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RESOLUTION ON RETHINKING CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

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We, the parliamentarians of the Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum (APPF), gathering in Manila, Republic of the Philippines for the 31st Annual Meeting of the APPF under the theme "Resilient Partnerships for Peace, Prosperity, and Sustainability":

Acknowledging that while definitions of critical infrastructure differ across countries, a common understanding includes the 'systems or assets (whether physical or digital), facilities and networks that provide essential services and are necessary for the national security, economic security, prosperity, and health and safety of their respective nations';

Recognizing that critical infrastructure can include government facilities, utilities, hospitals, water and wastewater systems, ports and roadways, financial institutions, and information and communication technologies (ICTs);

Underlining that critical infrastructure can be negatively affected by disruptions, such as those resulting from natural disasters or the malicious use of cyberspace, with implications for the well-being of individuals, the effective functioning of governments and the security of countries;

Noting that climate change is increasing the number and severity of weather events that have negative impacts on infrastructure that is essential for health, security and economic wellbeing;

Recognizing that the COVID-19 pandemic has driven a new focus on critical infrastructure and highlighted the fragility of essential services, and that several other risks to critical infrastructure have come into sharper focus in recent years – including climate change and the associated increase in severe weather events, infrastructure failures due to social unrest, and the particular risks to ICT systems posed by cyber-attacks;

Recognizing further that resilience efforts fall under Sustainable Development Goal 9 (SDG 9), which is to 'build resilient infrastructure, inclusive and sustainable industrialization, and foster innovation', and the 2015 Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction;

Drawing attention to the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goal 9 (SDG 9) that addresses the topics of building resilient infrastructure, promoting sustainable industrialization and fostering innovation, and to the UN Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, which aims to prevent and reduce disaster-related risks to infrastructure caused by natural or human-made hazards;

Believing that efforts to improve the resilience of critical infrastructure should include measures and actions in a variety of areas, including those designed to reduce the impact of damage, ensure the affected system's or asset's rapid recovery, and support adaptation to current and future threats;

Noting that international fora have advocated for Build Right at First Sight with more resilient infrastructure;

Highlighting that many countries are increasingly focused on reducing the vulnerabilities and enhancing the resilience of the critical infrastructure located on their territory;

Emphasizing the significance of sustainable development, environmental conservation, and the integration of natural capital accounting and the green and blue economy into critical infrastructure planning and implementation;

Recognizing the urgency for collaborative action to address the challenges posed by climate change, disasters, and environmental degradation, especially concerning infrastructure resilience and sustainability;

Considering the principles of the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (SEEA) of the United Nations as a comprehensive framework for integrating environmental and economic data to inform policymaking and sustainable development objectives;

Acknowledging the collective commitment of Member States to combat climate change and promote sustainable and low carbon, climate-resilient development, as well as the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction aiming to enhance the resilience of nations and communities through critical infrastructure policies;

Affirming the urgent need to rethink critical infrastructure to align with the principles of the green and blue economy and natural capital accounting, in response to the challenges posed by climate change, environmental degradation, and the increasing frequency and impact of natural disasters;

Welcoming the Internet and Digital Economy Roadmap adopted by Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation members, which encourages the development of digital infrastructure, the enhancement of confidence and security in the use of ICTs, the facilitation of e-commerce and cooperation regarding digital trade;

Observing that ICTs are essential not only for the operation and security of critical infrastructure, but also for improving citizens' access to government services, financial services, consumer goods and services, health, education and recreation, as well as for other reasons;

Emphasizing that critical infrastructure is no longer solely a domestic issue, with globalization of service delivery and increasing foreign investment in infrastructure provision making transnational collaboration for critical infrastructure resilience essential;

Being convinced that mitigating the risks to critical infrastructure requires partnerships within countries, including among governments and those who own, operate, and use infrastructure, as well as across countries through efforts designed to promote international collaboration and coordination;

Highlighting regional cooperation on critical infrastructure resilience through fora including the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum, ASEAN Digital Masterplan 2025, the Bandar Seri Begawan Roadmap; AN ASEAN Digital Transformation Agenda, the Pacific Islands Forum and the Pacific Region Infrastructure Facility; and

Underscoring the role that legislatures and legislators play in ensuring the protection and resilience of critical infrastructure, including through developing legislation and strategies that address vulnerabilities and ensure emergency preparedness;

RESOLVE TO:

