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ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

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Bangkok

**REVIEW OF THE CONFERENCE STRUCTURE OF THE  
COMMISSION: RESOLUTION 48/2**

(Item 5 of the provisional agenda)

**REPORT OF THE SENIOR OFFICIALS' SEGMENT ON THE REVIEW  
OF THE CONFERENCE STRUCTURE OF THE COMMISSION:  
RESOLUTION 48/2**

The outcome of the deliberations of the Senior Officials' Segment on the conference structure of the Commission, and the draft resolution emanating therefrom, are submitted for the consideration of the Commission.

**Review of the conference structure of the Commission: resolution 48/2**

1. The Commission had before it documents E/ESCAP/1046, E/ESCAP/1047 and E/ESCAP/1048 and Corr.1.

2. It noted that, in compliance with its resolution 52/1 of 24 April 1996, the Regional Preparatory Meeting on the Review of the Conference Structure of the Commission had been held at Bangkok in February 1997. The Meeting had deliberated on the findings and recommendations contained in the reports of the secretariat and the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission (ACPR), as well as the views of the eminent persons on the secretariat report. The deliberations had focused, in particular, on the thematic approach, the conference structure, the conduct of the annual sessions of the Commission and the role of ACPR. The Meeting took into account the multifaceted role of the Commission as the only intergovernmental regional forum for the Asian and Pacific region as a whole for the exchange of national economic and social development views and experiences.

3. The Commission endorsed the recommendations of the Regional Preparatory Meeting and welcomed the considerable progress made in ESCAP reform through close collaboration between the members and associate members of the Commission and the secretariat. The reform of the conference structure should seek to bring about wider participation of members and associate members in the Commission. It should aim to sharpen the focus of work of the Commission and its committees and thereby to improve effectiveness and efficiency in the delivery of the ESCAP programme of work. Within that context, the terms of reference of the committees should be flexible in order to enable ESCAP to respond to new demands and to adjust its priorities in the light of the region's rapidly changing economic and social circumstances.

4. The Commission stressed that the reform of ESCAP should be an ongoing process within the broader framework of the reform of the United Nations. Regular reviews would contribute to ascertaining the relevance of the work of the Commission and its subsidiary structure to the requirements of members and associate members and would provide opportunities for further adjustments in the functions of the Commission and the committees.

5. The Commission recommended that its sessions should continue to be held on an annual basis, comprising a senior officials' segment followed by a ministerial segment. It supported the organization of an informal session among the heads of delegation during the ministerial segment of each Commission session. It was proposed that an agenda should be decided by consensus and should be circulated well in advance to the members and associate members of the Commission to ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of each session. One delegation suggested that the agenda for the informal session should be decided by consensus, that the annotated agenda should reach members at least 30 days before the opening of the session to ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of the session, and that simultaneous interpretation should also be provided. The informal session should be organized on a year-to-year basis and should not be institutionalized. With regard to the duration of its annual sessions, the Commission requested ACPR to undertake a review, after the fifty-third session, of the possibility of further reducing the number of meeting days from the current seven days. It stressed the need for a focused agenda for its annual sessions. The interrelation among the issues dealt with by the three thematic committees should be addressed.

6. Recognizing that the advantages of the thematic approach outweighed the disadvantages, the Commission fully supported the recommendations of the Regional Preparatory Meeting. Considering that a process of evolution was preferable to any radical change, it felt that the right approach would be to consolidate the gains wherever they had been made and to make the necessary changes in the case of those committees and subprogrammes where some reordering of programme areas or a clearer expression of focus could be of advantage. That was particularly felt with respect to the themes relating to poverty alleviation, and environment and sustainable development. It approved the five committees subsidiary to the Commission, with the periodicity of sessions as follows: (a) regional economic cooperation, which would be assisted by its Steering Group (biennial, with the Steering Group meeting annually); (b) socio-economic measures to alleviate poverty in rural and urban areas (annual); (c) environment and natural resources development (annual); (d) transport, communications, tourism and infrastructure development (annual); and (e) statistics (biennial). It agreed that the duration of the sessions of the committees as well as of the Steering Group should not exceed three days, although one delegation suggested that the duration of sessions of the Committee on Statistics should be extended to four days in view of the scope of the matters requiring its attention. The Commission also approved the recommendation that the Special Body on Pacific Island Developing Countries and the Special Body on Least Developed and Landlocked Developing Countries should be retained and reinvigorated. The Special Bodies, at their recent sessions, which had taken place immediately prior to the Commission session, had decided to meet biennially; the Special Body on Pacific Island Developing Countries would meet in even years, and that on Least Developed and Landlocked Developing Countries in odd years. The sessions would be held back-to-back with the

annual sessions of the Commission. The request made in the Regional Preparatory Meeting that the secretariat should approach donors to mobilize resources to ensure the participation of at least one representative from the Pacific island subregion in each session of the Committees was reiterated.

7. The Commission deliberated on whether some of the names of the committees should be reconsidered in order to attract appropriate representation from member and associate member governments in the sessions of those committees. The majority of the delegations held the view that the names of the committees should be retained as recommended by the Regional Preparatory Meeting, since the titles had been arrived at after thorough reviews by both ACPR and the Meeting and intensive negotiations among the members and associate members of the Commission; however, one delegation suggested that the name of the Committee on Regional Economic Cooperation could be renamed the Committee on Trade, Industry, Investments and Technology and that the Committee on Socio-economic Measures to Alleviate Poverty in Rural and Urban Areas could be renamed the Committee on Poverty Alleviation. The Commission recognized the need to focus the discussion in the committees through a choice of a limited number of areas from a few closely related sectoral disciplines, to ensure appropriate representation from member and associate member governments in the sessions. That would provide guidance to the secretariat in the formulation of the programme structure.

