Eleventh Meeting of the

Wednesday, 18 November 2020
8:30 – 10:30 a.m.

Mr. Elliott Harris, Assistant Secretary-General of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and Chief Economist of the United Nations, welcomed participants, including the country economists joining the UNEN meeting for the first time. He noted that the webinar on 12 November, where he had briefed RCOs on the key messages of the UNEN report on *Shaping the Trends of Our Time*, had provided an excellent opportunity to exchange information with country offices. He added that 5 interactive regional webinars are planned for January to contextualize the messages of the UNEN report to the regional level. UNEN members would be invited to participate.

Mr. Harris outlined the main discussion items for the eleventh UNEN meeting: (1) Update on status of thematic briefs; (2) Work on New Economics for Sustainable Development - Alternative economic models and concepts; and (3) Continuation of discussion of UNEN's contribution to country teams.

Colleagues leading the thematic briefs gave an update on their progress:

UNEP informed that the two briefs on beyond GDP and nature-based solutions had been peer-reviewed by experts. The brief on nature-based solutions had been finalized and would be re-circulated to all UNEN members.

ECA is looking forward to engaging with colleagues and discussing the specific content and a reasonable timeframe for the preparation of the brief on migration. DESA and UNU-MERIT expressed their interest in collaborating on the brief. FAO shared the following material for the brief: http://www.fao.org/state-of-food-agriculture/2018/en/

A timeline for the brief on taxation would be developed early next year. Colleagues were invited to inform Mr. Harris if they are interested in collaborating on this brief.

Country economists from Iran, Mongolia, Argentina, Egypt, Kuwait, Burundi, Jordan, Namibia and Tajikistan took the floor and raised the following issues:

- Country economists can use the UNEN megatrend analysis and take it forward on the ground.
- The relevance of UNEN thematic briefs was recognized. It was proposed to strengthen their focus on social protection issues. They should also be customized to national priorities.
- An incremental approach for new economics of sustainable development was suggested.
- Priority areas that country economists suggest addressing include debt issues; taxation; infrastructure; post-COVID recovery; financing for development; knowledge-based economy.
- It would be important for country economists to have access to models that they can use to develop alternative scenarios to support policy choices and advocacy efforts. Country economists would benefit from trainings on [illegible]