



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
20 February 2012

Original: English

Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

Sixty-eighth session

Bangkok, 17-23 May 2012

Item 3 of the provisional agenda

**Review of issues pertinent to the subsidiary structure of
the Commission, including the work of the ESCAP
regional institutions**

Summary of progress in the implementation of Commission resolutions

Note by the secretariat

Summary

The present document summarizes the progress made in the implementation of Commission resolutions on which the secretariat is required to report to the Commission at its sixty-eighth session.

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

Contents

	<i>Page</i>
I. Macroeconomic policy, poverty reduction and inclusive development.....	3
A. Resolution 66/1: Incheon Declaration	3
B. Resolution 66/13: Strengthening regional cooperation in North and Central Asia	5
II. Transport	10
A. Resolution 63/9: Implementation of the Busan Declaration on Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific and the Regional Action Programme for Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific, phase I (2007-2011).....	10
B. Resolution 66/6: Improving road safety in Asia and the Pacific	13
III. Environment and development	15
Resolution 63/6: Implementation of intercountry energy cooperation to enhance energy security for sustainable development with a view to widening access to energy services in least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States	15
IV. Information and communications technology	17
Resolution 66/14: Continuation of the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development	17
V. Social development	19
A. Resolution 58/4: Promoting an inclusive, barrier-free and rights-based society for people with disabilities in the Asian and Pacific region in the twenty-first century.....	19
B. Resolution 63/7: International migration for least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States	21
C. Resolution 64/9: Midpoint review of the implementation of the Plan of Action on Population and Poverty adopted at the Fifth Asian and Pacific Population Conference	23
D. Resolution 66/10: Regional call for action to achieve universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support in Asia and the Pacific	25
VI. Subregional activities for development.....	27
A. Resolution 66/2: Five-year review of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States.....	27
B. Resolution 66/7: Pacific Urban Agenda	29
VII. Management issues	31
A. Resolution 67/14: Cooperation between the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and other United Nations and regional and subregional organizations serving Asia and the Pacific	31
B. Resolution 67/15: Midterm review of the functioning of the conference structure of the Commission.....	31

I. Macroeconomic policy, poverty reduction and inclusive development

A. Resolution 66/1 Incheon Declaration

1. Requirements of the operative paragraphs

1. In paragraph 21 of its resolution 66/1, the Commission requested the Executive Secretary:

(a) To continue to assist countries in the region, in particular the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and Pacific island developing countries, in their efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, in accordance with their national development priorities;

(b) To facilitate the reinforcement of regional partnerships on the Millennium Development Goals;

(c) To contribute inputs to the Special Ministerial Meeting for the Review of the Millennium Development Goals in Asia and the Pacific: Run Up to 2015;

(d) To report the results of the Special Ministerial Meeting to the High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly at its sixty-fifth session on accelerating progress towards the achievement of all the Millennium Development Goals by 2015;

(e) To coordinate with multilateral funding agencies with a view to enhancing financial and technology flows for the development and deployment of clean technologies in developing countries;

(f) To facilitate the exchange of information among members and associate members regarding national strategies and best practices in support of green growth and, if requested, to further assist in developing national strategies in this regard, and to report the results to the Commission at its sixty-eighth session.

2. Progress made

2. In response to paragraph 21 (a), ESCAP continued to contribute to the regional implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, in particular for the region's countries with special needs. Special attention was given to gender equality issues and to integrating the Goals into national development strategies, through, among other things, a series of workshops in Cambodia and the Republic of Korea on accelerating progress in the least developed countries.

3. To assist member States with weak statistical systems, including countries with special needs, the activities related to Millennium Development Goal policymaking include the improvement of civil registration and vital statistics as well as gender; disability, informal sector, economic, agriculture and rural, and social statistics. Support for the national statistical offices include designing appropriate census tabulation plans, applying small area estimation techniques and creating master samples, and strengthening the national statistical capacity for inclusive development and achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. The *Statistical Yearbook*

for *Asia and the Pacific 2011* was aimed at assisting with informed decision making and at providing evidence to develop and monitor national policies that address challenges, including those related to the Goals. Furthermore, the regional advisory services provided various kinds of technical assistance and training on institutional capacity-building and statistical management in various areas including Millennium Development Goal indicators.

4. The Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific (SIAP) continued its systematic training to strengthen the statistical capability of more than 400 course participants from countries with special needs in 2010-2011 to produce and disseminate official statistics, including the Millennium Development Goal statistics.

5. With the aim of enhancing awareness and understanding on World Trade Organization (WTO) issues, in particular for those from least developed countries and landlocked developing countries, a series of training activities and technical assistance were initiated in 2011, including WTO/ESCAP regional seminars/workshops in Bangkok on areas such as WTO and regional trade agreements, and research on intellectual property.

6. ARTNeT, a regional research and training network on trade, focused on three pillars, including the building of research capacity, particularly that of least developed countries and landlocked developing countries. Activities in 2011 included research grants to researchers from least developed countries and landlocked developing countries, and international seminars, symposiums, training and capacity-building workshops on policymaking in trade and investment and trade research, in collaboration with think tanks and international organizations such as WTO and the Asian Development Bank Institute.

7. In response to paragraph 21 (b), ESCAP continued to undertake activities under a regional Millennium Development Goal partnership with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The *Asia-Pacific Regional MDG Report 2011/2012*, jointly prepared under this partnership, helped to take stock of the region's progress and address areas where it is lagging.

8. In response to the demand, ESCAP has expanded the Asia-Pacific Trade and Investment Agreements Database (APTIAD), an online database of trade and investment agreements of the ESCAP region, which covers 176 agreements and, as at December 2011, contains over 19 trade indicators. It continued to serve as the secretariat of the Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement (APTA) and provided technical assistance to least developed countries in negotiating special concessions with their partner countries under APTA. ESCAP also provided technical assistance in facilitating the accession of Mongolia to APTA and supported other prospective members for their accession to APTA.

