify these efforts.

The Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) stressed the importance of adopting a multi-sectoral perspective when assessing SDS damages, acknowledging that disruptions in transportation and energy distribution systems can have far-reaching economic consequences. Protecting cultural and heritage sites from SDS impacts was also underscored. ECO noted the transboundary nature of socio-economic challenges resulting from disasters in the region, highlighting specific challenges and proposed measures to address them, such as investing in technology and fostering collective thinking.

The session emphasized the need for sector-based early warning and impact-based approaches and highlighted the importance of a multi-hazard system, particularly concerning the availability and accessibility of social data on population and various aspects of vulnerability. The designation of July 12 as the international day for combating SDSs was recognized as a significant milestone in understanding and addressing this critical phenomenon. The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) played a central role in detecting dust erosion sources and anticipating SDS risks and dangers. Collaborating with UNDRR, ITU, and UNOCHA, WMO actively supported the four pillars of the Secretary-General's Early Warning for All initiative, primarily focusing on hazard detection, observation, monitoring, analysis, and forecasting. The hope was expressed that measures related to the EW4All initiative would be endorsed by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change during COP28 in Dubai later this year.

Session 3: Thematic Interactive Discussion on the Implementation of regional plans of action to combat sand and dust storms: the example of the Regional Plan of Action on Sand and Dust Storms in Asia and the Pacific.

| | | |
|-------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| Moderator : | Ms.Litizia Rossano | Director, APDIM |
| Speaker 1: | Dr. Mostafa Mohaghegh | Senior Coordinator, APDIM |
| Speaker 2: | Dr. Ali Gholampour, | MFA, Islamic Republic of Iran |

The session 3 encompassed several critical strategies and recommendations aimed at addressing the challenges posed by Sand and Dust Storms (SDS). Collaboratively developing common guidelines for analyzing the socio-economic impacts of SDS events across various sectors and establishing national-level governance structures to facilitate the coordination of SDS response and data collection efforts were emphasized.

Promoting and supporting transboundary studies to gain a comprehensive understanding of the socio-economic and health impacts of SDS events that cross borders was a key focus. Standardizing methodologies for data collection, impact analysis, and reporting was highlighted to ensure consistency and comparability.

The session also emphasized the need to establish connections between the Air Pollution Action Plan and SDS-related processes to leverage existing frameworks for SDS mitigation. Strengthening coordination mechanisms for air pollution management to enhance preparedness and response to SDS events was a vital recommendation. Furthermore, the session stressed the importance of conducting additional studies to gather more data on the impacts of SDS events, particularly in the areas of health, agriculture, and transportation, and investing in advanced monitoring technology to enhance data collection and analysis.

Encouraging collaboration between countries to collectively address transboundary SDS challenges was highlighted, as was advocating for increased policy attention on SDS and its interconnection with climate change, emphasizing the need for comprehensive strategies. Developing targeted interventions and strategies to mitigate the impacts of SDS on agriculture, health, and transportation sectors was another key recommendation. The establishment of national committees modeled after successful approaches, focusing on joint projects and the need for financial mechanisms to support SDS mitigation efforts, was also discussed.

The session advocated for joint studies involving interested countries to thoroughly examine the impacts of specific SDS events and emphasized the adoption of multisectoral and multidisciplinary approaches to comprehensively address SDS challenges. Strengthening and expanding observation systems by increasing monitoring points and implementing standardized methodologies was highlighted, as was the

development of impact-based forecasting and early warning systems for SDS events, considering their transboundary nature and enhancing collaboration and data sharing among stakeholders to improve the effectiveness of these systems.

Collaboratively developing advisory services tailored to specific sectors, integrating SDS early warning systems with existing natural hazard response mechanisms, and recognizing the potential of regional applications and the UN Coalition as significant avenues for progress in addressing SDS challenges and fostering international cooperation were also key outcomes of the session. This collective effort, led by ESCWA and ESCAP, seeks to combat SDS through inter-regional dialogues and capacity-building initiatives, recognizing the need for regional and inter-regional assessments to comprehensively address SDS challenges.

