



Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific**Seventy-second session**

Bangkok, 15-19 May 2016

Annotated provisional agenda

The present document contains the annotated provisional agenda for the seventy-second session of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific.

I. Provisional agenda**Senior officials segment**

1. Opening of the session:
 - (a) Opening addresses;
 - (b) Election of officers;
 - (c) Adoption of the agenda.
2. Special Body on Least Developed, Landlocked Developing and Pacific Island Developing Countries:
 - (a) Development issues relevant to least developed countries;
 - (b) Development issues relevant to landlocked developing countries;
 - (c) Development issues relevant to Pacific island developing countries;
 - (d) Asia-Pacific Countries with Special Needs Development Report 2016;
 - (e) Other matters.
3. Review of issues pertinent to the subsidiary structure of the Commission, including the work of the regional institutions:
 - (a) Macroeconomic policy, poverty reduction and inclusive development;
 - (b) Trade and investment;
 - (c) Transport;
 - (d) Environment and development;
 - (e) Information and communications technology;
 - (f) Disaster risk reduction;
 - (g) Social development;
 - (h) Statistics;
 - (i) Subregional activities for development.

* Reissued for technical reasons on 10 May 2016.

4. Management issues:
 - (a) Report on the evaluation activities of the Commission during the biennium 2014-2015;
 - (b) Proposed programme changes for the biennium 2016-2017;
 - (c) Draft strategic framework for the biennium 2018-2019;
 - (d) Partnerships, extrabudgetary contributions and capacity development.
5. Activities of the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission.
6. Dates, venue and theme topic for the seventy-third session of the Commission (2017).

Ministerial segment

7. Policy issues for the Asia-Pacific region:
 - (a) Key challenges to inclusive and sustainable economic and social development in Asia and the Pacific;
 - (b) Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific 2016.
8. Theme topic for the seventy-second session of the Commission: “Science, technology and innovation for sustainable development”.
9. Other matters.
10. Adoption of the report of the Commission.

II. Annotations

Senior officials segment

1. Opening of the session

(a) Opening addresses

The detailed programme for the opening of the session will be made available upon finalization.

(b) Election of officers

Rule 13 of the rules of procedure of the Commission states: “The Commission shall, at its first meeting of each year, elect from among the representatives a Chairman and two Vice-Chairmen, designated as First and Second Vice-Chairmen, who shall hold office until their successors are elected. They shall be eligible for re-election.” If the plenary so decides, the rule may be applied differently to enable the Commission to elect more than two Vice-Chairs, as has been the practice at previous sessions, in which case the Commission may elect a bureau of officers composed of a Chair and several Vice-Chairs.

The senior officials segment may decide to meet in two committees of the whole and a working group on draft resolutions. It would then elect Chairs and Vice-Chairs for each.

The ministerial segment will elect the Chair and Vice-Chairs of the Commission.

(c) Adoption of the agenda**Documentation**

Provisional agenda (E/ESCAP/72/L.1)

Annotated provisional agenda (E/ESCAP/72/L.2/Rev.2)

2. Special Body on Least Developed, Landlocked Developing and Pacific Island Developing Countries**(a) Development issues relevant to least developed countries****Documentation**

Regional implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020 (E/ESCAP/72/1)

In May 2011, the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020 (Istanbul Programme of Action) was adopted by the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries. The overarching goal of the Istanbul Programme of Action is to overcome the structural challenges faced by the least developed countries in order to eradicate poverty, achieve internationally agreed development goals and enable graduation from the least developed country category. The Programme of Action aims to enable half of the least developed countries to meet the criteria for graduation by 2020, with a strong focus on developing their productive capacities.

Many least developed countries in the region have made progress in some areas related to human development, in line with the Millennium Development Goals. As a group, the least developed countries in the region reduced poverty by half and are expected to halve the proportion of underweight children. They also achieved gender parity in primary and secondary education and reversed the prevalence of infectious diseases. Even in areas where the targets of the Millennium Development Goals are not expected to be met, such as maternal mortality or primary education, many least developed countries have progressed faster than the average country in the region.

However, there has been wide divergence in economic growth performance among the least developed countries; only the least developed countries in South-East Asia have achieved the threshold of 7 per cent annual growth set in the Istanbul Programme of Action. In addition, least developed countries in the Asia-Pacific region have witnessed limited structural transformation and continue to have wide gaps in infrastructure development. Furthermore, progress in addressing their needs for financial and technical assistance, official development assistance, trade capacity, market access and debt relief has been less than expected.

The second half of implementation of the objectives contained in the Istanbul Programme of Action will take place within the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Commission resolution 71/2 requested the Executive Secretary to continue to assist least developed countries in Asia and the Pacific in building their capacity to take appropriate policy responses to accelerate their structural transformation and to achieve other internationally agreed development goals, including the Sustainable Development Goals.

The Special Body on Least Developed, Landlocked Developing and Pacific Island Developing Countries may wish to review the status of implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action in the Asia-Pacific region. It may also wish to provide further guidance on how the secretariat can assist least developed countries in the region, in cooperation with development partners and other international entities, while taking into account their respective mandates, in implementing the Programme of Action and in particular in graduating from the least developed country category.