8. The Commission was pleased to note that, as recommended by the Regional Preparatory Meeting, the detailed draft terms of reference for each of the committees which had been prepared by the secretariat had been considered by ACPR and included in a draft resolution on the restructuring of the conference structure of the Commission. The terms of reference adequately reflected the need to undertake quantifiable tasks within a set time-frame and to generate tangible results. The special concerns of the least developed and landlocked countries, the Pacific island developing countries and the economies in transition, as well as cross-cutting issues such as the environment and women in development, should be addressed. Each committee would monitor the implementation and effectiveness of its tasks. With regard to the terms of reference of the Committee on Regional Economic Cooperation pertaining to the participation of representatives of private sector organizations and non-governmental organizations in the Steering Group, the suggestion was made that the existing sentence should be revised to read "Subject to the approval of members and associate members of ESCAP by consensus, representatives of development agencies, financial institutions, private sector organizations and non-governmental organizations, may be invited to meetings of the Steering Group, to fulfil its role as a "think tank".

9. The Commission was of the opinion that ad hoc ministerial meetings should be restricted to no more than one per year. It was also of the opinion that it was not necessary to convene regional

intergovernmental preparatory meetings for global conferences. Rather, ESCAP should concentrate on the implementation of the decisions of such conferences at the regional level. It supported the recommendation of the Regional Preparatory Meeting that the number of intergovernmental meetings should be reduced from the current 15 per year to 5, and the maximum number of meeting days per calendar year for such meetings from the current 100 to 25.

10. The Commission held the strong view that ESCAP and other United Nations bodies, programmes and specialized agencies, as well as regional and subregional organizations, should make every effort to avoid duplication in their respective areas of work. In that connection, it recognized the role of the Regional Inter-agency Committee for Asia and the Pacific (RICAP) in strengthening inter-agency coordination at the regional level. The Commission also noted the existing cooperation between the secretariat and intergovernmental organizations such as the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) and the South Asian Association for Regional Economic Cooperation (SAARC) and requested that such cooperation should be continued.

11. With regard to the issue of resource allocations and prioritization of activities, several delegations suggested that resources should be reallocated from lower priority areas to selected priority areas. The Commission welcomed the questionnaire circulated to its members and associate members seeking their assessment of the secretariat's resource allocations at the programme activity level for the programme of work, 1996-1997 and requested that the analysis of the responses from the governments should be used for proposing changes to the programme of work, 1998-1999 and as a basis for future programme planning. It also suggested that the publications programme should be reviewed with a view to streamlining it.

12. The Commission recognized the important role of ACPR in assisting the secretariat in discharging its tasks and in undertaking the reform exercise. It recommended that ACPR should further examine ways to enhance and improve its ability to advise and assist the Executive Secretary in drawing up proposals for the medium-term plan, the programme budget and the work programme priorities and resource allocation that were consistent with the guidelines provided by the Commission, and in monitoring and evaluating the implementation and outcomes of the Commission's programme of work. The Commission also recommended that ACPR should review the secretariat's proposals for areas of focus of the committees which would assist the secretariat in the formulation of the programme structure. It stressed that there should be conformity between the conference structure and the programme structure.

13. The Commission adopted resolution 53/... on the conference structure of the Commission.

**53/... Restructuring the conference structure of the Commission**

*Sponsored by:* Members of the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission

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

*Recalling* its resolutions 143 (XXX) of 5 April 1974, 210 (XXXVI) of 29 March 1980, 262 (XLIII) of 30 April 1987, 47/3 of 10 April 1991 and 51/3 of 1 May 1995 on the conference structure of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific,

*Recalling also* General Assembly resolution 50/11 of 2 November 1995 on multilingualism, in particular paragraphs 1, 5 and 6 thereof,

*Further recalling* its resolution 48/2 of 23 April 1992 on restructuring the conference structure of the Commission, in particular its decision to review the conference structure of the Commission, including its thematic priorities and its subsidiary structure, no later than at the fifty-third session of the Commission,

*Cognizant* of General Assembly resolution 50/227 of 24 May 1996 on further measures for the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields,

*Reaffirming* that the complexity of the development problems faced by the countries in the Asian and Pacific region, in particular the developing countries, increasingly demands that these problems be tackled in a comprehensive manner through interdisciplinary and intersectoral action,

*Recognizing* the increased responsibilities of the Commission, which comprises a geographical area containing 62 per cent of the population of the world and includes many developing members and associate members, among which are least developed, landlocked and island developing economies, and economies in transition with special needs,

*Recognizing further* that the occasion of its fiftieth anniversary provides a historic opportunity for the Commission to bring about wide participation of its members and to sharpen the focus of its work to enable it to respond more effectively to the evolving economic and social needs of the members and associate members within a rapidly changing global paradigm, including the changing

scope of regional cooperation, by utilizing fully the multidisciplinary advantage of the Commission and its increased capability in technical assistance activities,

*Noting also* the comparative advantage of the Commission as the most representative body for the Asian and Pacific region in carrying out its role as the main general economic and social development centre of the United Nations system for the Asian and Pacific region,

*Having considered* the recommendations of the Regional Preparatory Meeting for the Review of the Conference Structure of the Commission, held at Bangkok from 24 to 28 February 1997,

1. *Decides* to revise its conference structure, including its thematic and subsidiary structure, to conform to the following pattern:

(1) *The Commission*

The Commission shall meet annually, each session comprising a senior officials' segment followed by a ministerial segment, for up to a maximum of seven working days to discuss and decide upon important issues concerning economic and social development in the region, to decide upon the recommendations of its subsidiary bodies and of the Executive Secretary, to examine and approve the programme of work and priorities and to take any other decisions required, in conformity with its terms of reference.