Session 4: Thematic Interactive Discussion on Enhancement Regional Cooperation

| | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| Main Moderator | Dr. Tahmasebi Birgani | Adviser to the Head of DoE and Head of National Secretariat for Policy Making and Coordination of SDS Management, I. R. Iran |
| Session 1 | | |
| Moderator and Speaker 1: | Dr. Asghar Tahmasebi | Kharazmi University, I.R. Iran |
| Speaker 2: | Mr. Berdi Berdiyev | Head of the Department on Coordination of International Environment Cooperation and Projects of the Ministry of Agriculture and Environmental Protection, Turkminstan |
| Speaker 3: | Jumaan Al-Qahtani | Chair of WMO SDS-WAS FOR GCC in Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia |
| Speaker 4: | Ms. Zarafo Qiyomzoda | First Deputy Chairman of the Committee for Environmental Protection under the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan |
| Speaker 5: | Mr. Imad Almaree | National focal point of UNCCD |
| Speaker 6: | Ms. Hyo Eun Kim | Ambassador and deputy minister for climate change, Republic of Korea |
| Speaker 7: | Mr. Sebastian Lange | UNHABITAT |
| Session 2 | | |
| Moderator 2: | Mr. Claudio Providas | UNDP Iran |
| Speaker 1: | Ms. Chimedtseren Purevjav | Scientific secretary, Mongolia |
| Speaker 2: | Mr. Kishan Khoday | Regional Coordinator & Team Leader, UNDP |
| Session 3 | | |
| Moderator 3: | Dr. Tahmasebi Birgani | Adviser to the Head of DoE and Head of National Secretariat for Policy Making and Coordination of SDS Management, I. R. Iran |
| Speaker 1: | Mr. Peng Chen | vice chairman and general secretary China Green Foundation |
| Speaker 2: | Ms. Louisa Karika | Regional Liaison Officer - Asia Pacific, UNCCD |

The Thematic Session 4 convened with a resounding consensus on the necessity of regional cooperation to combat the multifaceted challenges posed by Sand and Dust Storms (SDS). Participants, representing a diverse array of countries, underscored the imperative of collective efforts in addressing this complex and transboundary phenomenon. This commitment to regional cooperation was rooted in the recognition

that SDS events often transcend national borders, necessitating coordinated responses for effective mitigation and management. Central to the discussions was the unwavering commitment of countries to engage in bilateral, regional, and multilateral cooperation mechanisms.

Participants affirmed their dedication to working collaboratively across borders, acknowledging that the impacts of SDS events extend far beyond individual nations. This shared resolve emphasized the interdependence of countries in the face of SDS challenges, reinforcing the need for joint initiatives and solutions. The role of United Nations (UN) agencies was recognized as pivotal in facilitating and coordinating collaborative efforts. Participants emphasized the important role these agencies play in bridging gaps, sharing knowledge, and providing technical expertise. The UN's unique position as a neutral and credible actor was highlighted as an asset in fostering cooperation among nations and guiding the development of effective strategies. In charting the way forward, the session emphasized the necessity of crafting action plans at both regional and sub-regional levels. These action plans would serve as roadmaps for implementing collaborative initiatives and addressing SDS challenges specific to particular regions. Participants acknowledged that a one-size-fits-all approach would not suffice, given the diverse ecosystems, climate conditions, and socio-economic contexts across regions. Therefore, tailored action plans were deemed essential to effectively address region-specific SDS impacts. It was also emphasized that Extreme economic pressure exerted against several developing countries in the form of illegal unilateral coercive measures and unlawful unilateral sanctions negatively impacts their adequate access to funding, knowhow and technology required for building necessary capacities to mitigate the destructive impacts of sand and dust storms.

Key takeaways from the session encompassed the resounding call for regional cooperation as an indispensable element in combatting SDS events. The commitment of countries to engage in bilateral, regional, and multilateral cooperation mechanisms was viewed as a cornerstone of collective action. UN agencies were recognized for their instrumental role in facilitating collaborative work and providing vital expertise. Furthermore, the session underscored the imperative of developing action plans at both regional and sub-regional levels. These plans would not only guide collaborative efforts but also ensure that strategies align with the unique challenges faced by different regions. As participants departed the session, they carried with them a renewed commitment to cooperative endeavors, recognizing that it is through regional collaboration and coordinated action that the challenges posed by SDS can be effectively addressed.

Session 5: Thematic Interactive Discussion on International Cooperation on Sand and Dust Storms: The Work of the United Nations; and Main Components for an Integrated Global Actions to Combat Sand and Dust Storms.

| | | |
|-------------|-------------------------|---|
| Moderator : | Ms. Juliette Biao | Director of the UNFF Secretariat |
| Speaker 1: | Mr. Elier Pile | National Institute Meteorology, Cuba |
| Speaker 2: | Mr. Mohamed Yahya Chahe | Ministry of Environment, Mauritania |
| Speaker 3: | Ms. Heyddy Calderon | Minister, Nicaragua |
| Speaker 4: | Mr. Feras Ziadat | FAO |
| Speaker 5: | Ms. Louisa Karika | Regional Liaison Officer, Asia Pacific at UNCCD |
| Speaker 6: | Mr. Jasem Al Besharah | Executive Secretary of ROPME |

The session 5 commenced with a comprehensive overview of the global nature of Sand and Dust Storms (SDSs) as transboundary challenges. It was emphasized that addressing SDSs necessitates international cooperation and integrated, collaborative efforts. The discussion highlighted the importance of building upon existing initiatives at national, regional, and global levels, while also linking with international conventions and agreements to combat SDSs effectively.