(b) Development issues relevant to landlocked developing countries

Documentation

Regional implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014-2024 (E/ESCAP/72/2)

In the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014-2024, regional and subregional organizations, governing bodies of United Nations system entities and international organizations were invited to mainstream the Vienna Programme of Action into their programme of work. In its resolution 71/3, the Commission requested the Executive Secretary to mainstream the Programme of Action into the programme of work of the Commission, as appropriate and within its mandate, and to submit annual analytical reports on the implementation of the Programme of Action.

Support for the regional implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action has been mainstreamed into the programme of work of the Commission. ESCAP has identified three major constraints for landlocked developing countries: (i) lack of human and financial resources; (ii) lack of technical and institutional capacity; and (iii) lack of political and policy support. Relevant activities are carried out to address these constraints in a holistic manner and to ensure effective realization of the road map for implementing the Programme of Action, contained in the note by the secretariat on ESCAP support for the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action for landlocked developing countries (document E/ESCAP/71/2). At the national level, support is provided for policymaking, programme implementation and stakeholder coordination. At the subregional and regional levels, support is provided for analytical work, networking, knowledge-sharing, transit cooperation and regional integration.

The Special Body may wish to provide guidance to the secretariat on assisting landlocked developing countries, in cooperation with their development partners and other international entities, in the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action and in building their capacity to make appropriate policy responses that address their special development needs and challenges in a more coherent manner.

(c) Development issues relevant to Pacific island developing countries

Documentation

Support of the Commission for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals in the Pacific (E/ESCAP/72/3)

In the 2030 Agenda the objectives of the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway, as adopted by the third International Conference on Small Island Developing States, were reaffirmed. Furthermore, in the 2030 Agenda, it was agreed:

(a) That follow-up and review at the regional and subregional levels could, as appropriate, provide useful opportunities for peer learning, including through voluntary reviews, sharing of best practices and discussion on shared targets; the cooperation of regional and subregional commissions and organizations, was welcomed, while it was noted that inclusive regional processes would draw on national-level reviews and contribute to follow-up and review at the global level, including at the high-level political forum on sustainable development;

(b) Recognizing the importance of building on existing follow-up and review mechanisms at the regional level and allowing adequate policy space, to encourage all States Members of the United Nations to identify the most suitable regional forum in which to engage, and to encourage United Nations regional commissions to continue supporting Member States in that regard.

In its resolution 71/4, the Commission agreed on the need for the United Nations, regional and subregional organizations and non-governmental organizations to collaborate in implementing the SAMOA Pathway. Pacific leaders have also agreed to a collaborative process that can integrate the Pacific's own regional process (the Framework for Pacific Regionalism) with the Sustainable Development Goals and the SAMOA Pathway. The 2030 Agenda therefore provides a unique opportunity to build on the work of ESCAP in the Pacific to implement the SAMOA Pathway in a coherent and integrated fashion.

The Special Body may wish to provide guidance on how the secretariat can assist small island developing States in the Asia-Pacific region in the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway in conjunction with the Sustainable Development Goals and regional processes of the small island developing States.

(d) Asia-Pacific Countries with Special Needs Development Report 2016

Documentation

Supporting the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals by countries with special needs in Asia and the Pacific (E/ESCAP/72/4)

Launched in 2015, *Asia-Pacific Countries with Special Needs Development Report 2015: Building Productive Capacities to Overcome Structural Challenges* is a new ESCAP flagship publication on the development challenges of the region's least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States. Its main purpose is to provide in-depth and authoritative policy-oriented socioeconomic analysis of the status, challenges and prospects of each of these groups of countries as well as targeted policy options to promote their inclusive growth and sustainable development. The main theme of the 2016 issue of the *Report* is the implementation and adaptability of the Sustainable Development Goals in countries with special needs in the Asia-Pacific region.

An implementation strategy for the Sustainable Development Goals should provide an indication, including means of implementation, of which Goals should be initially prioritized. For that purpose, it should be based on an analytical framework indicating the trade-offs, as well as the synergies and linkages, between various Goals. Document E/ESCAP/72/4 summarizes the main results included in the *Asia-Pacific Countries with Special Needs Development Report 2016* with regards to the issue of implementation strategies for the Goals for countries with special needs in Asia and

the Pacific. It also includes an analytical framework and a survey of expert opinions from a representative sample of countries with special needs in Asia and the Pacific.

(e) Other matters

The Special Body may wish to consider other matters brought to its attention.

3. Review of issues pertinent to the subsidiary structure of the Commission, including the work of the regional institutions

The documents listed below contain information spanning all of the subprogrammes, and the relevant sections will be deliberated under each subprogramme as required.

Documentation

Enhancing regional economic cooperation and integration in Asia and the Pacific (E/ESCAP/72/5)

Summary of progress in the implementation of Commission resolutions (E/ESCAP/72/6)

Programme performance report for the biennium 2014-2015 (E/ESCAP/72/7)

Item 3 of the provisional agenda focuses on (a) addressing the issues and challenges pertaining to the eight subprogrammes, including the work of the regional institutions, in the context of the 2030 Agenda; (b) the reports of subsidiary bodies of the Commission (of which sessions have been held since the last Commission session); (c) reports of other intergovernmental bodies; (d) progress in the implementation of Commission mandates; and (e) the programme performance report for the biennium 2014-2015. In the documents under this agenda item, key priorities and emerging issues that take into consideration subregional perspectives are identified.