(2) *Subsidiary structure*

A. The conference structure of the Commission should consist of the following five committees, which should meet at the intervals and for the maximum duration indicated below:

<u>Committees</u>	<u>Periodicity</u>	<u>Maximum duration</u>
Regional economic cooperation	Biennial	3 days
Socio-economic measures to alleviate poverty in rural and urban areas	Annual	3 days
Environment and natural resources development	Annual	3 days
Transport, communications, tourism and infrastructure development	Annual	3 days
Statistics	Biennial	3 days

The Special Body on Least Developed and Landlocked Developing Countries and the Special Body on Pacific Island Developing Countries should be retained and reinvigorated. The sessions of the Special Bodies should be held for a maximum of two days biennially, one each in alternate years, back-to-back with the annual sessions of the Commission.

B. In order to facilitate its work, the Committee on Regional Economic Cooperation shall have a high-level steering group, which will meet annually for a maximum duration of three days. Such a steering group shall form its own agenda and organize its own procedure of work under the overall direction of the Committee.

C. The revised structure is shown in chart form in annex I to the present resolution.

(3) *Ad hoc ministerial conferences*

(a) Subject to the approval of the Commission, ad hoc ministerial conferences on specific issues may be organized, but, starting in 1998, no more than one such conference should be held per year;

(b) In those years when a ministerial conference is held which is regarded as covering issues normally discussed in a corresponding committee or special body, that committee or special body shall not be convened.

(4) *Ad hoc intergovernmental meetings*

(a) Ad hoc intergovernmental meetings may be convened with the prior approval of the Commission, to carry out a detailed examination of substantive and priority issues, including relevant cross-sectoral issues;

(b) No more than five such intergovernmental meetings may be held during a calendar year, and the total number of days should not exceed twenty-five.

(5) *Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission*

The functions of the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission shall be in accordance with the terms of reference contained in annex II to the present resolution. It shall examine ways to enhance and improve its ability to advise and assist the Executive Secretary in drawing up proposals for the medium-term plan, the programme budget, and the work programme priorities and resource allocation, consistent with the guidelines provided by the Commission, and to monitor and evaluate the implementation, outcome and effectiveness of the Commission's programme of work in accordance with paragraphs 2 and 3 of the terms of reference of the Advisory Committee, and to report back to the Commission at its fifty-fourth session.



(6) *Existing bodies under the auspices of the Commission*

The following bodies under the auspices of the Commission shall continue to function as prescribed in their respective statutes and terms of reference:

- (i) Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology
- (ii) Regional Coordination Centre for Research and Development of Coarse Grains, Pulses, Roots and Tuber Crops in the Humid Tropics of Asia and the Pacific
- (iii) Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific

(7) *General provisions*

(a) *Functions*

The functions of the committees and special bodies are specified in their respective terms of reference in annexes III - IX to the present resolution. Committees should select priority issues and focus on well-defined problems in order to show tangible results within specified time-frames.

(b) *Rules of procedure*

Unless otherwise specified by the Commission, the rules of procedure of the Commission, including those pertaining to the decision-making process, shall apply *mutatis mutandis* to the committees and special bodies.

(c) *Informal session*

An informal session among the heads of delegations during the ministerial segment of each Commission session should be organized on a year-by-year basis and should not be institutionalized. The agenda for the informal session should be decided by consensus and the annotated agenda should reach members at least thirty days before the opening of the session, to ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of the session. Simultaneous interpretation should also be provided.

2. *Invites* the Executive Secretary, under the direction of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and in conformity with the goal of maximizing the impact of the United Nations in the field of economic and social development, to reorganize the secretariat so as to enhance its capability to service the subsidiary structure of the Commission and implement its revised programme of work under the framework of the medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001;

3. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to inform the governments of members and associate members about his preliminary assessment of the organizational, staffing and financial implications of the revision of the intergovernmental structure subsidiary to the Commission within the next six months;

4. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to report to the Commission at subsequent sessions on: (a) the implementation of the present resolution; and (b) the impact and effectiveness of the revised conference structure, including its thematic priorities and its subsidiary structure;

5. *Further requests* the Executive Secretary to inform members and associate members, through the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission, of ESCAP progress towards implementation of General Assembly resolution 50/277.

6. *Commends* the secretariat on the implementation of General Assembly resolutions establishing language arrangements for the official working languages of the Commission and urges the Executive Secretary to continue his efforts to monitor closely the strict implementation of General Assembly resolution 50/11 of 2 November 1995;

7. *Decides* to review the conference structure of the Commission, including its thematic priorities and its subsidiary structure, no later than at its fifty-eighth session.