9. In response to paragraph 21 (c), ESCAP supported the Government of Indonesia in organizing the Special Ministerial Meeting for the Review of the Millennium Development Goals. It also organized a side event at the meeting to present the key messages of the *Asia-Pacific Regional MDG Report 2010/2011* to the ministers in order to seek the views of member States.

10. In response to paragraph 21 (d), the outcome document of the Special Ministerial Meeting in Indonesia was reported to the High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly at its sixty-fifth session.

11. In response to paragraph 21 (e), ESCAP is implementing two projects to improve access to energy services for the rural poor in Asia and the Pacific. The projects are funded by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the United Nations Development Account. In September 2011, the IFAD project conducted an inception workshop with participants from various international organizations and target countries. The initial consultative missions to the target countries have been undertaken, and a common webpage has been developed to disseminate information. The publication *Green Growth, Resources and Resilience*, jointly prepared by ESCAP, ADB and the United Nations Environment Programme, was launched in February 2011.

12. In response to paragraph 21 (f), activities in 2011 to develop national strategies for the application of a low-carbon green growth development path included: (a) the development of a framework of policy options, whereas the draft road map was presented at a policy forum in the Republic of Korea; (b) the development of guidelines for eco-efficient and socially inclusive infrastructure, jointly with the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), which were launched at the 3rd Asia-Pacific Mayors' Forum.

13. For exchanging information and experiences on strategy and institutional mechanisms to support green growth, ESCAP continued to facilitate policy consultations, including the Policy Consultation Forum in July 2011 in the Republic of Korea. The Seoul Initiative Leadership Programme on Green Growth in September 2011, designed to improve the working-level capacity of member countries to achieve green growth, complemented the Forum.

14. Pilot activities in select countries and training-of-trainers seminars for capacity development in green growth strategies, which to date benefited over 400 policymakers and practitioners, have contributed to green growth policy initiatives and strategies in a number of countries in the region. In response to increasing demand and for wider outreach, an online e-learning facility for green growth capacity development was established.

15. ESCAP also continued to serve as the interim secretariat of the Intergovernmental Collaborative Mechanism for Energy Cooperation in North-East Asia, under which regular subregional cooperation activities have been held. ESCAP has also been engaged in other energy cooperation activities in the North-East Asian subregion, such as an expert group meeting on subregional cooperation.

B. Resolution 66/13

Strengthening regional cooperation in North and Central Asia

1. Requirements of the operative paragraphs

16. In paragraphs 3 and 4 of its resolution 66/13, the Commission requested the Executive Secretary:

(a) To implement the Almaty Programme of Action: Addressing the Special Needs of Landlocked Developing Countries within a New Global Framework for Transit Transport Cooperation for Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries;

(b) To assist landlocked countries and transit countries in promoting reciprocal arrangements for transit transport;

(c) To strengthen and support the implementation of the Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia;

(d) To help mobilize the necessary resources with which to provide technical assistance, upon the request of member States, particularly in such key sectors as transport and trade facilitation, management of water and energy resources, protection of the environment and climate change adaptation;

(e) To take necessary measures to increase the relevance and effectiveness of the role and activities of the Commission in Central Asia;

(f) To strengthen the role and capacity of the Subregional Office for North and Central Asia as an important mechanism for subregional cooperation and the coordination of international projects;

(g) To ensure that the priority areas identified by the Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Meeting on the New ESCAP Subregional Offices for East and North-East Asia, North and Central Asia, and South and South-West Asia are fully supported through the proposed programme budget of the secretariat for the biennium 2012-2013 and that adequate resources are provided for that purpose;

(h) To report to the Commission at its sixty-eighth session on the implementation of the resolution.

2. Progress made

17. In response to paragraph 3 (a), ESCAP held an expert group meeting in Bangkok on 25 January 2011 to review the progress made by Asia-Pacific landlocked developing countries in implementing the Almaty Programme of Action and to identify key issues and challenges in preparing papers for the High-level Asia-Pacific Policy Dialogue on the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action and other Development Gaps Faced by the Landlocked Developing Countries in April 2011. Experts from Bhutan, Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mongolia and Nepal attended the meeting.

18. Organized by ESCAP and the Government of Mongolia, the above High-level Policy Dialogue was convened in Ulaanbaatar in April 2011, and attended by representatives of Afghanistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bhutan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mongolia, Nepal and Tajikistan. The meeting discussed four themes: (a) promoting Millennium Development Goals, including reducing poverty and hunger in the landlocked developing countries; (b) promoting connectivity and creating fundamental transit transport infrastructure in the landlocked developing countries; (c) enhancing the share of the landlocked developing countries in global trade flows through trade facilitation; and (d) enhancing development cooperation to support inclusive and sustainable development of the landlocked developing countries. The major outcome of the meeting was the Ulaanbaatar Declaration, which was submitted to the Commission at its sixty-seventh session (see Commission resolution 67/1).

19. ESCAP organized a series of activities to build capacity and promote regional cooperation for trade facilitation and paperless trade in 2010/11, mainly under the framework of the United Nations Network of Experts for Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific (UNNExT). In 2011, this included an Asia-Pacific Trade Facilitation Forum in Seoul and three regional UNNExT capacity-building workshops on business process analysis for trade facilitation, data harmonization and addressing legal issues for single window and paperless trade. A “Subregional trade and transit cooperation in Mongolian trade corridors” project was implemented to identify bottlenecks along the major trade and transit corridors of Mongolia and to develop action plans to overcome them. A high-level stakeholder workshop was held on 7 October 2011, bringing together government officials responsible for trade and transit issues in China, Mongolia and the Russian Federation and experts from the subregion. Participants recommended the establishment of a subregional public-private dialogue on Mongolian trade corridors and strengthening the capacity of the General Agency for Specialized Inspection of Mongolia. Mongolia is also making progress towards the implementation of its National Single Window following a series of technical assistance and capacity-building activities supported by ESCAP during the past two years, including the preparation of the Mongolia Single Window Master Plan, which was endorsed by the Government in 2011.

