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**PRESS RELEASE**

**Upcoming 62nd Session of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP)**

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The sixty-second session of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) will be held in Jakarta from April 6 to 12. It is the UN's largest regional commission concerned with promoting the economic and social development of the countries of the Asia-Pacific Region (APR).

Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Alexander Yakovenko will head Russia's interagency delegation at the session.

The chief theme of the sixty-second session is "Enhancing Regional Cooperation in Infrastructure Development Including that Related to Disaster Management." The session is expected to approve a draft, worked out with the participation of Russian experts, of an intergovernmental agreement on the Trans-Asian Railway (TAR) Network, which will incorporate that of Russia. The agreement is planned to be signed in the course of an APR Transport Ministers Conference in Seoul in the second half of 2006.

Session participants will also discuss ways to enhance energy security in the region through improving access to energy resources, including in the context of the outcome of the recent visit of President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin to China. The agenda also includes issues dedicated to the war on poverty in the region on the basis of the Jakarta Declaration on Millennium Development Goals, to strengthening the potential of Pacific island states on the basis of regional cooperation and to considering a UNESCAP strategic plan of action 2008-2009.

In parallel with the work of the session an Asian-Pacific Business Forum will be held under the aegis of UNESCAP. Its objective is to help strengthen partner ties among the business members of the APR countries and to assess the impact of the contemporary trends in global and regional economic policy, regional trade and investment cooperation for business development.

It is expected that the sixty-second session of UNESCAP will constitute a landmark event in the life of the region, and that its decisions will be long-term oriented. The Russian delegation has important work ahead to make sure that our priorities are secured in economic and social development with the region's countries in the UNESCAP framework.

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