The expected outcomes under this agenda item are (a) identification of emerging development issues, including those emanating from the 2030 Agenda, that merit policy dialogue; (b) identification of progress made and gaps requiring priority attention, with regard to the implementation of Commission mandates; (c) follow-up actions to major global conferences; (d) articulation of Asian and Pacific perspectives on issues that will be addressed in major global forums in 2016; (e) endorsement of the reports of the subsidiary bodies that have held sessions since the seventy-first session of the Commission; and (f) identification of key issues to be taken up in meetings of subsidiary bodies in 2016.

The Commission may wish to provide the secretariat with guidance on how these focus areas may be applied to each of the eight subprogrammes, by identifying, for example, priorities, gaps in implementation and any required technical assistance at the subregional or regional level.

The document entitled “Enhancing regional economic cooperation and integration in Asia and the Pacific” presents an examination of regional economic cooperation and integration as a key strategy for the region to assist in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. In resolution 70/1, the Commission, *inter alia*, recognized the important progress achieved by regional groupings and organizations in integrating their subregions, and proposed an agenda aimed at deepening and broadening economic cooperation and integration in Asia and the Pacific and at moving towards the

formation of an economic community of Asia and the Pacific as a long-term goal. The resolution included a proposal to establish four area-specific expert working groups: (a) moving towards the formation of an integrated market; (b) development of seamless connectivity in the region; (c) enhancing financial cooperation; and (d) increasing economic cooperation to address shared vulnerabilities and risks. The document summarizes critical issues based on the outcomes of these expert working groups to further advance the implementation of the resolution. The Commission may wish to consider the recommendations contained in this document and provide its comments and guidance to further facilitate the implementation of the Bangkok Declaration in preparation for the second Ministerial Conference on Regional Economic Cooperation and Integration in Asia and the Pacific.

The document entitled “Programme performance report for the biennium 2014-2015” contains an assessment of the outputs and activities during the biennium 2014-2015 measured against the expected accomplishments for each subprogramme as set out in the strategic framework for the biennium. The programme performance report consists of highlights of programme achievements and results by subprogramme for the biennium 2014-2015.

The Commission may wish to review the report and comment on the performance of ESCAP and its subprogrammes. Based on the lessons learned, the Commission may also wish to provide the secretariat with guidance on how to improve its effectiveness.

(a) Macroeconomic policy, poverty reduction and inclusive development

Documentation

Summary of progress in the implementation of Commission resolutions (E/ESCAP/72/6, resolutions 70/1, 71/2, 71/3 and 71/5)

Report of the Committee on Macroeconomic Policy, Poverty Reduction and Inclusive Development on its third session (E/ESCAP/72/8)

Note verbale dated 19 April 2016 from the Embassy of the Republic of Korea in Thailand addressed to the secretariat of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (E/ESCAP/72/9)

Report of the Governing Council of the Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Sustainable Agriculture on its twelfth session (E/ESCAP/72/10)

Summary of the outcomes of the Workshop on Macroeconomic Modelling in Asia and the Pacific (E/ESCAP/72/INF/5)

Summary of progress in the implementation of Commission resolutions (E/ESCAP/72/6, resolutions 70/1, 71/2, 71/3 and 71/5)

The document contains summaries of the progress made in the implementation of the following Commission resolutions:

(a) 70/1 on the implementation of the Bangkok Declaration on Regional Economic Cooperation and Integration in Asia and the Pacific;

(b) 71/2 on the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020 in Asia and the Pacific;

(c) 71/3 on the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014-2024;

(d) 71/5 on implementing the outcome of the Asia-Pacific High-level Consultation on Financing for Development.

The Commission may wish to review the progress made and provide the secretariat with further guidance for the effective implementation of the above-mentioned resolutions.

Report of the Committee on Macroeconomic Policy, Poverty Reduction and Inclusive Development on its third session (E/ESCAP/72/8)

The Committee on Macroeconomic Policy, Poverty Reduction and Inclusive Development held its third session in Bangkok from 1 to 3 December 2015. The agenda focused on existing and emerging macroeconomic challenges associated with the broad economic slowdown in the economies of countries in the Asia-Pacific region and policies to enhance country-level productivity, as well as regional tax cooperation, an implementation strategy for the Sustainable Development Goals in countries with special needs, and capacity-building for poverty reduction through sustainable agriculture. The Committee discussed pertinent issues and made a number of recommendations on how to revive economic growth and promote the 2030 Agenda to enhance inclusive development.

The Commission may wish to consider matters calling for action or brought to its attention, as contained in the report of the Committee, and provide the secretariat with further guidance.

Note verbale dated 19 April 2016 from the Embassy of the Republic of Korea in Thailand addressed to the secretariat of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (E/ESCAP/72/9)

In March 2016, ESCAP held the first High-level Follow-up Dialogue on Financing for Development in Asia and the Pacific. This event is a response to the outcome document of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development for the regional commissions to mobilize expertise and existing mechanisms for the implementation of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda in collaboration with regional stakeholders. The event follows two previous regional consultations on financing for development organized by ESCAP in 2014 and 2015.