20. In response to paragraph 3 (b), the secretariat continued to support landlocked and transit countries to facilitate transport. In North and Central Asia, ESCAP has been extending technical and financial assistance towards the formulation of an agreement between the Governments of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) member States on facilitation of international road transport. In 2010, the secretariat presented the findings of an in-depth study on road transport facilitation issues in SCO member States and subsequently prepared draft annexes for the agreement. This was followed by three negotiation meetings and one consultation meeting over the period 2010-2011. As a result, the experts of the SCO member States reached a consensus on most of the issues contained in the draft annexes. It is expected that SCO member States will continue their efforts in reaching a conclusion on this agreement.

21. In response to paragraph 3 (c), the 2010 Economic Forum of the Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA) was held in Geneva in October 2010 with the theme of “Strengthening regional cooperation in Central Asia: a contribution to long-term stability and sustainable development of Afghanistan”. The Forum brought together high-level government policymakers and other stakeholders and contributed to increased awareness on various aspects of regional economic cooperation in Central Asia as well as ways and means to bring about the closer involvement of Afghanistan in such cooperation.

22. The fifth session of the SPECA Governing Council was held in Geneva on 19 October 2010, during which the Governing Council endorsed progress reports from the six SPECA project working groups and adopted its decisions. The sixth session of the SPECA Working Group on Trade was held in Turkmenistan on 10 November 2011, together with the first session of the SPECA Aid-for-Trade Implementation and Monitoring Council and in parallel with the SPECA Economic Forum. This project working group adopted a technical assistance concept note on private sector development in SPECA countries and reviewed other ongoing and planned projects in trade and investment for the subregion.

23. ESCAP and the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) have been organizing annual sessions of the Project Working Group on Knowledge-based Development to address the issues of information, communication and space technology for development and disaster risk management towards building a resilient and knowledgeable society in Central and North-East Asia. The third and fourth sessions were held on 30 September 2010 in Kazakhstan and on 25 November 2011 in Azerbaijan, respectively. Both sessions reviewed the implementation of the work programme by ESCAP and ECE for the preceding years and endorsed the work programme for subsequent years.

24. A number of projects were initiated in 2010 and 2011 to support the recommendations of the SPECA Coordinating Committee. The project “Strengthening institutional capacity to support energy efficiency in selected Asian countries” includes the SPECA subregion in its analysis.

25. Cooperation among SPECA countries on energy efficiency was discussed during the SPECA regional meeting held as part of the International Energy Efficiency Forum in Kazakhstan in September 2010. In 2011, ESCAP initiated a technical cooperation project on energy efficiency policies and legislation knowledge-base for the Central Asian and neighbouring countries. The knowledge-base will provide online access to the full set of legal documents, strategies, action plans, technical regulations and standards related to the development of the energy sector, promotion of energy efficiency and renewable energy technologies in Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, the Russian Federation and Tajikistan.

26. In response to paragraph 3 (d), the secretariat, with the support of UNNExT, assisted Mongolia to prepare the National Single Window Master Plan. Subsequently, ESCAP organized a development partner consultation meeting in collaboration with the Government of Mongolia; which funding support from donors for the Single Window initiative was secured during the meeting, which was held in April 2011.

27. With the participation of Central Asian and neighbouring member States, ESCAP implemented a technical cooperation project on “Strengthening capacity to forecast extreme weather events in Asia.” Through subregional workshops held in Central Asian countries and the compilation of a compendium on flood and water-related risks and extreme weather events, with particular reference to Central Asia, the project promotes the sharing of information, experience and good practices in flood risk reduction, taking into consideration extreme weather events. A virtual subregional disaster knowledge network for sharing information and knowledge and the Central Asia Disaster Risk Reduction Knowledge Network were launched.

28. Technical assistance was rendered to conduct an analytical study in Uzbekistan to examine the municipal governance system and infrastructure related to electricity, heating, sanitation, sewage, water supply and waste management services. Due to a high level of interest in the topic and its relevance to the Central Asian subregion, preparations are under way to expand the study to include all Central Asian countries and engage in a policy dialogue to exchange ideas and seek partnerships.

29. ESCAP, in close collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and ADB, and under the guidance of the Steering Group for Agricultural Statistics, is developing a regional

implementation plan for the Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics. An assessment of agricultural and rural statistics systems is being conducted in all Asia-Pacific countries, including North and Central Asian countries.

30. In March 2011, ESCAP conducted a workshop on assessing civil registration and vital statistics systems in the Asia-Pacific region, which was attended by representatives of the health ministry and statistics office of Kazakhstan. The meeting provided an opportunity for government officials to become familiar with tools to undertake a detailed assessment of their civil registration systems, and increase awareness and recognition of the need to strengthen these systems to secure basic human rights, such as access to health and educational services.

31. ESCAP has been working to improve disability statistics in Central Asia under the United Nations Development Account project “Improvement of disability measurement and statistics in support of the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action and the Regional Census Programme”. A workshop on analysis of the cognitive and pilot test results in July 2010 was attended by senior statisticians from Kazakhstan. The meeting focused on training participants from six countries in cognitive survey methods and in presenting the final results from a disability study on pilot and cognitive tests.

32. In 2010 and 2011, 53 participants from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan improved their knowledge and skills in producing and disseminating official statistics, including the Millennium Development Goals, through training conducted by the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific (SIAP).