The participants engaged in a nuanced discussion regarding the potential creation of new conventions to address SDSs. The deliberation underscored the ambition of this approach and its possible impracticality, given the time required for negotiations versus the urgency of the matter. However, there was a consensus that exploring the option of a protocol under the leadership of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) should be encouraged as a viable alternative. The UN coalition on Sand and Dust Storms was commended for its commendable efforts in fostering effective and efficient regional and global actions against SDSs. The coalition's role in accelerating resource mobilization was acknowledged as a critical component of the global response. A key point of discussion revolved around the imperative of integrating SDSs into the three Rio Conventions, namely, the UNCCD, UNFCCC, and UNCBD. This integration ensures a holistic approach to addressing SDSs and recognizes their interconnectedness with land degradation, climate change, and biodiversity loss. Moreover, it was emphasized that SDSs should be explicitly discussed at the United Nations Forum on Forests, similar to the attention afforded to wildfires. This heightened focus underscores the significance of SDSs in the broader context of global forest management.

The session concluded by highlighting two pivotal upcoming events. Firstly, ministers from countries affected by SDSs were extended an invitation to attend the 19th Session of the UN Forum on Forests, scheduled for May 6 to 10, 2024. This session presents an invaluable opportunity for the mid-term review of international arrangements on

forests and collaborative strategies to address SDSs. Secondly, countries impacted by SDSs were invited to participate in the Conference on Wildfires, co-organized by the UN Forum on Forests and the Government of India, to be held from October 26 to 28, 2023. This conference serves as a preparatory stage for fostering dialogue and cooperation in combating SDSs.

Annex II to the letter dated 19 October 2023 from the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

PROVISIONAL LIST OF PARTICIPANTS:
International Conference on Combating Sand and Dust Storms
9-10 September 2023-Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

COUNTRIES:

Republic of Armenia

Mr. Simdyan Hakob

Minister of Environment

Mr. Gabrielyan Tigran

Deputy Minister of Environment

Ms. Lilit Sargsyan

Counselor, the Embassy

Australia

Ms. Susan Allen

First Secretary, the Embassy

Peoples Republic of Bangladesh

Mr. Mohammad Nazmul Abedin

Joint Secretary, Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief

Brazil

Mr. Carlos Roberto Bevilaqua Penna

Chargé d' Affaires, the Embassy

Mr. Thiago Carvalho de Medeiros

First Secretary, the Embassy

Peoples Republic of China

Mr. Guoji Sun

Director General, Department of Combating Desertification of the National Forestry and Grassland Administration

Ms. Hua Wang

Division Director, the Department of Combating Desertification of the National Forestry and Grassland Administration

Mr. Peng Chen

Vice Chairman and General Secretary, China Green Foundation

Mr. Tao Sun

Division Director, Academy of Forestry Inventory and Planning, National Forestry and Grassland Administration

Republic of Cuba

Mr. Armando Rodriguez Batista

Deputy Minister, Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment

Mr. Elier Pila

Researcher, National Institute of Meteorology

Democratic Republic of the Congo

Ms. Bazaiba Masoudi

Deputy of Prime Minister and Minister, Ministry of Environment and Sustainable development

Ms. Nafisa Masoudi

Advisor, Ministry of Environment and Sustainable development

Mr. Koyakpa Zukondiri

Communication Assistant, Ministry of Environment and Sustainable development

Arab Republic of Egypt

Mr. Ahmed Elsayed Ahmedhassan Abdelrahim

Second secretary, department of environment, Climate and sustainable, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Chile

Mr. Sergio Fransisco Toro Mendoza

Counselor, the Embassy

Finland

Mr. Kari Kahiluoto

Ambassador, the Embassy

Republic of France

Mr. Jerome Pasquier

Ambassador, Interagency Coordinator for Baghdad Format

Mr. Nicolas Roche

Ambassador, the Embassy

Mr. Remy Bouallegue

Counselor, the Embassy

Mr. Amos Reichman

Counselor, Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs

Mr. Martin-Pierre Charliat

Counselor, the Embassy

Mr. Sepehr Yahyavi Tajabadi

Translator

Germany

Mr. Hans-Peter Jügel

Charge d'Affairs, the Embassy

Ms. Aurelie Domisse

First Secretary, the Embassy

Islamic Republic of Iran

Mr. Ali Salajegheh

Vice President and Head of Department of Environment (DOE)

Sahar Tajbakhsh Mosalman

Vice-Minister of Roads and Urban Development, President of I.R. of Iran

Meteorological Organization (IRIMO)

Mr. Reza Najafi Deputy Foreign Minister for Legal and International Affairs

Mr. Iraj Heshmati

Deputy to Head of DOE
Mr Mojtaba Zoljodi
Deputy to Head of DOE

Mr. Gholamhossein Darzi
Director General, International Affairs of Environment and Sustainable Development,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Mr. Hossein Musavifar
Director General, International Affairs, Department of the Environment
Mr. Ali Mohammad Tahmasebi Birgani
Secretary for National Center of Sand and Dust Storms