The Addis Ababa Action Agenda is an integral part of the 2030 Agenda. The High-level Dialogue addressed Asia and the Pacific's financing strategy for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, with a focus on the two issues that are most pertinent to the region: regional tax cooperation, including at the subnational level, and capital market development. A Chair's summary, which is contained in an annex to the note verbale, summarizes the key priorities and way forward that emerged from the deliberation. It provides further guidance for the Commission's work in supporting development financing in the Asia-Pacific region.

Report of the Governing Council of the Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Sustainable Agriculture on its twelfth session (E/ESCAP/72/10)

The Commission may wish to review the report of the Governing Council of the Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Sustainable Agriculture and provide the secretariat with guidance on the future work of the Centre.

Summary of the outcomes of the Workshop on Macroeconomic Modelling in Asia and the Pacific (E/ESCAP/72/INF/5)

The Workshop on Macroeconomic Modelling in Asia and the Pacific was held in Bangkok from 8 to 11 December 2015. Its aim was to strengthen

national capacities to integrate social and environmental indicators into traditional macroeconomic monitoring and policy analysis frameworks for monitoring progress towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in the Asia-Pacific region.

The training workshop highlighted the importance of developing a quantitative modelling framework at the national level that can integrate the economic, social and environmental pillars of sustainable development. It also showed high demand from member States for technical data and capacity support in macroeconomic and sustainable development modelling.

The document summarizes the outcomes and policy discussions deliberated by the government representatives at the workshop, with recommendations concerning regional cooperation in advancing the development of modelling frameworks to assess the impact of policies on sustainable development in the region.

The Commission may wish to take note of the summary.

(b) Trade and investment

Documentation

Summary of progress in the implementation of Commission resolutions (E/ESCAP/72/6, resolutions 70/4, 70/5 and 70/6)

Report of the Committee on Trade and Investment on its fourth session (E/ESCAP/72/11)

Report of the 2nd meeting of the Interim Intergovernmental Steering Group on Cross-border Paperless Trade Facilitation (E/ESCAP/72/12)

Report of the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology on its eleventh session (E/ESCAP/72/13)

Report of the Governing Council of the Centre for Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization on its eleventh session (E/ESCAP/72/14)

Summary of progress in the implementation of Commission resolutions (E/ESCAP/72/6, resolutions 70/4, 70/5 and 70/6)

The document contains summaries of the progress made in the implementation of the following resolutions:

(a) 70/4 on promoting sustainable agricultural development in Asia and the Pacific through technology transfer;

(b) 70/5 on strengthening regional cooperation and capacity for enhanced trade and investment in support of sustainable development;

(c) 70/6 on the implementation of the decision of the Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Meeting on a Regional Arrangement for the Facilitation of Cross-border Paperless Trade.

The Commission may wish to review the progress made and provide the secretariat with further guidance for the effective implementation of the above-mentioned resolutions.

Report of the Committee on Trade and Investment on its fourth session (E/ESCAP/72/11)

The Committee on Trade and Investment held its fourth session in Bangkok from 4 to 6 November 2015. It reviewed recent trends and developments in the area of trade and investment and discussed the role of trade and investment policies to support participation in value chains and how trade policy can better support implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. The Committee discussed the engagement of the business community in strengthening regional cooperation and capacity for enhanced trade and investment in support of sustainable development, the activities of the Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology and the Centre for Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization, as well as the implementation of Commission resolutions 68/3, 70/1, 70/4, 70/5 and 70/6. The Committee considered the proposed strategic framework 2018-2019 in respect of the subprogramme on trade and investment.

The Commission may wish to consider the matters calling for action or brought to its attention, as contained in the report of the Committee, and provide the secretariat with further guidance.

Report of the 2nd meeting of the Interim Intergovernmental Steering Group on Cross-border Paperless Trade Facilitation (E/ESCAP/72/12)

The Commission may wish to take note of the report and provide the secretariat with further guidance on the future work of the Interim Intergovernmental Steering Group on Cross-border Paperless Trade Facilitation.

Report of the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology on its eleventh session (E/ESCAP/72/13)

The Commission may wish to review the report of the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology and provide the secretariat with guidance on the future work of the Centre.

Report of the Governing Council of the Centre for Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization on its eleventh session (E/ESCAP/72/14)

The Commission may wish to review the report of the Governing Council of the Centre for Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization and provide the secretariat with guidance on the future work of the Centre.

(c) Transport**Documentation**

Summary of progress in the implementation of Commission resolutions (E/ESCAP/72/6, resolution 71/6)

The document contains a summary of the progress made in the implementation of Commission resolution 71/6 on maritime transport connectivity for sustainable development.

The Commission may wish to review the progress made and provide the secretariat with further guidance for effective implementation of the resolution.

(d) Environment and development**Documentation**

Summary of progress in the implementation of Commission resolutions (E/ESCAP/72/6, resolution 70/12)

Report of the Committee on Environment and Development on its fourth session (E/ESCAP/72/15)

Report of the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development on its third session (E/ESCAP/72/16)

Promoting regional energy connectivity in Asia and the Pacific: challenges and opportunities for aligning the energy sector with sustainable development (E/ESCAP/72/INF/6)

Report of the Coordinating Committee for Geoscience Programmes in East and South-East Asia (E/ESCAP/72/INF/1)

Report of the Mekong River Commission (E/ESCAP/72/INF/2)

Summary of progress in the implementation of Commission resolutions (E/ESCAP/72/6, resolution 70/12)

The document contains a summary of the progress made in the implementation of Commission resolution 70/12 on strengthening efforts on human settlements and sustainable urban development for the Asia-Pacific region.