33. In response to paragraph 3 (e), the Special Body on Least Developed and Landlocked Developing Countries, at the sixty-seventh session of the Commission, explored options for strengthening regional cooperation in promoting greater connectivity, as part of the Ulaanbaatar Declaration, and adopted a set of recommendations for action at the national, subregional and regional levels. The Commission expressed appreciation for the convening of the High-level Asia-Pacific Policy Dialogue on the Implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action, and the Ulaanbaatar Declaration as an outcome of the High-level Policy Dialogue.

34. The Committee on Macroeconomic Policy, Poverty Reduction and Inclusive Development, at its second session, in December 2011, discussed issues related to countries with special needs. It reiterated its commitment to support the least developed and landlocked developing countries in their development efforts and requested that the secretariat strengthen its technical assistance for these countries as well as small island developing States in accelerating their development.

35. The ESCAP secretariat has been actively supporting North and Central Asian member States in strengthening their capacity to produce basic statistics and to ensure that their needs are incorporated into the regional statistics development work programme. The statistics capacity development work is directed by the Committee on Statistics. ESCAP facilitated the formation of the Partners for Statistics Development in Asia-Pacific, which is a regional network of international, regional and subregional organizations and bilateral donors. The partnership is a key tool for expanding the geographical reach and substantive depth of the Commission’s activities.

36. In response to paragraph 3 (f), the ESCAP Subregional Office for North and Central Asia has, since its inception, undertaken several activities to promote subregional cooperation. These include coordinating the SPECA Economic Forum in November 2011; taking part in the final meeting of the preparatory process “Green Bridge” Europe-Asia-Pacific partnership programme; and facilitating capacity-building activities for the use of ICT to better manage disaster risk and adapt to the challenges of climate change.

37. In response to paragraph 3 (g), ESCAP allocated resources in the programme budget 2012-2013 to support the subregional offices in undertaking activities as stipulated in Subprogramme 8, Subregional activities for development, of the programme of work for the biennium 2012-2013.

II. Transport

A. Resolution 63/9

Implementation of the Busan Declaration on Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific and the Regional Action Programme for Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific, phase I (2007-2011)

1. Requirements of the operative paragraphs

38. In paragraph 9 of its resolution 63/9, the Commission requested the Executive Secretary:

(a) To assist regional members and associate members in realizing the long-term vision of an international integrated intermodal transport and logistics system, which is needed in order to meet the growing challenges of globalization;

(b) To accord priority to the implementation of phase I (2007-2011) of the Regional Action Programme, including the mobilization and deployment of resources;

(c) To undertake a detailed study on the establishment of a forum of Asian ministers of transport, including its organization and format, and submit the findings to the Committee on Managing Globalization at its fourth session and the Commission at its sixty-fourth session for their consideration;

(d) To undertake a study which, based upon the Asian Highway and Trans-Asian Railway networks as well as major Euro-Asian and other interregional transport links, defines priority transport corridors, and good practices that could be implemented on the corridors and proposes specific measures, for example memorandums of understanding, that lead to the effective development of those corridors;

(e) To ensure effective coordination with other United Nations and multilateral agencies as well as subregional organizations, including the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the Economic Cooperation Organization, the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization;

(f) To collaborate effectively with international and regional financing institutions, multilateral and bilateral donors and international

organizations and, if necessary, determine other possible innovative sources of financing for the implementation of the Regional Action Programme;

(g) To assess and evaluate the implementation of the Regional Action Programme and submit reports with recommendations to the Commission at its sixty-fifth and sixty-eighth sessions;

(h) To carry out in 2011 an evaluation of the implementation of phase I of the Regional Action Programme as an important and necessary step in the preparation of phase II (2012-2016).

2. Progress made

39. In response to paragraphs 9 (a) and 9 (b), the Busan Declaration and its Regional Action Programme for Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific, phase I (2007-2011), recognized that countries required efficient transport infrastructure and services in order to realize new opportunities for economic and trade development brought about by globalization. The Regional Action Programme served as a joint planning document for member States and the secretariat, and was therefore the basis for the secretariat's programme of work for the period 2007-2011.

40. Within the framework of the Regional Action Programme, the most tangible progress was made in upgrading and expanding the Asian Highway and Trans-Asian Railway networks. Between 2007 and 2011, eight countries ratified the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Asian Highway Network, bringing the total number of parties to 28 with only one signatory yet to become a party.¹ Meanwhile, the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Trans-Asian Railway Network came into force in 2009 and currently has 22 signatories, 16 of which are parties.² In order to realize the full potential of these networks, the secretariat is developing a draft intergovernmental agreement on dry ports which will be reviewed by an intergovernmental body in 2012.

41. With regard to transport facilitation, the secretariat continues to promote accession to the international transport conventions contained in resolution 48/11, and to support the formulation and implementation of subregional agreements on transport facilitation.³ In cooperation with the secretariat of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and ADB, the secretariat provided technical and financial assistance to support the formulation of an agreement between the Governments of SCO Member States on facilitation of international road transport, which was adopted in 2008, and is continuing to support the development of technical annexes to the agreement. It also developed a draft regional strategic framework for the facilitation of international road transport, which was presented to the Ministerial Conference on Transport at its second session, in 2012, for endorsement.

¹ Bangladesh (2009), Indonesia (2010), Islamic Republic of Iran (2009), Kazakhstan (2007), Lao People's Democratic Republic (2008), Nepal (2010), Philippines (2007) and Turkey (2010).

² Bangladesh (2010), Cambodia (2007), China (2009), Georgia (2009), India (2009), Islamic Republic of Iran (2009), Pakistan (2009), Lao People's Democratic Republic (2011), Mongolia (2008), Pakistan (2009), Republic of Korea (2008), Russian Federation (2008), Sri Lanka (2010), Tajikistan (2008), Thailand (2008), Uzbekistan (2009) and Viet Nam (2009).