Mr. Ali Reza Noormohammadi
Chef de Cabinet for DOE
Mr. Massoud Rezvanian Rahaghi
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Mr. Javad Momeni
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Ms. Hosna Khalvandi
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Ms. Sanaz Sabeti Mohammadi Department of the Environment

Mr. Mahmood Rezaei
Department of Environment

Ms. Seyedeh Elham Azizi
Department of Environment

Ms. Farnaz Shoaie
Department of Environment

Ms. Afsaneh Hassani
Department of Environment

Mr. Ali Ansari
Department of Environment

Mr. Mohammad Ali Gorji
Department of Environment

Mr. Mahdi Shalchian
Department of Environment

Mr. Hossein Chitsazi
Department of the Environment

Ms. Raziye Mirzajani Darestani
Department of the Environment

Ms. Maedeh Mirzajani Darestani
Department of the Environment

Pirhosain Kolivand
President of the Iranian Red Crescent Society
Razieh Alishavandi
SDG international affairs and IHL

Jabbar Aslani
Director General of Principles, Law & IHL
Mani Moez Ardalan
Climate Change Center Iranian Red Crescent Society
Hadi Ahmadi
Head of Climate Change Center/Iranian Red Crescent
Azadeh Ostad Rahimi
Head, Western Transboundary Rivers and Shared Water Resources, Iranian Ministry
of Energy
Shahrokh Fateh
Manager Meteorological Organization

Republic of Iraq

Mr. Nazar Mohammed Saeed Kinji
Minister, Ministry of Environment
Mr. Nadheer Abood Faza
Advisor, Ministry of Environment
Ms. Najla Mohsin Hammood
General Manager of the Technical Department, Ministry of Environment
Ms. Ruaa Abdulzahra Zaki
Secretary, Ministry of Environment
Mr. Fadhaa Turki Dakhil
Head of R.S & GIS Unit, Ministry of Environment
Mr. Seerwan Abdullah Mawlood
Director, Ministry of Environment
Mr. Omer Kerim
Under Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Republic of Korea

Ms. Hyo Eun Kim
Deputy Minister for Climate Change, Minister of Foreign Affairs
Mr. Kang Hyeon Yun
Ambassador
Ms. Hye Jung Shin
Senior Researcher, National Institute of Environmental Research
Ms. Boyoung Kim
Second Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Ms. Jiuen Kim
Second Secretary, the Embassy

State of Kuwait

Ms. Shareef Alkhayat
Director of Air Quality Monitoring Department, Kuwait Environment Public
Authority
Mr. Fawwaz Aldhefairsi
Third secretary, the Embassy
Mr. Nawaf Alrujaib
First Secretary, the Embassy

Ireland

Mr. Gavin Glynn
Chargé D'Affaires, the Embassy

Italy

Mr. Giuseppe Perrone
Ambassador, the Embassy
Mr. David Balloni
First Secretary, the Embassy

Japan

Mr. Kazutoshi Aikawa
Ambassador, the Embassy
Mr. Kenju Morikami,
Counselor, the Embassy
Ms. Atsuko Ishida
Second Secretary, the Embassy
Mr. Vahid kheirloomour
Assistant to Economic Cooperation Affairs, the Embassy

Mexico

Mr. Guillermo Puente Ordorica
Ambassador, the Embassy
Mr. Diego Ruiz Gayol
Counselor, the Embassy
Mr. Ashkan Izadyar
Commercial Section, the Embassy

Islamic Republic of Mauritania

Mr. Moulaye Brahim Moulaye Driss
Deputy Ministe , Ministry of Environment
Mr. Mohamed Yahya
Technical Advisor, Ministry of Environment

Mongolia

Ms. Chimedtseren Purevjav
Scientific Secretary, National Emergency Management Agency

Republic of Nicaragua

Ms. Heyddy Loredana Calderon Palma
Minister, Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources
Mr. Ramon Alberto Moncada Colindres
Ambassador, the Embassy
Mr. Rene Salvador Castellon
Director of Biodiversity, Ministry of Environment and National Resources
Mr. Mohammad Moezzi Dashtaki
Translator

Sultanate of Oman

Mr. Nasser Al Yaaqubi
Director of the Environment Administration in Al Buraimi Governorate, Environment
Agency

Mr. Ahmed AlMakhmari
Manager of Environment Control Office, Environment Authority
Mr. Mohammed Al Hajri
Director, Environment Authority

Islamic Republic of Pakistan

Ms. Khirat Rehamn
First Secretary, the Embassy

Poland

Mr. Maciej Falkowski
Ambassador, the Embassy

Portugal

Mr. Carlos Costa Neves
Ambassador, the Embassy
Ms. Mafalda paiva de oliveira
Counselor, the Embassy