The Commission may wish to review the progress made and provide the secretariat with further guidance for effective implementation of the resolution.

Report of the Committee on Environment and Development on its fourth session (E/ESCAP/72/15)

The Committee on Environment and Development held its fourth session in Bangkok from 11 to 13 November 2015. In view of the opportunities provided by the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals process, the Committee deliberated on emerging and persistent issues related to the 2030 Agenda with a view to further promoting transformation for a balanced integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development.

The Committee also provided the secretariat with guidance on further development of policy options and implementation tools in pursuit of inclusive and sustainable development.

Report of the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development on its third session (E/ESCAP/72/16)

Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 67/290 on the format and organizational aspects of the high-level political forum on sustainable development, the third session of the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development was held from 3 to 5 April 2016 as a preparatory event for the high-level political forum on sustainable development. As the primary regional platform for cohesive and coordinated implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development has the objective of strengthening the institutional framework for sustainable development at the regional level. At the third session of the Forum, a regional road map for determining priorities for the Sustainable Development Goals in the region and their subsequent implementation were discussed.

Promoting regional energy connectivity in Asia and the Pacific: challenges and opportunities for aligning the energy sector with sustainable development (E/ESCAP/72/INF/6)

Within the framework of regional economic cooperation and integration, the secretariat is exploring measures to promote regional energy connectivity. This document provides an overview of the challenges and opportunities in promoting regional energy connectivity, which facilitates the alignment of the energy sector with sustainable development. The Commission may wish to consider and endorse recommendations contained in this document to further facilitate regional energy connectivity for the Asia-Pacific region.

Report of the Coordinating Committee for Geoscience Programmes in East and South-East Asia (E/ESCAP/72/INF/1)

Report of the Mekong River Commission (E/ESCAP/72/INF/2)

The Commission may wish to take note of the two reports.

(e) Information and communications technology

(f) Disaster risk reduction

Documentation

Asia-Pacific information superhighway: for inclusive and seamless connectivity (E/ESCAP/72/17)

Building resilience to cross-border disasters (E/ESCAP/72/18)

Summary of progress in the implementation of Commission resolutions (E/ESCAP/72/6, resolutions 68/5, 69/10, 69/11, 69/12, 70/2 and 71/11)

Report of the Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction on its fourth session (E/ESCAP/72/19)

Report of the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development on its tenth session (E/ESCAP/72/20)

Report of the Typhoon Committee (E/ESCAP/72/INF/3)

Report of the Panel on Tropical Cyclones (E/ESCAP/72/INF/4)

Asia-Pacific information superhighway: for inclusive and seamless connectivity (E/ESCAP/72/17)

This document provides an overview of the activities of the Working Group on the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway, as established in accordance with the recommendation of the fourth session of the Committee on Information and Communications Technology and Commission resolution 71/10 on strengthening regional information and communications technology connectivity through the Asia-Pacific information superhighway.

In addition to the recommended norms and principles for its operation, the specific areas of focus of the working group include four main pillars: strengthening the regional broadband terrestrial backbone network; harmonizing Internet traffic management systems and policies; enhancing information and communications technology infrastructure resilience; and providing inclusive access to broadband internet. Taken together, these dimensions of the Asia-Pacific information superhighway will help member countries address the digital divide and promote the benefits of enhanced

information and communications technology infrastructure to reduce costs of connectivity and promote socioeconomic development.

Building resilience to cross-border disasters (E/ESCAP/72/18)

This document provides an overview of the impact of cross-border disasters in Asia and the Pacific and describes the Commission's efforts to foster regional cooperation to address hazards with transboundary origins, including through the Multi-Donor Trust Fund for Tsunami, Disaster and Climate Preparedness in Indian Ocean and Southeast Asian Countries, enhanced collaboration between the Typhoon Committee and the Panel on Tropical Cyclones, and the Regional Cooperative Mechanism for Drought Monitoring and Early Warning. This document highlights the secretariat's initiatives and activities that support the member States' efforts to use innovative technology, in particular through applications of space technology and geographic information systems, to address transboundary disasters such as flood and drought. The document also highlights areas in which there is scope for strengthened regional cooperation in relation to specific hazards such as transboundary river basin floods, flash floods, glacial lake outburst floods and landslides.

Summary of progress in the implementation of Commission resolutions (E/ESCAP/72/6, resolutions 68/5, 69/10, 69/11, 69/12, 70/2 and 71/11)

The document contains summaries of the progress made in the implementation of the following Commission resolutions:

- (a) 68/5 on the Asia-Pacific Years of Action for Applications of Space Technology and the Geographic Information System for Disaster Risk Reduction and Sustainable Development, 2012-2017;
- (b) 69/10 on promoting regional information and communications technology connectivity and building knowledge-networked societies in Asia and the Pacific;
- (c) 69/11 on the implementation of the Asia-Pacific Plan of Action for Applications of Space Technology and Geographic Information Systems for Disaster Risk Reduction and Sustainable Development, 2012-2017;
- (d) 69/12 on enhancing regional cooperation for building resilience to disasters in Asia and the Pacific;
- (e) 70/2 on disaster-related statistics in Asia and the Pacific;
- (f) 71/11 on the establishment of the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management.