³ See Commission resolution 48/11 of 23 April 1992 on road and rail transport modes in relation to facilitation measures.

42. In the areas of transport logistics, finance and private sector participation, sustainable transport, road safety, and transport and the Millennium Development Goals, the secretariat focused on capacity-building activities. In addition, it provided technical support for the organization of the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) for Infrastructure Development, held in Seoul in 2007 and in Jakarta in 2010.⁴

43. In response to paragraph 9 (c), the Ministerial Conference on Transport held in Busan, Republic of Korea, in 2006 expressed strong support for the establishment of a forum of Asian ministers of transport in order to respond in a timely manner to the changing transport demands of the region. The findings of a study on the establishment of a forum was presented to the Committee on Managing Globalization at its fourth session as well as the Commission at its sixty-fourth session, which adopted resolution 64/5 of 30 April 2008 on the establishment of the Forum of Asian Ministers of Transport. The Commission, in its resolution 66/4 of 19 May 2010, welcomed the first session of the Forum, which had been held in Bangkok in December 2009, and adopted the Bangkok Declaration on Transport Development in Asia.

44. In response to paragraph 9 (d), the secretariat implemented a project between 2008 and 2010 on the operationalization of international intermodal transport corridors in North-East and Central Asia. A study was undertaken to identify key issues and challenges for the subregions. Following the initial study, three of the six corridors were selected by countries for further in-depth study. The results were reviewed by government experts and culminated in a Joint Statement of Experts to enhance corridor-based cooperation among member countries.

45. In response to paragraph 9 (e), the secretariat worked closely with several subregional organizations, including the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the Economic Cooperation Organization, the Secretariat of the Pacific Community, the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. It also worked with the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe on Euro-Asian transport linkages and the Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA), and with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development on transport facilitation issues.

46. In response to paragraph 9 (f), the secretariat received support from a wide range of funding sources. In 2010, ADB launched a project on "Promoting regional infrastructure development" that included the identification of potential projects along the Asian Highway and the Trans-Asian Railway for funding. The secretariat also received support from several non-traditional sources, including the Korean Expressway Corporation, the Korea Maritime Institute and the International Union of Railways.

47. In response to paragraph 9 (g), reports on the implementation of the Regional Action Programme were presented to the Commission at its sixty-fifth session and to the Ministerial Conference on Transport at its second session, held in Bangkok in March 2012. Activities implemented under the

⁴ See Commission resolutions 64/4 of 30 April 2008 on the implementation of the Seoul Declaration on Public-Private Partnerships for Infrastructure Development in Asia and the Pacific and 66/5 of 19 May 2010 on the implementation of the Jakarta Declaration on Public-Private Partnerships for Infrastructure Development in Asia and the Pacific.

framework of the Regional Action Programme were also reported to the Committee on Transport at its first and second sessions, held in 2008 and 2010, respectively.

48. In response to paragraph 9 (h), in 2011 an independent consultant was recruited to conduct an evaluation of phase I of the Regional Action Programme.⁵ The evaluation focused on the assessment of the Regional Action Programme as a whole, based on the criteria of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability, United Nations coherence, and partnerships. The results of the evaluation were used in the development of phase II of the Regional Action Programme. In particular, the evaluation supported the inclusion of two new themes under phase II: (a) inter-island shipping, to address the transport challenges of island and archipelagic countries; and (b) connecting subregional transport networks, to improve coordination in developing transport linkages between subregions.

B. Resolution 66/6 Improving road safety in Asia and the Pacific

1. Requirements of the operative paragraphs

49. In paragraph 5 of its resolution 66/6, the Commission requested the Executive Secretary, in cooperation with the World Health Organization and other United Nations regional commissions, partners in the United Nations Road Safety Collaboration and other stakeholders:

- (a) To prepare an implementation plan for the Asia-Pacific region to be presented as a regional input to the Decade of Action for Road Safety;
- (b) To participate actively in the second United Nations Global Road Safety Week to launch the Decade and to encourage the participation of members and associate members;
- (c) To develop, in consultation with the members and associate members of the Commission, a set of regional goals, targets and indicators, to be achieved by 2020 in order to assess and evaluate road safety progress;
- (d) To coordinate regular monitoring, within the framework of the United Nations Road Safety Collaboration, of global progress towards meeting the targets identified in the proposed plan of action and to make a regional input to the global status reports on road safety and to develop other appropriate monitoring tools;
- (e) To organize regional and subregional meetings to facilitate regional implementation of the Decade and assess the results achieved, subject to the availability of financial resources;
- (f) To assess and evaluate the implementation of the resolution and submit, as appropriate, a progress report to the Commission at its sixty-eighth session.

⁵ Questionnaires were sent to member States and organizations. A total of 34 questionnaires were returned: 22 from various ministries in 11 countries, 4 from freight forwarders, and 8 from partner organizations.

2. Progress made

50. In response to paragraph 5 (a), the secretariat held, in Bangkok from 2 to 4 September 2009, the Expert Group Meeting on Improving Road Safety in Asia to prepare regional inputs to the First Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety: Time for Action, held in Moscow on 19 and 20 November 2009 and moderated the panel session on safe road infrastructure at the Conference.

51. In response to paragraph 5 (b), the secretariat promoted the second United Nations Global Road Safety Week to launch the Decade of Action for Road Safety on 11 May 2011 by organizing a poster-signing event during the sixty-seventh session of the Commission, which contributed towards enhancing awareness among the delegates attending the session. A large number of the delegates signed the poster and sent postcards with road safety messages to their friends, family and colleagues.