State of Qatar

Mr. Saadat Sheikh Faleh ben Naser al Sani
Minister, Ministry of Environment
Mr. Ebrahim Abdolteif Al Mosalmani
Deputy Minister, Ministry of Environment
Mr. Abdollah Mohammad Alfalasi
Office Manager of the Minister, Ministry of Environment
Mr. Mohammad Ben Hamd Alhajeri
Ambassador, the Embassy
Mr. Ahmad Mohammad Al Maleki
Secretary of the minister's office, Ministry of Environment
Mr. Abdollah Aki Al Khalifi
Deputy of Environmental Supervision and Inspection Department, Ministry of Environment
Mr. abdollah Mehdi alyami
First secretary, the Embassy
Mr. Mohammad Ben Abdolaziz Alatiye
Second secretary, the Embassy
Mr. Alireza Hadaei
Public relations official, the Embassy

Russian Federation

Ms. Tatiana Kuderina
Senior Researcher, Institute of Geography Russian Academy of sciences

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Mr. Ayman Bin Salem Ghulam
CEO of National Center of Meteorology
Mr. Jamaan Bin Saad Al Ghahtain
Mr. Aymen Bin Mohammad Al Bar
Mr. Ghatijeh Bin Hamood Al Saadoun
Mr. Yaser Bin Hamed Al Ghaffari
Mr. Abdollah Bin Soleiman Al Beriaei
Mr. Ahmad Bin Fallahi Al Anzee
Ms. Samireh Bent Mansour Al Asiri
Ms. Atriyeh Bin Mohammad Shook

Republic of Senegal

Mr. Alioune Ndoeye
Minister, Ministry of Environment and Ecological Transition
Mr. Ba Baidy
Director of Waters and Forestry, and Soil Conservation, Ministry of Environment and Ecological Transition
Mr. Saliou Niang Dieng
Ambassador, the Embassy

Spain

Ms. Angel Losada Fernandez
Ambassador, the Embassy
Mr. Enrique Ruiz Molero
The Embassy
Mr. Luis Romero Díaz
Counselor, the Embassy

Syrian Arab Republic

Mr. Moutaz Douaji
Deputy Minister, Ministry of Local Administration and Environment
Mr. Imad Almaree
National Focal Point of UNCCD, Ministry of Local Administration and Environment

Switzerland

Ms. Nadine Mietta Olivieri Lozano
Ambassador, the Embassy
Ms. Albane Dorsaz
Second Secretary, the Embassy
Ms. Maren Scheppach
Attaché, the Embassy

Republic of Tajikistan

Ms. Zarafo Qiyomzoda
First Deputy Chairman, Committee for Environmental Protection
Mr. Abduqayum Qalandarzoda
Member, Secretariat of the National Authority for Issues Related to the Green Climate Fund

Republic of Türkiye

Mr. Nurettin Taş
Director General, General Directorate of Combating Desertification and Erosion,
Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change
Mr. Orhan Tatar
General Director, Earthquake and Risk Reduction, Disaster and Emergency
Management Presidency of Türkiye
Ms. Irde Cetinturk Gurtepe
Head of Department, Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change
Ms. Caglar Kaynak
Head of Atmospheric Models Division, Turkish State Meteorological Service
Mr. Muhammet Maruf Yaman
Head of Foreign Relations Department, Ministry of Interior - Disaster and Emergency
Management Authority (AFAD)
Mr. Adnan Altay Altinors
Head of Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Mr. Murat Ali Hatipoglu
Deputy Head of Department, General Directorate of State Hydraulic Works (DSI)
Mr. Murat Arsalan
Expert, Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change
Ms. Kudret Asli Babacan
Expert, Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change
Mr. Ali Kucumen
Data Analysis and GIS Specialist, General Directorate of Combating Desertification and Erosion
Ms. Ulfet Unal
Engineer, Turkish Water Institute- SUEN
Mr. Mehmet Akkoyun
Engineer, General Directorate of Water Management, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry

Turkmenistan

Mr. Charygeldi Babanyyazov
Minister, Ministry of Environment Protection
Mr. Berdi Berdiyev
Head, Department on Coordination of the International Environmental Cooperation and Projects, Ministry of Environmental Protection

Republic of Uzbekistan

Mr. Aziz Abdolkarimov
Minister, Ministry of Environment
Mr. Normatov Abdusalom
Director, Ministry of Environment
Ms. Suna Park
Advisor, Ministry of Environment

Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela

Mr. Hernan Toro
Deputy Director, Ministry of Environment
Mr. Joze Silva
Ambassador, the Embassy
Mr. Carlos Gonzales
Director of Integration and International Affairs, Ministry of Environment

United Arab Emirates

Ms. Naval Alhosani
Assistant Undersecretary of Climate Change, Ministry of Climate Change and Environment
Ms. Fatima Sahib Ali Mohamed Al Hebshi Head of International Affairs of Climate Change Section

United Kingdom

Ms. Ashley Meredith
Second Secretary, the Embassy

UN AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS:

Ms. Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana
United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)
Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Secretary of UNESCAP