**PROGRAMME BUDGET IMPLICATIONS OF THE DRAFT RESOLUTION ON  
RESTRUCTURING THE CONFERENCE STRUCTURE  
OF THE COMMISSION**

**A. Requests contained in the draft resolution**

On the assumption that the revised conference structure of the Commission would take effect from 1 January 1998, adoption of the decision contained in paragraph 1 of the draft resolution, as well as the requests contained therein, would not involve any additional cost implications for the regular programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997 as well as subsequent bienniums, provided that all Commission sessions and all legislative meetings are held in the United Nations Conference Centre in Bangkok, and that the organization will not undertake the costs of participation of members and associate members in the meetings of the legislative committees, the two special bodies and the high-level Steering Group of the Committee on Regional Economic Cooperation.

**B. Relationship of the request to the approved programme of work, 1996-1997  
and/or the proposed programme of work, 1998-1999**

None.

**C. Activities by which the requests would be implemented**

*1. Background of the request*

The decision and requests arise from a review of the existing conference structure of the Commission by the Regional Preparatory Meeting for the Review of the Conference Structure of the Commission, held at Bangkok from 24 to 28 February 1997, in follow-up to the decisions contained in resolution 48/2.

*2. Relation to the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997 and its second  
revision, and/or the medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001  
(if the resolution has implications for the medium-term plan)*

The request has no relation to the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997 and its second revision. The medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001 may, however, have to be aligned to the conference structure proposed under the draft resolution and the consequent programme structure.

*3. Activities by which the request would be implemented*

The draft resolution will be implemented through reorganization of the structure of the secretariat, and reorientation of the medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001 and the proposed programme of work, 1998-1999.

**D. Modification of the approved programme of work, 1996-1997 and/or  
the proposed programme of work, 1998-1999**

Implementation of the requests contained in the draft resolution will not require any modification of the approved programme of work, 1996-1997. It may, however, necessitate focusing of the proposed programme of work, 1998-1999.

**E. Additional requests at full cost**

Implementation of the requests contained in the draft resolution will have no additional cost implications for the programme budget provided that all meetings are held in the United Nations Conference Centre in Bangkok.

**F. Proposals for accommodation of additional requirements**

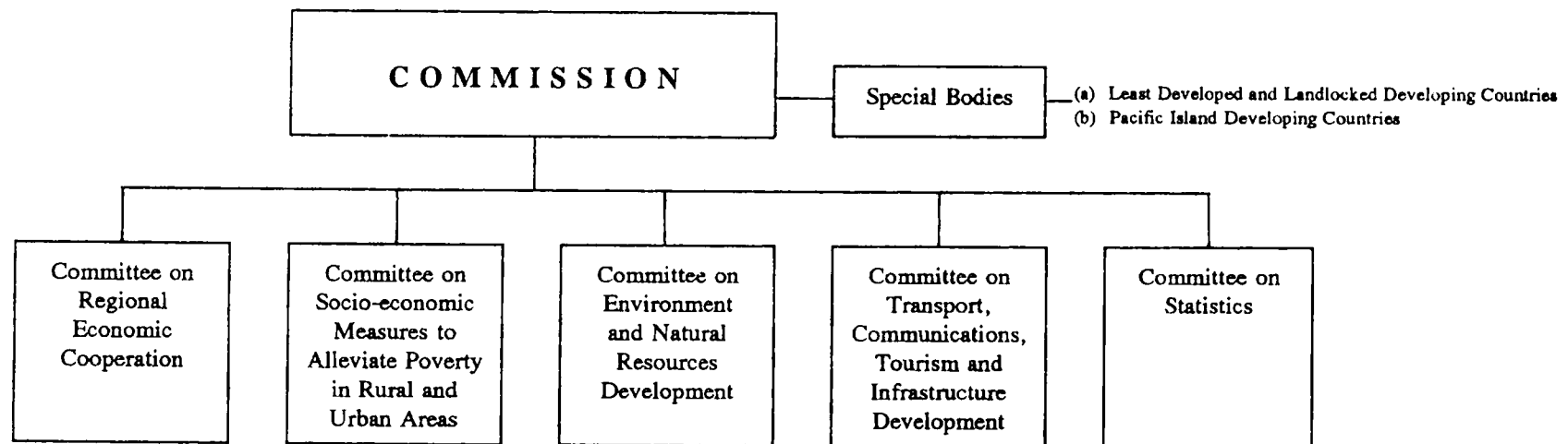
Not applicable.

## ANNEXES

### *Annex I*

## ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

### SUBSIDIARY STRUCTURE OF THE COMMISSION



*Annex II*

TERMS OF REFERENCE OF  
THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES AND  
OTHER REPRESENTATIVES DESIGNATED BY MEMBERS  
OF THE COMMISSION

The Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission shall have the following functions:

1. To maintain close cooperation and consultation between the members and the secretariat of the Commission.
2. To advise and assist the Executive Secretary in drawing up proposals for the medium-term plan, programme budget and priorities, consistent with the guidelines provided by the Commission.
3. To receive on a regular basis information on the administrative and financial functioning of ESCAP, and to assist and advise the Executive Secretary in monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the ESCAP programme of work.
4. To review the draft calendar of meetings, prior to its submission to the Commission session.
5. To exchange views with the Executive Secretary on the provisional agenda for each session of the Commission, bearing in mind chapter II of its rules of procedure.
6. To assist the secretariat in the formulation of the annotated provisional agenda for each session of the Commission before it is finalized.
7. To monitor the functioning of the thematic approach and the implementation of activities under it, in order to provide an assessment of the thematic approach and to suggest to the Commission at the appropriate time potential modifications to or changes of the themes.
8. To carry out any other tasks to be entrusted to it by the Commission.