1. **Support** the attainment of SDG 9 by taking the actions outlined in the *Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction* and other UN instruments, as well as the implementation of other international initiatives that have the goal of building resilient infrastructure and reducing the impact of damage to infrastructure caused by natural or human-made hazards;

2. **Encourage** members to develop a common understanding of the impacts of critical infrastructure failures, with a focus on the risks applicable to our region;

3. **Facilitate** the development of policies, programs, and other measures designed to increase the resilience of critical infrastructure, as well as the sharing of best practices (nationally, regionally, and internationally) as regards their development and implementation;

4. **Recommend** Member States to prioritize the integration of the principles of the green and blue economy and natural capital accounting into their strategic approach to critical infrastructure development, aiming for sustainable and resilient solutions that uphold environmental conservation and economic progress;

5. **Urge** the facilitation of regional cooperation and knowledge exchange among Member States to promote best practices in integrating the principles of the green and blue economy and natural capital accounting into infrastructure planning and implementation, particularly in regions vulnerable to climate change and natural disasters;

6. **Call** for the support and involvement of international organizations, financial institutions, and development partners to provide technical assistance, capacity building, and financial resources to aid Member States in integrating the principles of the green and blue economy and natural capital accounting into critical infrastructure projects;

7. **Stress** the importance of engaging diverse stakeholders, including civil society organizations, private sector entities, and local communities in the decision-making processes, planning, and monitoring of sustainable infrastructure projects to ensure inclusivity and stakeholder ownership;

8. **Encourage** Member States to align their infrastructure development plans with the commitments made under the Sendai Framework, emphasizing the importance of mitigation, climate resilience, disaster risk reduction, strategic impact assessment that includes infrastructure objectives and alternatives, and environmental sustainability;

9. **Support** the promotion of research, innovation, data science for planning effective and efficient delivery of the objectives of proposed infrastructure projects and programs and the dissemination of sustainable infrastructure technologies and practices aligned with the principles of the green and blue economy and natural capital accounting, aiming to foster collaboration and knowledge sharing across the Asia Pacific region;

10. **Call** for the establishment of regional mechanisms for monitoring and reporting on the integration of the principles of the green and blue economy and natural capital accounting into critical infrastructure development, to assess progress and identify areas for improvement;

11. **Stress** the need for capacity building and awareness-raising activities aiming to enhance understanding of the benefits and importance of rethinking critical infrastructure through the principles of the green and blue economy and natural capital accounting among policymakers, practitioners, and the general public;

12. **Urge** Member States to allocate and invest resources towards sustainable and resilient infrastructure that aligns with the principles of the green and blue economy and natural capital accounting, ensuring long-term environmental, social, and economic benefits;

13. **Call** for the establishment of a regular platform for dialogue and knowledge sharing on rethinking critical infrastructure through the principles of the green and blue economy and natural capital accounting, bringing together policymakers, experts, and stakeholders from the Asia Pacific region;

14. **Urge** multilateral banks, lending institutions and private investors to calculate gains and losses in natural capital in their assessment of loan proposals;

15. **Foster** international cooperation aimed at strengthening protections for critical infrastructure that has transnational dimension;

16. **Strengthen** the resilience of critical infrastructure by reinforcing the ICT systems that are vital for the operation of such infrastructure, including through enhanced cybersecurity efforts;

17. **Invest** in emergency preparedness relating to critical infrastructure through activities that include planning, financing, capacity building, technology transfer, training exercises and post-disaster assessments of response efforts;

18. **Endorse** a 'build forward better' approach to reconstructing and rehabilitating critical infrastructure affected by disasters in order to support the revitalization of livelihoods and economies, and to reduce communities' vulnerability to future disasters;

19. **Encourage** collaborative efforts within and across countries that contribute to the goal of adopting a coherent approach to preventing, reducing and recovering from disruptions to critical infrastructure, and sectors for investment;

20. **Call on** governments to acknowledge climate change impacts in developing infrastructure resilience, and support preparedness planning for severe weather events and shared response capabilities;

21. **Develop** strategies to communicate to citizens, communities and businesses the importance of taking appropriate actions to protect critical infrastructure, including through promoting best practices for cybersecurity;

22. **Promote** a consistent approach to combatting cyber-crime, given that malicious activity may disrupt critical infrastructure delivery, and sharing of information on cybersecurity threats to critical infrastructure;

23. **Recommend** that countries consider impacts of climate change on critical infrastructure and how to adapt appropriately to it; and

24. **Promote** the sustainability of pandemic-response capabilities, so that the lessons of COVID-19 can help mitigate future dangers.