Mr. Tarek Sadek
Economic Affairs Officer, UNESCWA
Mr. Lifang Li
Director, Land and Water Division, FAO
Mr. Abdulhakim Elwaer
FAO Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative for the Near East and North Africa
Mr. Feras Mousa Salameh Ziadat
Land and Water Officer, HQ
Ms. Asiyeh Rezaei
Programme Assistant, GEF- SGP
Ms. Fariba Aghakhani
Programme Assistant, GEF- SGP
Ms. Golda El-Khoury
Director UNESCO Tehran Cluster Office
Ms. Mehrasa Mehrdadi
National Professional Officer in Natural Sciences, UNESCO Tehran Cluster Office
Mr. Ata Hussein
Scientific Officer, WMO
Ms. Juliette Biao
Director, Land and Water Division, UNDESA
Mr. Stefan Priesner
RC- IRAN
Mr. Davide Zaru
RCO-Iran, Head of Office
Ms. Elmira Nurgazieva
Associate Development Coordination Officer, Data Management
Mr. Ali Assadikhomami
RCO-Iran, Social Development Consultant
Ms. Shadab Shahraki
RCO-Iran, Admin Associate
Ms. Lalini Veerassamy
IOM-Iran, Chief of Mission
Mr. Nima Karimi
IOM-Iran, Project Assistant
Mr. Claudio Providas
UNDP Iran, Resident Representative
Ms. Gulbahor Nematova
UNDP Iran, Deputy Resident Representative
Mr. Alireza Mohammadi
UNDP Iran, Programme Analyst
Ms. Niki Tavakoli
UNDP Iran, Programme Analyst
Ms. Nazi Tavakoli
FAO Iran, Officer-in-Charge
Mr. Ali Nazaridoust
FAO Iran, National Programme and Partnership Development Consultant
Ms. Faranak Bakhtiari
FAO Iran, Communication and Reporting Specialist

Mr. Baton Osmani
WFP Iran, Representative a.i.
Ms. Maria Dotsenko
UNIC Iran, Director

Mr. Pasha Tabrizian
UNIC Iran, Associate Public Information Officer
Ms. Mahdokht Hafezi
UNIC Iran, Public Information Assistant
Ms. Shirin Afkham Ebrahimi
UNIC Iran, Consultant
Ms. Neda Salamian
UNIC Iran, Consultant
Mr. Syed Jaffar Hussain
WHO Iran, Representative
Mr. Rahim Taghizadeh
WHO Iran, Unit Head, Healthier Populations
Ms. Mona Khaleghy
WHO Iran, National Professional Officer, Environmental and Occupational Health
Ms. Maira Kupperts
UNAMI Iran Officer in Charge
Mr. Afshin Kalantari
UN-Habitat Iran, Project Manager
Mr. Sina Saemian
UNICEF-Iran WASH officer and Climate Change focal point
Ms. Helnaz Pourian
UNFPA-Iran Humanitarian Response Analyst
Ms. Letizia Rossano
APDIM/ESCAP- Iran, Director
Mr. Mostafa Mohaghegh
APDIM/ESCAP- Iran Senior Programme Management Officer
Mr. Amin Shamseddini
APDIM/ESCAP- Iran, Associate Programme Management Officer
Mr. Sina Vakil
UNDSS- Iran, Field Security Associate
Mr. Ali Shabestari
UNOCHA-Iran, Head of OCHA HAT
Mr. Raja Gundu
RCO-Iran, Development Coordination Officer, Partnerships and Development
Mr. Hossein fadaei
UNEP Head of the Secretariat, UN Environment Management Group
Ms. Zahra Golshan
UNDP Programme Associate
Ms. Niloofar Sadeghi Komjani
Asian and Pacific Center for Development of Disaster
Ms. Fariba Torabi
UNESCAP-APDIM Administrative/Financial Associate
Mr. Saman Seyfi
United Nations Information Center - Tehran Consultant
Mr. Ali Ashraf Mojtahed
UNOCHA Head of OCHA HAT
Mr. Mehrdad Rezaeian
United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq UNAMI National Information Officer
Mr. Sina Vakilbahrani
United Nations Field Security Associate
Ms. Shirin Afkhami
United Nations Iran - UNIC (UN Information Centre) Media Adviser
Mr. Alper Aras
Economic Affairs Officer

Mr. Ally Raza Qureshi
Country Representative of WFP Iraq
Ms. Elizabeth Sellwood
Senior Programme Manager
Mr. Andrea Dekrout
Climate Change Adviser
Mr. Asaad Ibrahim
Special Assistant to the DSRSG RC/HC
Mr. Ghulam Mohammed Isaczai
DSRSG/RC/HC Iraq Deputy Special Representative
Mr. Mazen AlMalkawi
Regional Advisor WHO
Mr. Sebastian Lange
Sand and Dust Storm Expert/UN-HBIATAT
Mr. Huseyin Avni Bicakli
Deputy Secretary General for Administration, Energy, Minerals and Environment,
Information Technology; and International Relations, ECO
Mr. Husnu Tekin
Director for Human Resources and Sustainable Development, ECO
Mr. Morteza Khansari Bozorgi
Programme Officer, Directorate for Energy, Minerals and Environment (EME), ECO