The Commission may wish to review the progress made and provide the secretariat with further guidance for the effective implementation of the above-mentioned resolutions.

Report of the Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction on its fourth session (E/ESCAP/72/19)

The Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction held its fourth session in Bangkok from 27 to 29 October 2015. It reviewed the challenges of disaster risks in the region and promoted regional cooperation in disaster risk reduction in development activities as guided by the 2030 Agenda and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. The Committee expressed support for ESCAP initiatives in the area of disaster risk reduction and highlighted the importance of the following: promoting regional cooperation

mechanisms to address disaster risks, particularly those that are transboundary in nature; improving regional multi-hazard early warning systems and strengthening national systems; promoting regional knowledge and capacity on integration of disaster risk reduction into development planning and in disaster-related statistics; and enhancing regional cooperation initiatives on applications of space technology and geographic information systems for disaster risk reduction.

The Commission may wish to consider the matters calling for action or brought to its attention, as contained in the report of the Committee, and provide the secretariat with further guidance.

Report of the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development on its tenth session (E/ESCAP/72/20)

The Commission may wish to review the report of the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development and provide the secretariat with guidance on the future work of the Centre.

Report of the Typhoon Committee (E/ESCAP/72/INF/3)

Report of the Panel on Tropical Cyclones (E/ESCAP/72/INF/4)

The Commission may wish to take note of the two reports.

(g) Social development

Documentation¹

Summary of progress in the implementation of Commission resolutions (E/ESCAP/72/6, resolutions 68/7 and 69/13)

Report of the Committee on Social Development on its fourth session (E/ESCAP/72/21)

Summary of progress in the implementation of Commission resolutions (E/ESCAP/72/6, resolutions 68/7 and 69/13)

The document contains summaries of the progress made in the implementation of the following Commission resolutions:

(a) 68/7 on the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013-2022;

(b) 69/13 on the implementation of the Ministerial Declaration on the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013-2022, and the Incheon Strategy to “Make the Right Real” for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific.

¹ The background documents for the fourth session of the Committee on Social Development provide in-depth analyses of the social dimension of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and are highly relevant to the deliberations on this agenda item. The two documents are: (a) “Challenges in implementing the social dimension of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals” (E/ESCAP/CSD(4)/1); and (b) “Innovative approaches and modalities to enhance the social dimension of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals” (E/ESCAP/CSD(4)/2). Both documents are available from the Commission documents web page.

The Commission may wish to review the progress made and provide the secretariat with further guidance for the effective implementation of the above-mentioned resolutions.

Report of the Committee on Social Development on its fourth session (E/ESCAP/72/21)

The Committee on Social Development held its fourth session in Bangkok from 28 to 30 March 2016. It reviewed the key social development trends and issues in the region, particularly in the context of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals, and identified priority actions to effectively integrate the social dimension with the economic and environmental dimensions. It reviewed and proposed recommendations relating to regional trends regarding youth unemployment and education, in particular the challenges arising from the school-to-work transition in the Asian and Pacific region. It also endorsed the proposed draft strategic framework for 2018-2019 on social development.

The Commission may wish to consider the matters calling for action or brought to its attention, as contained in the report of the Committee, and provide the secretariat with further guidance.

(h) Statistics

Documentation

Summary of progress in the implementation of Commission resolutions (E/ESCAP/72/6, resolutions 67/11, 70/2 and 71/14)

Report of the Regional Steering Group for Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific (E/ESCAP/72/22)

Report of the Governing Council of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific on its eleventh session (E/ESCAP/72/23)

Summary of progress in the implementation of Commission resolutions (E/ESCAP/72/6, resolutions 67/11, 70/2 and 71/14)

The document contains summaries of the progress made in the implementation of the following Commission resolutions:

- (a) 67/11 on strengthening statistical capacity in Asia and the Pacific;
- (b) 70/2 on disaster-related statistics in Asia and the Pacific;
- (c) 71/14 on the Asian and Pacific Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Decade, 2014-2024.

The Commission may wish to review the progress made and provide the secretariat with further guidance for the effective implementation of the above-mentioned resolutions.

Report of the Regional Steering Group for Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific (E/ESCAP/72/22)

The document provides an overview of the work of the Regional Steering Group for Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific established by the Commission at its seventy-first session. The Steering Group is the custodian of the Asian and Pacific Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Decade, 2015-2024, and oversees the implementation of the Regional Action Framework on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific. The document highlights the current situation of civil

registration and vital statistics in the region and the progress in implementing the Regional Action Framework to date, based on country reports.

The Commission may wish to review the progress made in implementing the Regional Action Framework and endorse the report.

Report of the Governing Council of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific on its eleventh session (E/ESCAP/72/23)

The Governing Council of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific held its eleventh session on 30 November and 1 December 2015. Members of the Council discussed how the Institute could transform itself to better lead capacity development for producing data and statistics for the 2030 Agenda in Asia and the Pacific. The Council recommended courses of action to guide the Institute in implementing its proposed 2016 and 2017 annual work plans, which strongly support capacity development for the follow-up and review process of the 2030 Agenda in accordance with expressed priorities of member States. Taking note of the critical importance of the proposed training programmes on new and emerging statistical measurements, while also continuing to meet training needs on the foundations of official statistics, the Council urged the Institute and the secretariat to take proactive measures to secure the resources needed to implement the Institute's programme of work on a sustainable basis.

