



# Economic and Social Council

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## Committee for Programme and Coordination

### Fifty-seventh session

5-30 June 2017

Agenda item 7

### Adoption of the report of the Committee on its fifty-seventh session

## Draft report

*Rapporteur:* Mr. Rodrigo Otávio **Penteado Moraes** (Brazil)

### Addendum

## Programme questions: evaluation

(Item 3 (b))

### Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the evaluation of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

1. At its 6th meeting, on 7 June 2017, the Committee considered the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) on the evaluation of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) ([E/AC.51/2017/4](#)).
2. The Assistant Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services introduced the report and, together with the Deputy Executive Secretary of ESCWA and representatives of OIOS, responded to questions raised during its consideration by the Committee.

### Discussion

3. Delegations expressed their appreciation for and concurred with the recommendations in the report of OIOS, noting that it contained useful and invaluable assessments of ESCWA and how it had adapted and reprioritized its available resources to respond to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Delegations also recognized the efforts undertaken by ESCWA to carry out its work against the backdrop of the complex regional context within which it was operating.
4. Observations were also made about the management response to the report provided by ESCWA on how it intended to move forward with the recommendations made by OIOS, and one delegation noted with appreciation the promptness of



ESCWA action in addressing, making progress in and moving forward with the implementation of those recommendations.

5. One delegation sought clarification on the methodology used in the report pertaining to the extent to which survey responses had been used as the sole method to support the results, as opposed to triangulation with other sources of data. Clarification was also sought on the support that ESCWA had provided on the substantive servicing of the regional intergovernmental processes, noting that the evaluation methodology did not cover the programme of work of ESCWA relating to conference management services and administration, even though in paragraph 22 of the report mention was made of the important broker role played by ESCWA in the region and its effectiveness in facilitating regional and thematic forums in support of regional decision-making.

6. Clarification was sought on the normative role of ESCWA versus its capacity-building and technical assistance role, especially in the light of the support that it provided to countries in implementing the 2030 Agenda, and on how such activities undertaken by regional commissions dovetailed with the activities of the specialized funds and programmes, which themselves played a normative role in development. A delegation indicated that the real structure of publications was troubling and indicated that, from a results-based perspective, there were deficient dissemination practices and feedback mechanisms with regard to publications ([E/AC.51/2017/4](#), para. 34).

7. A question was raised about the role of ESCWA in consensus building and facilitating decision-making and dialogue, noting that a resolution recently adopted contained contentious language that resulted in a vote on the resolution, as opposed to its adoption by consensus.

8. One delegation questioned the percentage of resources allocated for gender-related activities as reflected in the subprogramme for the advancement of women and for the conflict mitigation and development subprogramme, noting that the budget allocations for the two subprogrammes were relatively low compared with other subprogrammes of ESCWA.

### **Conclusions and recommendations**

9. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly endorse the recommendations contained in paragraphs 58 to 62 of the report of OIOS on the evaluation of ESCWA ([E/AC.51/2017/4](#)), subject to the provision below.

10. In addition to the measures set out in recommendation 2, the Committee recommended that the General Assembly encourage the Secretary-General to raise the efficiency of the publications of ESCWA in the areas most useful to its stakeholders and consumers.