Annex III to the letter dated 19 October 2023 from the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General



Program of Work
**International Conference on Combating
Sand and Dust Storms**

Tehran-Islamic Republic of Iran, 9-10 September 2023

Saturday, 9 September 2023

09.00-10:00 Inaugural ceremony

- Welcoming opening remarks by the Vice-President and Head of the Department of Environment of the I.R. of Iran
- Statement by H.E. Ebrahim Raisi, President of the I.R. of Iran
- Statement by H.E. Antonio Guterres, the Secretary-General of the United Nations (by video)
- Statement by HE. Ms. Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana, the Executive Secretary of UNESCAP,
- Statement by Mr. Abdulhakim Elwaer, FAO Assistant Director-General on behalf of the International Coalition to Combat Sand and Dust Storms

10:00-10:30 Tea Break

10:30- 12:30 High- Level Segment

12:30-14:00 Lunch

**14:00-15:00 Session 1: Thematic interactive discussions on:
Socio-economic impacts of sand and dust storms**

**15:00-16:00 Session 2: Thematic interactive discussions on:
Accelerating Regional and International
Cooperation to Combat Sand and Dust Storms**

16:00 – 16:30 Tea Break

16:30 – 18:00 **Session 3:** Thematic interactive discussions on:
Implementation of Regional Plans of Action on Sand and Dust Storms: the example of the Regional Plan of Action on Sand and Dust Storms in Asia and the Pacific.

Sunday, 10 September 2023

9:00 - 10:00 **High Level Segment (cont.)**

10:00-13:00 **Session 4:** Thematic interactive discussions on:
Enhancement of Regional Cooperation

1300-14:30 Lunch

14:30-15:30 **Session 5:** Thematic interactive discussions on:
International Cooperation on Sand and Dust Storms: The Work of the United Nations; and Main Components for an Integrated Global Action Plan to Combat Sand and Dust Storms

15:30 **Closing Session**

- Adoption of the final Declaration
- Concluding remarks by the UN Resident Coordinator to the I.R. of Iran, Mr. Stefan Priesner
- Concluding remarks by the Vice President and Head of Department of Environment of the I.R. Iran

Annex IV to the letter dated 19 October 2023 from the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

September 10, 2023

Final

Tehran Ministerial Declaration

**International Conference on Combating Sand and Dust Storms
Tehran, 9-10 September 2023**

The Ministers and high-level representatives from sand and dust storms affected countries as well as donor and interested states, met in Tehran – the Islamic Republic of Iran on 9-10 September 2023 to forge stronger global and regional cooperation on combating sand and dust storms as an issue of international concern,

Appreciating the support and participation of various United Nations agencies in the conference,

Recalling the UNGA Resolutions 70/195, 71/219, 72/225, 73/237, 74/226, 75/222, 76/211, 77/171 and 77/294 and UNEA II Resolution 2/21 and 4/10 and WMO Congress Decision Cg-XV/3.3.3.6, and UNESCAP Resolution 72/7, in which Sand and Dust Storms has been acknowledged to be posing a daunting challenge to the sustainable development of affected countries,

Noting the outcomes of meetings and conferences on SDSs held over last two decades including the “International Conference on Sand and Dust Storms” (July 2017), and the ‘Regional Ministerial Meeting on Environmental Cooperation for a Better Future’ (July 2022) in Tehran,

Welcoming with appreciation of various ongoing initiatives by countries and regional and international entities/organizations, including the UNDESA, UNCCD, UNEP, UNESCAP, FAO, WMO, WHO, UNDP, UNHABITAT, IOM and UNDRR to combat sand and dust storms,

Emphasizing that climate change is an important contributor to the occurrence of more extreme weather events especially intensity, frequency, and risk of sand and dust storms,

Welcoming activities of the UN Coalition on Combatting Sand Dust Storms to promote and coordinate a collaborative UN system response to the growing issues of SDSs, ensuring unified and coherent actions including advocacy and funding initiatives,

Recognizing the transboundary nature and negative impacts of Sand and Dust Storms on many countries and regions including those which are far away from their hot spots, and

acknowledging that Sand and Dust Storms, which are on the rise in terms of severity and frequency in many parts of the world, are detrimental to human health, agricultural land, livelihoods, aquatic and terrestrial environment, biodiversity loss, infrastructure, and the socio-economic systems, in all affected countries,

Further recognizing that the challenge of Sand and Dust Storms requires concerted and collaborative global, regional and sub-regional as well as national responses to address this phenomenon and underlining the leading role of the United Nations system in promoting international cooperation and partnerships among countries and relevant stakeholders to combat Sand and Dust Storms,

Acknowledging that adequate access of developing countries, as appropriate, to funding, knowhow and technology is required for building necessary capacities at the national and regional levels to adapt to and to mitigate the negative impacts of sand and dust storms and recognizing the need for enhancing resilience of affected countries.