The Commission may wish to review the report of the Governing Council and provide guidance for the future work of the Institute.

(i) Subregional activities for development

Documentation

Subregional activities for development: issues and challenges related to inclusive and sustainable economic and social development in Asia and the Pacific (E/ESCAP/72/24)

Report of the Governing Council of the Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia on its tenth session (E/ESCAP/72/25)

Component 1: the Pacific

The document provides a review of the multidimensional challenges and interrelated processes with which the Pacific subregion is faced as it embarks on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SAMOA Pathway. Drawing on the outcomes of the seventy-first session of the Commission and resolution 71/4 on the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway, the document contains highlights of the policy options for addressing the unique and particular vulnerabilities of Pacific island countries and territories, with a focus on improving integrated decision-making and planning. An agenda is set out for the work of the subregional office in supporting the means of implementation for Sustainable Development Goals and the SAMOA Pathway. Additionally, mechanisms for improving coordination within the Asia-Pacific region with regards to the Pacific subregional processes are proposed.

The Commission may wish to provide the secretariat with guidance on the policy options identified and the initiatives being undertaken by the secretariat in support of member States.

Component 2: East and North-East Asia

A brief review of the subregional challenges for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in East and North-East Asia is provided. The overview contains highlights of the Commission's current subregional programme which links a number of challenges to the strategic direction of the secretariat, including (i) supporting member States in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals; (ii) promoting regional economic cooperation and integration; (iii) enhancing the social inclusion and rights of vulnerable and marginalized groups; (iv) promoting sustainable management of natural resources, climate change adaptation and mitigation, and resilience to disasters and shocks; and (v) promoting the means of implementation of the Goals. The overview also presents a number of policy options and initiatives for mobilizing subregional efforts for addressing challenges and advancing the work of the secretariat in the subregion.

The Commission may wish to provide the secretariat with guidance on the policy options identified and the initiatives being undertaken by the secretariat in support of member States.

Component 3: North and Central Asia

A review of policy issues and challenges in the North and Central Asian subregion as well as initiatives of the secretariat to support implementation of the 2030 Agenda is provided. The document addresses the interrelated and integrated approach of the three dimensions of sustainable development by assessing ways of (i) improving regional connectivity through transport, energy, and information and communications technology infrastructure development; (ii) facilitating regional market integration; and (iii) strengthening economic cooperation and integration.

The Commission may wish to provide the secretariat with guidance on the policy options identified and the initiatives being undertaken by the secretariat in support of member States.

Report of the Governing Council of the Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia on its tenth session (E/ESCAP/72/25)

The Commission may wish to review the report of the Governing Council of the Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia and provide the secretariat with guidance on the future work of the Programme.

Component 4: South and South-West Asia

The subprogramme overview highlights issues and challenges facing member States in South and South-West Asia in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, including with regards to regional cooperation. The overview examines the progress made by member States in the subregion in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, as those remain core priorities in the 2030 Agenda, which encompasses the unfinished dimensions of the Millennium Development Goals while also broadening the scope to include cross-cutting drivers and enablers of inclusive and sustainable development.

The document contains policy priorities for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in South and South-West Asia, including by harnessing the potential of regional cooperation. Focusing on those key priorities identified in the document would allow the subregion to be at the forefront of transformational and innovative practices to redress inequalities and imbalances, bridge major development gaps and leapfrog into sustainable, low-carbon pathways.

The Commission may wish to provide guidance on the policy options identified and the initiatives being undertaken by the secretariat to support member States.

4. Management issues

Under agenda item 4, the secretariat is submitting for the consideration of the Commission reports on a range of management issues relevant to the continued effectiveness of the work of ESCAP.

(a) Report on the evaluation activities of the Commission during the biennium 2014-2015

Documentation

Report on the evaluation activities of the Commission during the biennium 2014-2015 (E/ESCAP/72/26)

The document contains the main findings and recommendations from evaluations undertaken during the biennium 2014-2015 with regard to the Commission's programme of work. Topics addressed include the steps taken by the secretariat to implement those recommendations and to strengthen the evaluation function of the secretariat in accordance with resolution 66/15. In addition, pursuant to resolution 67/14, the document contains highlights regarding the key arrangements and initiatives through which the secretariat coordinates its work with regional and subregional organizations operating in Asia and the Pacific. The secretariat also works with the United Nations funds, agencies and programmes through the Asia-Pacific Regional Coordination Mechanism.

The Commission may wish to review the progress made and provide the secretariat with further guidance for effective implementation of the resolutions.

(b) Proposed programme changes for the biennium 2016-2017

Documentation

Programme changes for the biennium 2016-2017 (E/ESCAP/72/27)

Programme changes for 2016-2017 may be required following the identification of emerging global priorities by the Economic and Social Council, the General Assembly and global conferences since the endorsement of the draft programme of work by the Commission at its seventy-first session.

The Commission may wish to consider the proposed changes with a view to endorsing them for incorporation into the programme of work for 2016-2017.