*Annex III*

TERMS OF REFERENCE OF  
THE COMMITTEE ON REGIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION

A. The economic growth process in the Asian and Pacific region is characterized by increasing interdependence of its economies leading to a growing trend towards regional economic cooperation. The potential for enhanced cooperation will be realized more fully through the promotion and expansion of intraregional and inter-subregional trade and investment flows, technology development and transfer, and industrial production linkages, all of which are strongly encouraged by the diversity and increasing complementarity of the region's economies. There is, in addition, the imperative of such enhanced regional economic cooperation for spreading the growth impulse more widely across the region and mainstreaming the least developed, landlocked and Pacific island developing countries as well as economies in transition.

B. Under the overall supervision of the Commission, the Committee would:

1. Review and analyse global and regional trends and developments that have an impact on areas such as intraregional trade, investment, technology and financial flows, enterprise development, trade efficiency, information technology, industrial restructuring and relocation, and technological development and transfer.
2. Serve as a mobilizer of ideas and a catalyst for action to promote regional economic cooperation by identifying and addressing major development issues and regional concerns and priorities in trade, investment, financial, information technology, industrial and technological areas, and recommending policy options and measures to achieve tangible results and to enhance national capacities to meet new challenges.
3. Review the implementation and effectiveness of the programme of work of the secretariat and make recommendations to the Commission about future programmes of work, and in this process ensure that cross-sectoral issues such as special concerns of the least developed, landlocked and Pacific island developing countries, and economies in transition, the environment, human resources development, and women in development, are adequately addressed.
4. Strengthen the cooperative relationship with relevant subregional organizations to promote intra- and inter-subregional cooperation and linkages through the interchange of information and experiences and, in response to articulated needs, through the promotion of growth triangles and quadrangles or other special mechanisms and arrangements.

5. Accelerate follow-up to the decisions and recommendations of global conferences relevant to the work of the Committee, at the national, subregional and regional levels; evaluate progress and provide guidance on the implementation of regional action programmes.
6. Promote liaison with development agencies and financial institutions, private sector organizations, non-governmental organizations, and donor countries, within and outside the region, in its initiatives and activities to promote regional economic cooperation.
7. Promote liaison with relevant agencies of the United Nations system, with a view to minimizing overlapping and duplication, and strengthening cooperation with other organizations and other bodies at the subregional, regional and global levels to maximize the effectiveness and impact of the Commission's activities.
8. Work closely with other subsidiary organs of the Commission and coordinate its activities with them.
9. Carry out such other activities as the Commission may direct from time to time in matters relating to regional economic cooperation.

Within the context of its terms of reference, the Committee should identify the tasks to be undertaken during a specified period. The Committee should indicate the outcomes expected from each task, set a time-frame for the achievement of each task and monitor its implementation and effectiveness.

The Committee shall be composed of all members and associate members of the Commission.

The Committee shall meet biennially and its report will be submitted as a background document to facilitate discussion on regional economic cooperation at the Commission sessions.

The Committee shall have a high-level Steering Group to develop innovative approaches and facilitate exchange of views on pre-selected issues of current interest, among a cross-section of representatives of government, academia and the private sector in order to have in-depth discussion on a range of options on regional economic cooperation and make specific recommendations. Its membership shall be drawn from members and associate members on a voluntary basis. Subject to the approval of members and associate members by consensus, representatives of development agencies, financial institutions, private sector organizations and non-governmental organizations may be invited to meetings of the Steering Group to fulfil its role as a "think tank".

The Steering Group shall meet annually and its report shall be submitted to the Committee. In the years the Committee does not meet, issues discussed and recommendations made by the Steering Group could also be submitted directly to the Commission for its consideration.



*Annex IV*

TERMS OF REFERENCE OF  
THE COMMITTEE ON SOCIO-ECONOMIC MEASURES TO ALLEVIATE  
POVERTY IN RURAL AND URBAN AREAS

A. Poverty remains a most important issue in developing countries of the ESCAP region, which must be addressed in a holistic and integrated manner. Hence, poverty alleviation is a major focus of assistance to countries in their attempts to achieve economic growth and improve the quality of life in the context of sustainable development and the emerging global economy. The Committee on Socio-economic Measures to Alleviate Poverty in Rural and Urban Areas would therefore serve as a regional forum for (a) the identification of social and economic development issues directly related to the alleviation of poverty, and (b) the development of appropriate strategies and policies to improve the quality of life of the poor.

B. Under the overall supervision of the Commission, the Committee would:

1. Review and analyse the global and regional trends and developments that have an impact on the poverty situation in the region, with focus on their correlates in both the rural and urban contexts, and recommend development policy options and programme strategies.
2. Serve as a mobilizer of ideas and a catalyst for action in undertaking measures aimed at alleviating poverty in both rural and urban areas through the promotion of people's participation, including that of women and socially and economically disadvantaged groups, and capacity-building of national and local institutions and communities as well as human resources, and other means. Specifically, the Committee will recommend policy options and identify programmes that would address population issues and concerns; social development issues and concerns; human resources development; women in development; increased access to employment, education, health, shelter and credit; agricultural growth, especially through environmentally-friendly inputs; the use of appropriate technologies; devolution of authority and participatory urban management and governance.
3. Accelerate follow-up to the decisions and recommendations of global conferences at the national, subregional, and regional levels; monitor and evaluate progress in their implementation and provide guidance on the implementation of the regional action programmes relevant to the work of the Committee, *inter alia*, on population, social development, human resources development, rural development, women and urbanization.

