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**Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific**

**Seventy-second session**

Agenda item 3 (d)

**Resolution adopted by the Economic and Social Commission  
for Asia and the Pacific**

**72/7. Regional cooperation to combat sand and dust storms in  
Asia and the Pacific**

*The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific,*

*Recalling* General Assembly resolution 70/195 of 22 December 2015 on combating sand and dust storms, in which it acknowledged the role of the United Nations development system in promoting international cooperation to combat sand and dust storms, and in which it stressed the need for cooperation at the global and regional levels with a view to preventing and managing dust and sandstorms through the development of early warning systems and the sharing of climate and weather information to forecast dust storms and sandstorms, and affirming that resilient action to combat sand and dust storms requires a better understanding of the severe multidimensional impacts of dust and sandstorms, including the deterioration of the health, well-being and livelihood of people, increased desertification and land degradation, deforestation, loss of biodiversity and land productivity, and their impact on sustainable economic growth,

*Noting with concern* that the frequency and intensity of sand and dust storms have increased in the past three decades and pose a great challenge to the sustainable development of affected countries and that they have adverse impacts on infrastructure, transport and communications and human health,

*Recognizing* that sand and dust storms are a challenging problem for affected countries, with transboundary impacts that are being frequently experienced in Asia and other regions with serious consequences, that require institutional and technical interventions,

*Acknowledging* that implementation of the elements of General Assembly resolution 70/206 of 22 December 2015 on the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa would contribute towards the continuation of the sharing of best practices, experiences and technical expertise in combating sand and dust storms,

*Reaffirming* resolution 71/12 of 29 May 2015 of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific on strengthening regional mechanisms for the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 in Asia and the Pacific, and recognizing the

relevance of addressing multidimensional hazards for the achievement of the objectives of the Sendai Framework,<sup>1</sup>

*Recalling* paragraph 1 of Commission resolution 71/11 of 29 May 2015, in which it endorsed the recommendations of the evaluation carried out pursuant to its resolution 67/4 of 25 May 2011 on the establishment of the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management, including project result 4, which stated that “the Centre work programme may attach priority to the disaster with transboundary reach in the subregions – such as earthquakes, droughts, sandstorm, regional floods”,<sup>2</sup>

*Referring* to resolution XII.13 on wetlands and disaster risk reduction, adopted at the 12th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially Waterfowl Habitat in Uruguay in 2015, in which the Conference underscored the significance of the need to develop and implement management plans for wetlands that integrate the principles of ecosystem-based management and adaptation against natural hazards, such as dust and sandstorms,

*Affirming*, in this regard, that resilient action to combat sand and dust storms requires a better understanding of the multidimensional aspects of this challenge, including the deterioration of the health, well-being and livelihood of people, increased desertification and land degradation, deforestation, loss of biodiversity and land productivity and their impact on sustainable economic growth,

*Acknowledging with appreciation* the first International Conference on Dust, held in the Islamic Republic of Iran from 2 to 4 March 2016, which facilitated the exchange of recent academic and field-oriented findings and solutions regarding dust phenomena,

1. *Recognizes* that dust and sandstorms, and the unsustainable land-management practices, among other factors, that can cause or exacerbate these phenomena, pose a significant challenge to the sustainable development of affected countries and regions, also recognizes that, in the past few years, dust and sandstorms have inflicted substantial socioeconomic damage on the inhabitants of the world’s arid, semi-arid and dry subhumid areas, and underscores the need to treat them and to promptly undertake measures to address these challenges;

2. *Calls upon*, in this connection, member States to collaborate with the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and other relevant stakeholders, including international and regional bodies and organizations, in the discharge of their respective mandates, in relation to General Assembly resolutions 70/195 and 70/206, complementary to the programme of work of the Commission;

3. *Invites* member States to enhance their cooperation towards enhancement of necessary tools, projects and mechanisms aimed at facilitating needed measures, such as forecasting the likelihood of damaging sand- and dust-related events, data collection and knowledge-sharing, setting up monitoring systems and mitigating the adverse impacts of this phenomenon on the health of people, in particular people living on frontiers and in rural areas, in collaboration with related international, regional and

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<sup>1</sup> General Assembly resolution 69/283, annex II.

<sup>2</sup> See E/ESCAP/71/INF/6.

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subregional entities, including United Nations regional commissions, within their respective mandates and expertise;

4. *Invites* member States, in collaboration with the Commission and other regional organizations, to promote North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation to support the exchange of knowledge and best practices in addressing the problem, within their existing mandates and expertise;

5. *Invites* member States, the Asian Development Bank and other donors to consider contributing financial resources towards the Commission's regional initiatives and projects to address this challenge;

6. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to:

(a) Within existing mandates and expertise, accord priority focus on the work of the Commission relating to sand and dust storms as a great transboundary challenge;

(b) Work, including through the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management, as well as with other relevant regional organizations, utilizing a combination of existing funds and extrabudgetary contributions, to promote regional and interregional networking on sand and dust storms;

(c) Work closely with the United Nations Environment Programme, the World Meteorological Organization and the secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa in the process of preparing the global assessment on sand and dust storms;

(d) Report to the Commission at its seventy-third session and thereafter on a biennial basis on progress in the implementation of the present resolution.

*6th plenary meeting  
19 May 2016*

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