

**Asia-Pacific Intergovernmental Meeting on the Third Review and Appraisal of the Madrid  
International Plan of Action on Ageing  
Bangkok, 12-14 September 2017**

Name of speaker: (Mr.) (Ms.) Sue Vize

Country/Organization: UNESCO

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Agenda Item No: 2 for 3

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Excellencies, Ladies & Gentlemen,

My name is Sue Vize and I work at the UNESCO regional office here in Bangkok. My role is regional adviser for UNESCO's Social and Human Sciences Program.

A centrepiece for UNESCO's Social Sciences program is its Management of Social Transformations (MOST) Program, which focuses on contributing to social policies supported by research findings to contribute to Agenda 2030 and other development agendas. H.E. Dato' Sri Rohani Abdul, Minister of Women, Family and Community Development, the Government of Malaysia, is currently the President of the MOST Intergovernmental Council, and Thailand is the Vice President for Asia and the Pacific, represented by Professor Surichai Wangeo of Chulalongkorn University.

At the **first Forum of Ministers of Social Development for the Asia-Pacific region, 20-23 March 2017, Kuala Lumpur (including a senior officials meeting which focused on "Building Inclusive Societies"**, her excellency specifically requested UNESCO to focus on the theme of ageing, responding in particular SDGs 16, 10 and 5. Out of the Member States which participated, 11 were represented at a Ministerial level. Dr Kumar represented ESCAP and provided excellent contributions.

The analytical research commissioned by UNESCO in the lead-up to the Forum formed the basis of discussions and the exchange of ideas and experiences between researchers and country representatives. The research highlighted the trends of population ageing in Asia and the Pacific, accompanied by declining fertility and mortality rates.

Some areas of recommendations include:

- Research on social care funding, sustainable home- and community-based long-term care systems, and improved services for the elderly, and the role of tele-care in services for older people to meet the needs of the elderly should be supported.
- There should be research on the prevalence of mental health issues including depression among the elderly, especially women since they make up a growing proportion of the elderly and suffer greater morbidity compared with older men.
- The role of pension systems should be researched further, especially how they would generate the social inclusion of older persons, especially older women who have worked in the informal sector.

The participants of the Forum adopted an Outcome Document affirming the importance of supporting national and regional research within to fill research gaps to ensure public policies are informed by knowledge. It suggested to implement within its programme starting in January 2018, a regional policy-oriented research project on "Building inclusive societies for ageing" developed in consultation with designated government ministries, MOST IGC Committees, UNESCO National Commissions, research institutions and relevant stakeholders in the Asia-Pacific region.

The MOST Program is also supporting an initiative in partnership with ASEAN, the Thai Government to build research and teaching capacities in the social sciences in ASEAN universities. This focuses on multidisciplinary social sciences looking at social sustainability as well as environmental and economic sustainability. Although the first theme to be launched in January is agrifood systems, additional themes are expected to be added in 2018.

I would like to warmly thank ESCAP for its excellent collaboration which I hope will continue to be further enhanced, -especially in the context of the issues of ageing, - and hopefully connecting it with more intergenerational linkages.