4. Review the implementation and effectiveness of the programme of work of the secretariat and make recommendations to the Commission about future programmes of work, and in this process ensure that cross-sectoral issues such as special concerns of the least developed, landlocked and Pacific island developing countries and economies in transition, the environment, human resources development, and women in development, are adequately addressed.
5. Promote liaison with development agencies and financial institutions, private sector organizations, non-governmental organizations, and donor countries, within and outside the region, in its efforts and initiatives to deal with the issues of poverty alleviation in both the rural and urban areas.
6. Work closely with other subsidiary organs of the Commission and coordinate its activities with them.
7. Carry out such other activities as the Commission may direct from time to time in matters relating to poverty alleviation.
8. Promote liaison with relevant agencies of the United Nations system, with a view to minimizing overlapping and duplication, and strengthening cooperation with other organizations and other bodies at the subregional, regional and global levels to maximize the effectiveness and impact of the Commission's activities.

Within the context of its terms of reference, the Committee should identify the tasks to be undertaken during a specified period. The Committee should indicate the outcomes expected from each task, set a time-frame for the achievement of each task and monitor its implementation and effectiveness.

The Committee shall meet annually, focusing on a limited number of pre-selected issues, and shall report to the Commission.

*Annex V*

**TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE COMMITTEE ON  
ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT**

A. The main objectives of the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources Development will be to promote regional and subregional cooperation for sustainable development and to strengthen national capacities in the field of the environment, including integration of environmental concerns into development strategies, in line with the provisions of Agenda 21 and other subsequent decisions; development and management of natural resources, including water, mineral and energy resources (excluding infrastructural aspects of electric power); diffusion and management of environmentally sound technologies; space technology applications; and natural disaster reduction.

B. Under the overall supervision of the Commission, the Committee shall perform the following specific functions:

1. Review and assess the state of the environment in the region and, where a regional perspective on the issues provides a clear advantage, highlight the major environmental concerns with a view to encouraging the integration of environmental concerns into development policies, strategies, plans and programmes of members and associate members, at both the macroeconomic and sectoral levels.
2. Review and identify priority issues, assess progress, and promote regional and subregional cooperation in the development and management of water, mineral and energy resources, and in the application of space technologies, keeping in view the need for ensuring sustainable development; and make recommendations on policies, strategies, methods and techniques for the proper investigation, development, utilization and management of those resources.
3. Promote regional and subregional cooperation in environmental protection and natural disaster reduction, and encourage members and associate members to undertake their assessment of risks from natural hazards and to integrate the outcomes of such assessments into their development plans.
4. Promote opportunities for and provide guidance on the transfer and adoption of environmentally sound technologies, their diffusion, as well as management and operational practices to contribute to the strengthening of national capacities in achieving sustainable development.
5. Encourage the setting of standards and the strengthening of legal frameworks for the development and management of natural resources, and promote the application of environmental safeguards in manufacturing and product development.

6. Review the salient issues in the regional strategies and action programmes emerging from recent global conferences, international conventions and agreements; monitor the implementation of Agenda 21 at the regional level; and articulate the region's response to relevant global initiatives, ensuring that such initiatives support the development of the region.
7. Review the implementation and effectiveness of the programme of work of the secretariat and make recommendations to the Commission about future programmes of work, and in this process ensure that cross-sectoral issues such as special concerns of the least developed, landlocked and Pacific island developing countries, and economies in transition, human resources development, and women in development, are adequately addressed.
8. Promote liaison with relevant agencies of the United Nations system, with a view to minimizing overlapping and duplication, and strengthening cooperation with other organizations and other bodies at the subregional, regional and global levels to maximize the effectiveness and impact of the Commission's activities.
9. Work closely with other subsidiary organs of the Commission and coordinate its activities with them.
10. Carry out such other activities as the Commission may direct from time to time in matters relating to the environment and natural resources development.

Within the context of its terms of reference, the Committee should identify the tasks to be undertaken during a specified period. The Committee should indicate the outcomes expected from each task, set a time-frame for the achievement of each task and monitor its implementation and effectiveness.

The Committee shall meet annually, focusing on a limited number of pre-selected areas on a rotating basis, and shall report to the Commission.