52. In response to paragraph 5 (c), the secretariat held the Regional Expert Group Meeting on Implementation of the Decade of Action for Road Safety in Bangkok from 21 to 23 September 2010. The meeting took note of the ESCAP regional road safety goals, targets and indicators, developed by the secretariat in line with the Decade of Action for Road Safety. In addition, national workshops and advisory services were provided to Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mongolia, the Philippines, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan to develop national road safety strategies and action plans with measurable road safety goals and targets.

53. In response to paragraph 5 (d), member States provide the secretariat with data and information relating to the ESCAP regional road safety goals, targets and indicators, usually every two years in conjunction with the organization of an expert group meeting on road safety. At the most recent Expert Group Meeting on Progress in Road Safety Improvement in Asia and the Pacific, held in Bangkok from 27 to 29 September 2011, it was suggested that additional indicators that are not currently part of the 36 ESCAP regional road safety indicators could be collected/monitored, if available. These include the road fatality rate per 100,000 population; road safety budget in proportion to the total road construction budget, and whether there are laws addressing drunk driving, speed limits, mobile phone usage and the wearing of seat belts and motorcycle helmets.

54. In response to paragraph 5 (e), the secretariat held in Bangkok from 27 to 29 September 2011 an Expert Group Meeting on Progress in Road Safety Improvement in Asia and the Pacific. The meeting noted a number of recent national road safety initiatives and activities that have taken place in the region, noting in particular the announcement of various national road safety plans to significantly reduce the number of road fatalities and injuries over the Decade of Action for Road Safety. The meeting also noted various future activities that are planned or being planned by Governments in the region. The secretariat also launched the Asia-Pacific Road Safety Network, a web-based regional network of stakeholders designed to facilitate the timely and continuous exchange of road safety best practices and other useful information.

55. Additional activities in support of the Decade of Action for Road Safety are planned during phase II of the Regional Action Programme for Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific (2012-2016), which will be implemented in collaboration with member States and the United Nations

Economic Commission for Europe, the Global Road Safety Partnership (GRSP), the World Health Organization and other partner organizations.

III. Environment and development

Resolution 63/6

Implementation of intercountry energy cooperation to enhance energy security for sustainable development with a view to widening access to energy services in least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States

1. Requirements of the operative paragraphs

56. In paragraph 5 of its resolution 63/6, the Commission requested the Executive Secretary:

(a) To facilitate the establishment of a cooperation framework on energy security and widening access to energy services for least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, and small island developing States by:

- (i) Exploring the possibility of raising extrabudgetary resources;
- (ii) Holding policy dialogues among least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States;
- (iii) Undertaking policy studies on energy security as well as on widening access to energy services, and the role of renewable energy;
- (iv) Synergizing or linking, wherever possible, with other broader energy cooperation frameworks, such as the proposed trans-Asian energy system;

(b) To explore the establishment of a special programme on energy-related infrastructure and to identify the best usage of energy available in least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States in support of the above-mentioned cooperation framework that would be aimed at the following;

- (i) Strengthening national capacity for energy planning and management to enhance the sustainability of the energy sector;
- (ii) Promoting intercountry cooperation to exchange information, experiences and models, and good practices on renewable energy technology and its applications with a view to reducing poverty;
- (iii) Exploring the prospects for renewable solar and wind energy available on soft terms from international donors and nongovernmental organizations for least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States;
- (iv) Mainstreaming the concerns of least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States into subregional and regional initiatives on energy trade and cooperation for the benefit of rural populations;

(c) To report to the Commission on the progress of implementation of the resolution at its sixty-fifth session, with the final report to be presented at its sixty-eighth session.

2. Progress made

57. Since the sixty-fifth session of the Commission, the secretariat has engaged in a few projects developed and supported through regular and extrabudgetary resources. From 2008 to 2011, the Korea Energy Management Corporation (KEMCO) supported a capacity-building project on energy efficiency, which enabled subregional dialogue in North and Central Asia, South Asia and South-East Asia in exchanging knowledge and experiences in enhancing the effectiveness of strategies in developing energy efficiency policies and their implementation.

58. A subregional dialogue was supported by the Russian Federation from 2010 for North-East Asia and activities will continue under the project funded by the Russian Federation to hold dialogues in North-East and North and Central Asia. These dialogues focused on the specific needs of the least developed countries and landlocked developing countries, which often lacked the capacity to develop baselines for formulating effective energy policies and monitoring the implementation of those policies.

59. Based on the implementation of an ESCAP project on the pro-poor public-private partnership (5P) initiative, the secretariat submitted a project proposal to further promote the 5P approach in the region in order to mobilize financial resources from both the public and private sectors in developing and implementing projects on widening access to energy services under the seventh tranche of the Development Account. The project was implemented in 2011 and will continue until 2013. In addition, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) is supporting a project to promote the 5P approach in widening access to energy services by implementing demonstration projects in Bangladesh, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Nepal.

60. In addition to the above-mentioned activities and on the basis of Commission resolution 67/2 of 25 May 2011 on promoting regional cooperation for enhanced energy security and the sustainable use of energy in Asia and the Pacific, the secretariat will continue to address the needs of least developed and landlocked developing countries with respect to widening access to energy services, promoting energy efficiency and the wider application of renewable energy. The planned Asian and Pacific Energy Forum at the ministerial level in 2013 will provide further opportunities for member States to voice their concerns and renew their commitments towards enhanced energy security and the sustainable use of energy.

61. The secretariat was not able to develop specific programmes for small island developing States but will strive to develop programmes that would enable them to hold dialogues and exchange experiences with other subregions of ESCAP. It is planned to consider the special energy programme for small island developing States under the auspices of the Asian and Pacific Energy Forum in 2013.

