



# Economic and Social Council

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## Committee for Programme and Coordination

Sixty-third session

30 May–30 June 2023

### Draft report

*Rapporteur:* Mr. Rouven **Klein** (Germany)

#### Addendum

### Programme questions: proposed programme budget for 2024

(Item 3 (a))

#### Programme 17

#### Economic development in Europe

1. At its 12th meeting, on 6 June 2023, the Committee considered programme 17, Economic development in Europe of the proposed programme plan for 2024 and programme performance in 2022 ([A/78/6 \(Sect. 20\)](#)). The Committee also had before it a note by the Secretariat on the review of the proposed programme plan by sectoral, functional and regional bodies ([E/AC.51/2023/9](#)).
2. Representatives of the Secretary-General introduced the programme and responded to questions raised by the Committee during its consideration.

#### Discussion

3. Delegations expressed appreciation for the work of the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), with one delegation describing it as helpful, and encouraged ECE to continue the good work of the programme plan into 2024.
4. A delegation emphasized that ECE played a vital role in facilitating dialogue, cooperation and coordination among member States, as it provided a platform for engagement with many countries and global stakeholders, allowing for the exchange of knowledge and collaboration on common challenges to achieve the commitments made under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
5. A delegation further praised ECE for supporting its member States, civil society, non-governmental organizations, the private sector and local governments to convene and cooperate on initiatives for economic growth. One delegation especially



applauded the Forum of Mayors, which facilitated knowledge-sharing and collaboration by cities in the region supported by ECE.

6. Another delegation stated that the Commission's norms, standards and conventions had a direct positive impact on the lives of those in the region and were considered global best practices, noting the Commission's reliable platform for technical experts to cooperate and develop innovative approaches to economic challenges. The delegation welcomed the development of the new strategy to guide ECE concerning partnerships with the private sector, stressed the importance of that strategy operating effectively and encouraged ECE to ensure that staff were trained on its proper use. ECE was asked to comment on the new partnership strategy.

7. One delegation commended the Commission's expertise, technical assistance and support for capacity-building, as well as its support in implementing international legal instruments related to sustainable development, economic growth, transport, energy, environment and other critical areas.

8. Another delegation, with reference to paragraph 20.4 of the report, urged ECE to continue its integrated approach by providing multisectoral policy advice and capacity-building through cross-sectoral collaboration with a view to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, including:

- (a) Digital and green transformations;
- (b) Circular economy and the sustainable use of natural resources;
- (c) Sustainable and smart cities for all ages;
- (d) Sustainable mobility and smart connectivity;
- (e) Measuring and monitoring progress towards achieving the Goals.

9. The framework for the preparation of environmental performance reviews was cited by one delegation as successful under the leadership and guidance of ECE, and support was pledged in supporting the Commission's work on promoting smart cities. ECE was asked to elaborate on projects and initiatives regarding the support of urban sustainability and smart cities.

10. Another delegation expressed support for discussions on transport in the Inland Transport Committee, which had a positive impact, and urged the Commission to ensure that that Committee did not promote one set of regional regulations and agreements over other regional agreements.

11. Furthermore, the delegation noted that the United Nations Code for Trade and Transport Locations was not mentioned in the programme plan for 2024, and the Commission was reminded of the fact that upgrades were necessary for its function. ECE was requested to explain how it would improve the United Nations Code for Trade and Transport Locations in 2024.

12. The topic of Ukraine was introduced to the discussion, with one delegation recalling that the main objective of the Commission's programme was to support development in the region, but that one country was nonetheless destabilizing and destroying instead of developing the region with an aggressive war on Ukraine. The destruction of the dam in the Kherson province was cited as an example of that destruction. ECE was asked to comment on how that might affect its work and how reconstruction would be included in the programme in the future. Other delegations echoed the comments, voiced support for the people of Ukraine and agreed that the Commission's leadership should continue to support development in the region that it served, pursuant to its mandate to support economic cooperation for peace and promote regional cooperation and security in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia.

13. One delegation indicated that it welcomed discussions to uphold the principles of the Charter of the United Nations; strengthen the regional response to the war in Ukraine; and hold accountable a delegation that did not uphold those values and principles. Another delegation added that reconstruction and recovery from war must be a core focus of ECE in the coming years.

14. One delegation opposed the inclusion of the Ministerial declaration of the ninth Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference, 2016 (ECE/NICOSIA.CONF/2022/Add.1) and the Nicosia ministerial statement on education for sustainable development (ECE/NICOSIA.CONF/2022/Add.2) under legislative mandates, owing to the blocking of its participation in the Ministerial Conference, which was against the rules, according to the delegation. As a result, the delegation had been denied the opportunity to participate in drafting the final ministerial declaration, which, it claimed, contained politicized provisions that it deemed unacceptable. Accordingly, the delegation requested the removal of the two documents from the programme plan.

#### **Conclusions and recommendations**

15. **The Committee recommended that the plenary or the relevant Main Committee or Main Committees of the General Assembly, in line with Assembly resolution [77/254](#), consider the programme plan for programme 17, Economic development in Europe, of the proposed programme budget for 2024 under the agenda item entitled “Programme planning” at its the seventy-eighth session of the Assembly.**

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