*Annex VI*

TERMS OF REFERENCE OF  
THE COMMITTEE ON STATISTICS

A. The Committee on Statistics, in acting as the focus of regional statistical development, shall perform the following functions:

1. Review and analyse progress in the development of statistics in the region.
2. Assist in the strengthening of the statistical infrastructure in the countries of the region, promote the improvement of the quality of statistics, the international comparability of data and the appropriate application of new techniques, provide guidance in meeting emerging data requirements, and arrange for the exchange of information on and experiences in statistical work and methods among the countries.
3. Promote observance of the fundamental principles of official statistics adopted by the United Nations Statistical Commission at its special session in 1994.
4. Participate actively in the initiation, development, revision, testing and implementation of international statistical standards, promote and monitor their application, and promote their adaptation, as appropriate, to the conditions and needs of the countries of the region.
5. Play the focal role in promoting close coordination of all aspects of the statistical activities of specialized agencies, relevant United Nations bodies and other international organizations in regard to their work in the Asian and Pacific region, *inter alia* so as to achieve greater uniformity in concepts and definitions, reduce to a minimum the response burden on national statistical offices, and maximize the effectiveness of technical cooperation activities.
6. Promote the generation and analysis of statistical data and encourage, with due regard to relevant international work, efforts to develop a set of standardized statistical indicators for the region relevant to the programme of work of the Commission.
7. Recommend programmes of technical assistance, training, education and research in the various fields of statistics and their application.
8. Review and analyse progress in the development of information technology applications and information resource management in the region, especially in the public sector, and make recommendations on issues concerning policies and strategies, as well as on programmes of technical assistance, training and research in this field.

9. Review and evaluate the activities of the secretariat and the implementation and effectiveness of the programme of work in the areas of statistics and computerized information processing, provide guidance on the work of the secretariat, and make recommendations to the Commission about the future programme of work, paying due regard to the recommendations of the United Nations Statistical Commission and other relevant bodies.
10. Make recommendations to the Governing Board of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific on the nature of and priorities in statistical training for the countries of the region.
11. Inform the United Nations Statistical Commission and, where appropriate, the statistical authorities of the specialized agencies and other relevant bodies, of its work, so that due attention may be given to the wider aspects of the issues considered by the Committee.
12. Work closely with other subsidiary organs of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, coordinate activities with them, and ensure that cross-sectoral issues such as the special concerns of the least developed, landlocked, Pacific island developing countries and economies in transition, the environment, human resources development, and women in development are adequately addressed.
13. Carry out such other activities as the Commission may direct from time to time in matters relating to statistics.

Within the context of the above terms of reference, the Committee shall identify the tasks to be undertaken during a specified period. The Committee should indicate the outcomes expected from each task, set a time-frame for the achievement of each task and monitor its implementation and effectiveness.

The Committee shall meet once every two years and shall report to the Commission.

*Annex VII*

TERMS OF REFERENCE OF  
THE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORT, COMMUNICATIONS, TOURISM  
AND INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

A. The rapid growth in regional economies, trade and tourism is placing considerable strain on infrastructure facilities and services. It is also highlighting the importance of intraregional and interregional transport linkages as well as appropriate facilitation measures to ensure efficient utilization of regional linkages.

In the context of these developments, the Committee will address the following areas: roads, railways, urban transport, ports, shipping, inland waterways, dredging, multimodal transport, including freight forwarding, tourism, and the infrastructural aspects of electric power.

B. Under the overall supervision of the Commission, the Committee would:

1. Review and analyse global and regional trends and developments that have an impact on transport, communications, tourism and infrastructure development in the ESCAP region.
2. Serve as a mobilizer of ideas and a catalyst for action in the transport, communications, tourism and infrastructure development sectors; recommend policy options to achieve tangible results in improving the efficient provision, management, operation, maintenance and pricing of transport, tourism facilities, infrastructure and services, taking into account equity, safety and environmental considerations; promote intraregional and interregional transport linkages, and in particular the Asian Highway and Trans-Asian Railway, services, facilitation measures and tourism; and enhance national capacities.
3. Accelerate follow-up to the decisions and recommendations of global conferences at the national, subregional, and regional levels; evaluate progress and provide guidance on the implementation of the New Delhi Action Plan on Infrastructure Development in Asia and the Pacific being coordinated by ESCAP. In this connection, aspects of work on civil aviation, telecommunications and postal services carried out by the specialized agencies in relation to the implementation of the Action Plan would also be addressed by the Committee.
4. Promote liaison with international financing institutions, concerned private sector organizations and non-governmental organizations, to assist in the development of transport, communications, tourism and electric power infrastructure and services.

5. Review the implementation and effectiveness of the programme of work of the secretariat, and make recommendations to the Commission about future programmes of work, and in this process ensure that cross-sectoral issues such as the special concerns of the least developed, landlocked and Pacific island developing countries and economies in transition, the environment, human resources development, socially and economically disadvantaged groups, and women in development, are adequately addressed.
6. Work closely with other subsidiary organs of the Commission and coordinate its activities with them.
7. Promote liaison with relevant agencies of the United Nations system, with a view to minimizing overlapping and duplication, and strengthening cooperation with other organizations and other bodies at the subregional, regional and global levels to maximize the effectiveness and impact of the Commission's activities.
8. Carry out such other activities as the Commission may direct from time to time in matters relating to transport, communications, tourism and infrastructure development.

Within the context of its terms of reference, the Committee should identify the tasks to be undertaken during a specified period. The Committee should indicate the outcomes expected from each task, set a time-frame for the achievement of each task and monitor its implementation and effectiveness.

The Committee shall meet annually and focus on specific pre-selected sectors, and present its report to the Commission as a background document to facilitate discussion.



*Annex VIII*

**TERMS OF REFERENCE OF  
THE SPECIAL BODY ON LEAST DEVELOPED AND LANDLOCKED  
DEVELOPING COUNTRIES**

A. The special problems and constraints on the economic and social development of the least developed and landlocked developing countries have been recognized by the international community, and also within the context of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s, the International Development Strategy and other international declarations. These constraints require focused priority attention in the Asian and Pacific region in order to mainstream them into the ongoing regional integration process and to associate them with the economic and social dynamism of the region. The Special Body on Least Developed and Landlocked Developing Countries provides a focused forum for addressing the special issues and problems facing these groups of countries in the spirit of regional cooperation.