IV. Information and communications technology

Resolution 66/14

Continuation of the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development

1. Requirements of the operative paragraphs

62. In paragraphs 2, 3, and 4 of its resolution 66/14, the Commission:

(a) Decided that the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development (APCICT) should continue to operate beyond 2011 as a subsidiary body of the Commission, based on the Statute of the Centre, to strengthen the human and institutional capacities of members and associate members in the use of information and communications technology to support inclusive and sustainable economic and social development;

(b) Called upon all members and associate members, and encouraged relevant bodies within the United Nations and other international organizations, as well as non-governmental organizations, as appropriate:

(i) To support the efforts of the Centre aimed at strengthening subregional and regional cooperation in information and communications technology capacity-building through the sharing of information, experiences, knowledge and resources;

(ii) To actively seek opportunities for collaboration with the Centre in the effort to strengthen human and institutional capacities in the use of information and communications technology (ICT) for sustainable socio-economic development in the Asia-Pacific region, including information and communications technology applications for e-government, e-commerce and community e-centres;

(c) Requested the Executive Secretary to take all steps necessary for the implementation of the resolution and to report on the implementation of the resolution to the Commission at its sixty-eighth session.

2. Progress made

63. In response to paragraphs 2 and 4 of the resolution, the secretariat signed a new administrative and financial arrangement with the Korea Communications Commission and Incheon Metropolitan City, Republic of Korea, in September 2011, thus formalizing continuation of the operations of the Centre beyond 2011 as a subsidiary body of the Commission. The new arrangement covers the period 2011 to 2015 with a provision for automatic extension for successive five-year periods. The new instalment of annual funding for the Centre under the new arrangement was received from the Republic of Korea.

64. APCICT continues to fulfil its mandate of strengthening the human and institutional capacities of ESCAP members and associate members in the use of information and communications technology for socio-economic development in accordance with its statute. A comprehensive capacity development project document has been developed to guide the operations of the Centre within the framework of its mandate.

65. In response to paragraph 3 (a), APCICT leveraged a number of opportunities to strengthen subregional and regional cooperation in ICT for development (ICTD) capacity-building involving the sharing of information, experiences and knowledge. From 24 to 28 October 2011, the Centre held the second Asia-Pacific Regional Forum on ICT Human Capacity Development, a major quinquennial event which benefited from the participation of senior decision makers from 38 countries and 8 regional and international organizations. The Forum provided a unique multilateral platform for member States to review the current status, needs and challenges of ICTD capacity-building, and engage in fruitful networking in order to further mutual cooperation. APCICT also held its annual ICTD partners meetings in 2010 and 2011 to encourage peer learning and the exchange of ICTD best practices. APCICT continued to utilize other online and offline platforms to promote stakeholder interactions and collaboration, such as the e-Collaborative Hub, the Centre's online knowledge sharing platform, which offers a wide range of ICTD resources and case studies, and has had over 50,000 unique visitors. APCICT received support from the Republic of Korea for developing the "Knowledge Sharing Series," a publication aimed at building the capacities of policymakers in member States through exchange of best practices.

66. In response to paragraph 3 (b), APCICT actively collaborated with a range of national training institutions, government ministries, other United Nations entities, international organizations, universities, academic networks and non-governmental organizations to strengthen national capacities to use ICT for socio-economic development and achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. APCICT received strong support from member States in terms of technical inputs to its knowledge resources as well as contributions for enhancement and promotion of its capacity-building programmes. A large number of officials and experts from many member States and international organizations contributed to the development of APCICT's new "Primer Series on ICT for Development for Youth" and a new training module for policymakers entitled "ICT for Disaster Risk Management." Many national experts also provided technical inputs for updating the eight existing modules of APCICT's flagship capacity-building programme, "Academy of ICT Essentials for Government Leaders" (Academy). Concurrently, APCICT's training content was customized and localized by a number of national partners for wider utilization. Since the sixty-sixth session of the Commission, APCICT and its partners have, employing an inclusive and participatory approach, organized 66 workshops and training sessions in support of the Centre's ICTD capacity-building efforts, including the Academy programme. Various thematic areas of ICTD, including e-government, were covered through these events. National partners took strong ownership for supporting these workshops and training sessions which included contributing in kind and human resources that promoted the institutionalization of APCICT's programmes in long-term national capacity-building frameworks.

V. Social development

A. Resolution 58/4

Promoting an inclusive, barrier-free and rights-based society for people with disabilities in the Asian and Pacific region in the twenty-first century

1. Requirements of the operative paragraphs

67. In paragraph 10 of its resolution 58/4, the Commission requested the Executive Secretary to strengthen, subject to available financial resources:

(a) The national capacity of members and associate members in developing and pursuing national programmes of action during the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 2003-2012;

(b) Collaboration with other regional initiatives in the field of disabilities, including sharing of best practices in the implementation efforts of the African Decade of Disabled Persons, 2000-2009.

2. Progress made

68. In response to paragraph 10 (a), the secretariat worked with national governments to harmonize domestic legislation with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and promote its ratification and further implementation. Disability was selected as the theme of the second session of the Committee on Social Development, which was held from 19 to 21 October 2010 in Bangkok and attended by more than 200 participants from ESCAP member States and civil society. The Committee reviewed, among other things, the preparations for the High-level Intergovernmental Meeting on the Final Review of the Implementation of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 2003-2012. It also launched the ESCAP regional campaign to “Make the Right Real”. Further, the Committee recommended to the Commission at its sixty-eighth session the proclamation of a new decade to promote the rights of persons with disabilities.