(c) Draft strategic framework for the biennium 2018-2019

Documentation

Proposed strategic framework for the period 2018-2019, part two: biennial programme plan, economic and social development in Asia and the Pacific (A/71/6 (Prog. 16))

The document consists of (a) a narrative highlighting the overall orientation of the programme and (b) elements of the logical framework for each subprogramme.

The Commission may wish to review the draft strategic framework for ESCAP for the biennium 2018-2019 with a view to endorsing it.

(d) Partnerships, extrabudgetary contributions and capacity development

Documentation

Overview of partnerships, extrabudgetary contributions and capacity development (E/ESCAP/72/28)

The document contains an overview of the secretariat's partnerships in 2015, including with regional and subregional intergovernmental organizations, which facilitate the efforts of the United Nations to "work together as one" at the regional level and in support of its capacity development work. It also provides an overview of the extrabudgetary resources mobilized for implementing the programme of work. The delivery of the Commission's capacity development work in 2015 is discussed.

Individual members and associate members may wish to announce their intended contributions for 2016.

5. Activities of the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission

Documentation

Report of the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission (E/ESCAP/72/29)

The document covers the main activities of the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission since the seventy-first session of the Commission, including the Committee's support to the Executive Secretary on matters related to programme planning, implementation and monitoring.

The Commission may wish to comment on the role of the Advisory Committee and provide further guidance regarding its work.

6. Dates, venue and theme topic for the seventy-third session of the Commission (2017)

Documentation

Dates, venue and theme topic for the seventy-third session of the Commission (2017) (E/ESCAP/72/30)

Unless the Commission decides otherwise, the seventy-third session of the Commission will be held in Bangkok in April/May 2017. Under this agenda item, the Commission may also wish to select a theme topic for that session.

Ministerial segment**7. Policy issues for the Asia-Pacific region****(a) Key challenges to inclusive and sustainable economic and social development in Asia and the Pacific****Documentation**

Enhancing regional economic cooperation and integration in Asia and the Pacific (E/ESCAP/72/5)

The document entitled “Enhancing regional economic cooperation and integration in Asia and the Pacific” presents an examination of regional economic cooperation and integration as a key strategy for the region to assist in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. In resolution 70/1, the Commission, inter alia, recognized the important progress achieved by regional groupings and organizations in integrating their subregions, and proposed an agenda aimed at deepening and broadening economic cooperation and integration in Asia and the Pacific and at moving towards the formation of an economic community of Asia and the Pacific as a long-term goal. The resolution included a proposal to establish four area-specific expert working groups: (a) moving towards the formation of an integrated market; (b) development of seamless connectivity in the region; (c) enhancing financial cooperation; and (d) increasing economic cooperation to address shared vulnerabilities and risks. The document summarizes critical issues based on the outcomes of these expert working groups to further advance the implementation of the resolution. The Commission may wish to consider the recommendations contained in this document and provide its comments and guidance to further facilitate the implementation of the Bangkok Declaration in preparation for the second Ministerial Conference on Regional Economic Cooperation and Integration in Asia and the Pacific.

(b) Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific 2016**Documentation**

Summary of the Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific 2016 (E/ESCAP/72/31)

The document provides a review of the region’s progress and its near-term outlook as it contends with emerging challenges to economic growth emanating from a general economic slowdown in advanced economies as well as from within the region. With a view of supporting inclusive growth and promoting the 2030 Agenda, areas of economic and social policy to be considered include growth and trade; inflation, monetary policy and financial markets; fiscal policy and issues related to private debt; and challenges associated with rapid urbanization and rising middle class. Some selected social and environmental issues are also considered. In particular, the document provides an analysis of the challenge of enhancing productivity in the Asia-Pacific region and provides an examination of the interrelationship between productivity and the Sustainable Development Goals. Trends and patterns of productivity and productivity growth in the region are identified and policies that have contributed to these patterns within countries are highlighted. Challenges that countries are facing in boosting productivity are also identified with examples of how some of these challenges can be overcome. The analysis is based upon in-house research, country studies and thematic investigations that were commissioned for the preparation of this document.

8. Theme topic for the seventy-second session of the Commission: “Science, technology and innovation for sustainable development”

Documentation

Science, technology and innovation for sustainable development (E/ESCAP/72/32)

The document provides the results of theme study, *Harnessing Science, Technology and Innovation for Inclusive and Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific*. The study developed a common and clear conceptual framework for science, technology and innovation to support member States to formulate and implement best practices in science, technology and innovation policy, frameworks and strategies to achieve inclusive and sustainable development by sharing lessons between leaders, builders and beginners in science, technology and innovation (that is, triangular cooperation) in the region.

The study also developed a framework to measure and monitor the impact of science, technology and innovation policies and to facilitate regional comparison and knowledge-sharing. It highlights and promotes scientific and technological advances as well as new and emerging concepts and approaches to innovation. Finally, the study proposes a practical and contextually relevant set of recommendations to catalyse science, technology and innovation in the region with a specific focus on recommending regional actions on this topic.

9. Other matters

The Commission may wish to consider other matters brought to its attention.

10. Adoption of the report of the Commission

The Commission will consider and adopt the report on its seventy-second session. Pursuant to annex I of resolution 71/1, the report of the Commission will be composed of the decisions and the resolutions of the Commission. The draft record of proceedings of the Commission session, prepared by the secretariat, will be circulated among members and associate members for comments within 15 days after the conclusion of the session.