Declared herewith to:

1. enhance cooperation on mitigating, controlling, and combating Sand and Dust Storms at transboundary, regional and sub-regional and international levels;

2. exchange and share information and views, knowledge and experiences, best practices and lessons learnt, including on mitigation of the source, adaptation and management of the impact, data collection and analysis, and transfer of the most efficient techniques and technologies in combating sand and dust storms;

3. Strengthen scientific and research activities, exchange of data and information, and sharing experiences among academia and early warning centers for effective monitoring, impact-based assessment and forecasting Sand and Dust Storms to foster disaster prevention and mitigation through the development of appropriate preparedness and effective response to Sand and dust storms;

4. Build stronger actions through preventive measures and carrying out, and promotion of national, regional, interregional, global, and transboundary cooperation, as well as expansion of plant and forest cover of affected and fragile lands, and forest restoration programmes at all levels;

5. Stress the need that combating SDSs should also become an integral part of the climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies, and land degradation and eligible for technical and financial support;

6. Further Strengthen national legal and institutional frameworks to share information on Sand and Dust Storms and to raise awareness among the public and policy makers, and promote integrated and synergistic actions across various sectors and foster strengthened cooperation among relevant institutions;

7. Enhance public awareness of the impacts including the cost of Sand and Dust Storms on human health, agriculture, food security, infrastructure, forest, education, transport, energy, and in general socio-economic sectors and the environment and partnerships among relevant stakeholders on mitigation of those impacts;

8. Develop a strategy for global and regional cooperation to address the root causes, risks, and impacts of Sand and Dust Storms and to enhance resilience through sustainable management of natural resources in croplands, rangelands, bare lands, and international / transboundary wetlands and lakes, biosphere reserves as well as rural and urban areas prone to Sand and Dust Storms risks and impacts;

9. Continue dialogue on responding to the issues of Sand and Dust Storms among interested and affected countries in partnership with relevant international bodies and organizations and emphasize on organizing similar and regular events, and initiatives also with facilitation, contribution and support by the United Nations system;

10. Formulate, review, update, and implement global, regional, sub-regional and national action plans to address sand and dust storms with the support and participation of multilateral funding institutions and the UN system to further assist affected countries in different areas of work, including funding sub-regional and regional projects, and action plans;

11. Take note of the regional plan of action on sand and dust storms in Asia and the Pacific, (ESCAP/78/12/Add.1) as a strategic framework and reference for countries in other regions including African Region, and the ECO Regional Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction (ECORFDRR) and its roadmap adopted during the 8th ECO Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in 2021;

12. Support the establishment of a regional trust fund for West Asia to combat sand and dust storms in line with Tehran Ministerial Declaration of 2022 which will be supported by voluntary contributions of interested countries, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, major groups and other donors, private sectors, civil society, and Regional Development Banks, as appropriate, for undertaking the implementation of regional and sub-regional programmes and action plans;

13. Underscore the importance of mobilizing technical and financial support from all possible resources, including the relevant United Nations organizations and programs as well as the multilateral funds established under the multilateral environmental agreements such as GEF, GCF, Adaptation Fund, Special Climate Change Fund, LDC Fund, Global Fund, Land Degradation Neutrality Fund – UNCCD and Multilateral Development Banks to assist the developing countries in their efforts to mitigate and cope with the adverse effects of Sand and Dust Storms;

14. Support the establishment, as appropriate, of regional centers/committees/working groups together with a network among affected and interested countries to combat sand and dust storms through capacity building, technical support, and preparation and implementation of regional and sub-regional action plans and projects;

15. Further support the UN coalition with a view to ensuring adequate allocated financial resources for the effective follow up of decisions on SDSs and support the affected countries in combating SDS;

16. Invite the UN Secretary-General, in line with the GA Resolution A/RES/77/171 to further encourage the United Nations Coalition on Combating Sand and Dust Storms on the need to implement activities as identified by the Coalition's five working groups, which are knowledge sharing, capacity-building, training, awareness-raising and support for the formulation of national, regional and sub-regional action plans, to mitigate and manage sand and dust storm hazards, and to invite resource partners from the UN and non-UN systems to enhance resource mobilization so as to increase voluntary contributions to the Coalition and its member agencies and strengthening its role to support affected countries specially through implementing regional and sub-regional action plans;

17. Take note of a proposal to establish a regional center/committee/working group for technical cooperation in order to prepare a regional action plan in concerned countries;

18. Also take note of a proposal to work out a convention aimed at adaptation to, mitigating, controlling and combating sand and dust storms in collaboration with the affected nations and other countries;

19. Invite the Islamic Republic of Iran to transmit this declaration to the UNGA and UNECOSOC for their consideration and appropriate actions;

20. Express our deepest gratitude to the Government and people of the Islamic Republic of Iran for hosting this International Conference as well as the excellent arrangements and the warm hospitality extended to the participants in this respect.