B. Under the overall supervision of the Commission, the Special Body will:

1. Review and analyse the economic and social progress in the least developed and landlocked developing countries and undertake in-depth reviews of economic, social and environmental constraints on the development of least developed and landlocked developing countries.
2. Serve as a mobilizer of ideas and a catalyst for action to identify and promote new policy options at the national, subregional and regional levels for the removal of constraints on the economic and social development efforts of these countries, with emphasis on adoption of measures for increased mobilization of domestic and foreign resources, trade and private sector development, public sector reform, and provision of economic advice, on request, to governments with limited internal capacity.
3. Assist in enhancing national capacities in least developed and landlocked developing countries, including in relation to the formulation of development strategies at the national and sectoral levels.
4. Foster and strengthen intercountry cooperation arrangements for exchanges of experience and technical cooperation between and among the least developed and landlocked countries and with other developing and developed countries in the region.
5. Without duplicating work done elsewhere, review and analyse the special transit trade and transport problems of Asian landlocked developing countries, recommend suitable measures for solving these problems in accordance with international legal instruments, in particular article 125 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, and

encourage the Asian landlocked developing countries and their transit neighbours to deal with problems within the context of bilateral cooperation.

6. Promote liaison with development agencies and financial institutions, private sector organizations, non-governmental organizations and donor countries within and outside the region, in its initiatives and activities for the benefit of the least developed and landlocked developing countries.
7. Review the implementation and effectiveness of the programme of work of the secretariat and make recommendations to the Commission about future programmes of work, and in this process, ensure that cross-sectoral issues such as the environment, human resources development and women in development are adequately addressed.
8. Accelerate follow-up to the decisions and recommendations of global conferences on least developed countries at the national, subregional and regional levels, in particular the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s and any successor programme.
9. Promote liaison with relevant agencies of the United Nations system, with a view to minimizing overlapping and duplication, and strengthening cooperation with other organizations and other bodies at the subregional, regional and global levels to maximize the effectiveness and impact of the Commission's activities.
10. Work closely with other subsidiary organs of the Commission and coordinate its activities with them.
11. Carry out such other functions as the Commission may direct from time to time in matters relating to least developed and landlocked developing countries.

Within the context of its terms of reference, the Special Body should identify the tasks to be undertaken during a specified period. The Special Body should indicate the outcomes expected from each task, set a time-frame for the achievement of each task and monitor its implementation and effectiveness.

The Special Body will meet biennially for two days, back-to-back with the Commission sessions, in alternate years with the Special Body on Pacific Island Developing Countries.

*Annex IX*

TERMS OF REFERENCE OF  
THE SPECIAL BODY ON PACIFIC ISLAND DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

A. The special problems and constraints on the economic and social development of the Pacific island developing countries related to their isolation, small size and vulnerability to environmental hazards have been recognized by the international community, and also within the context of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States and other international declarations. These constraints require focused priority attention in order to mainstream them into the ongoing regional integration process and to associate them with the economic and social dynamism of the region. The Special Body on Pacific Island Developing Countries provides a focused forum for addressing the special issues and problems facing this group of countries in the spirit of regional cooperation.

B. Under the overall supervision of the Commission, the Special Body will:

1. Review and analyse the economic and social progress in the Pacific island developing countries and undertake in-depth reviews of economic, social and environmental constraints on their development.
2. Serve as a mobilizer of ideas and a catalyst for action to identify and promote new policy options at the national, subregional and regional levels for the removal of constraints on the economic and social development efforts of these countries.
3. Assist in enhancing national capacities of Pacific island developing countries, including in relation to the formulation of development strategies at the national and sectoral levels.
4. Foster and strengthen intercountry and inter-subregional cooperation arrangements for exchanges of experience and technical cooperation between and among the Pacific island developing countries and with other developing and developed countries in the region.
5. Promote liaison, particularly through the ESCAP Pacific Operations Centre, with development agencies and financial institutions, private sector organizations, non-governmental organizations and donor countries within and outside the region, in its initiatives and activities for the benefit of the Pacific island developing countries.
6. Review the implementation and effectiveness of the programme of work of the secretariat and make recommendations to the Commission about future programmes of work, and in this process, ensure that cross-sectoral issues such as the environment, human resources development and women in development are adequately addressed.

7. Accelerate follow-up to the decisions and recommendations of global conferences on small island developing countries at the national, subregional and regional levels, in particular the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States.
8. Promote liaison with relevant agencies of the United Nations system, with a view to minimizing overlapping and duplication, and strengthening cooperation with other organizations and bodies at the subregional, regional and global levels to maximize the effectiveness and impact of the Commission's activities.
9. Work closely with other subsidiary organs of the Commission and coordinate its activities with them.
10. Carry out such other functions as the Commission may direct from time to time in matters relating to Pacific island developing countries.

Within the context of its terms of reference, the Special Body should identify the tasks to be undertaken during a specified period. The Special Body should indicate the outcomes expected from each task, set a time-frame for the achievement of each task and monitor its implementation and effectiveness.

The Special Body will meet for two days biennially, back-to-back with the annual sessions of the Commission, in alternate years with the Special Body on Least Developed and Landlocked Developing Countries.