69. In 2011, ESCAP facilitated the launch of the “Make the Right Real” campaign at the national level in five countries to promote the ratification and further implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The launch took place in Islamabad from 29 to 31 January 2011 and in Port Moresby from 28 to 29 March 2011. In India, the launch took place in conjunction with the Workshop to Accelerate the Implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, held in Delhi from 18 to 21 August 2011. The fourth campaign event was held in Dhaka on 21 and 22 September 2011 as part of the Regional Leadership Conference of Persons with Disabilities in South Asia. The fifth launch took place in Manila on 2 December 2011, in conjunction with the International Day of Persons with Disabilities. Stakeholders attending the events stressed the importance of regional and subregional cooperation in enhancing disability-inclusive development and the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

70. As part of regional preparations for the High-level Intergovernmental Meeting on the Final Review of the Implementation of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 2003-2012, the secretariat convened the second Regional Stakeholder Consultation from 14 to 16 December 2011. The Consultation reviewed the status of the implementation of the road map

leading up to the High-level Intergovernmental Meeting, and considered the framework of the draft outcome document of the High-level Intergovernmental Meeting. The draft outcome document will be submitted to a meeting of government experts for consideration in March 2012.

71. The secretariat further provided national Governments with support for evidence-based policymaking by building capacity among disabled people's organizations in ESCAP member States to conduct research on disability, livelihoods and poverty. In this context, an action research project on disability, livelihoods and poverty was initiated in 2011, the ultimate aim of the research being the reduction of poverty and the enhancement of livelihood prospects of persons with disabilities. An expert group meeting on disability, livelihoods and poverty was held on 17 and 18 October 2011 to develop research methodologies. In addition, a capacity-building workshop was held with disabled people's organizations as partner organizations in the research from 16 to 18 January 2012.

72. To provide Governments with an assessment of current policy development and implementation on disability programmes and strengthen evidence-based policymaking in the region, a survey was conducted concerning the implementation of the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action and Biwako Plus Five over the period of the second Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 2003-2012. The survey results will provide a basis for the draft outcome document for the High-level Intergovernmental Meeting on the Final Review of the Implementation of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 2003-2012.

73. In addition, the secretariat provided national Governments with technical assistance regarding accessible tourism and ICT. In terms of accessible tourism, ESCAP, in collaboration with partners including the city of Takayama, Japan, strengthened capacity and generated greater awareness among members and associate members to enhance the integration of the planning and development of the built environment and tourism, both within and across countries. Concerning ICT accessibility, the capacity of members and associate members was built through workshops in which information on policy options and good practices were shared, in particular with regard to universal design, assistive technologies, standardization and harnessing the purchasing power of governments to produce accessible ICT products and services. Moreover, a regional website was developed providing information on guidelines and good practices as well as up-to-date information on issues concerning ICT accessibility for persons with disabilities.

74. In response to paragraph 10 (b), the secretariat, in collaboration with Leonard Cheshire Disability, convened the Conference on Disability-Inclusive MDGs and Aid Effectiveness in Bangkok from 14 to 16 March 2012. The Conference enhanced the capacity of participants, including government officials, to effectively advocate for, negotiate and develop strategic relationships to bring disability into the mainstream of national and international development. In addition to those from Asia and the Pacific, participants came from Africa and Europe, resulting in the sharing of good practices regarding initiatives in the field of disabilities from different regions.

B. Resolution 63/7**International migration and development for least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States****1. Requirements of the operative paragraphs**

75. In paragraph 2 of its resolution 63/7, the Commission requested the Executive Secretary, among other things:

(a) To ensure that the activities of the secretariat, consistent with its programme of work, took into account the special needs related to migration issues of the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States;

(b) To analyse and compile relevant information, as available, on international migration, with a view to identifying key trends, emerging issues, opportunities and challenges in both sending and receiving countries, especially in least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States;

(c) To continue to provide a forum for dialogue among members and associate members of the Commission, with particular focus on sending, transit and receiving countries, and to facilitate discussion on the multidimensional aspects of international migration and its linkages with socio-economic development;

(d) To convene a high-level meeting on international migration and development in close coordination with related international organizations on migration, preferably in 2008.

2. Progress made

76. The majority of activities in implementation of resolution 63/7 were undertaken in cooperation with the Regional Thematic Working Group on International Migration, including Human Trafficking, which is co-chaired by ESCAP and the International Organization for Migration (IOM). The key pillars of the strategy were to enhance the availability of information through data collection and to conduct research that leads to the formulation of policy recommendations.

77. Since the adoption of resolution 63/7, the secretariat has focused on the key issues which highlight international migration and development for least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States. In response to paragraph 2 (b), the Regional Thematic Working Group on International Migration, including Human Trafficking conducted comprehensive analysis on international migration within the region. The outcome of the analysis was published as two situation reports, one on East and South-East Asia and one on South and South-West Asia. These reports provided a comprehensive overview on migration trends in 26 countries in the Asia-Pacific region and analysis on issues of concern to the region, such as labour migration, remittances, gender, migration and development and others. Of the countries covered in both reports, 10 are least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States: Afghanistan; Bangladesh; Bhutan; Cambodia; the Lao People's Democratic Republic; Maldives; Mongolia; Myanmar; Nepal; and Timor-Leste.

78. In order to closely monitor migration outflows from countries in the Asia-Pacific region, the secretariat established a database on labour migration outflows from selected countries in the region, including Bangladesh and Nepal. The database comprises the official statistics made available from respective countries. It includes annual migrant outflows and, to the extent possible, data disaggregated by destination country, sex and skill level of migrants. The database will be made available to the public online in the first half of 2012.

79. The secretariat also produced a number of research papers on migration and development issues, including: “Maximizing development benefits and minimizing negative impact in the Pacific Islands subregion”; “Linking international migration and development in Asia”; and “Social impact of international migration and remittances in Central Asia”. These papers covered least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States.

80. In response to paragraph 2 (c), ESCAP provided forums to facilitate discussion on the multidimensional aspects of international migration and its linkages with socio-economic development. Special attention was given to the participation of individuals from least developed and landlocked developing countries and small island developing States. The focus was also on sharing good practices in the provision of social protection and basic health services to all international migrant workers.

81. In order to assess the impact of the global economic crisis on international migration, ESCAP, in cooperation with IOM, held the Policy Dialogue on the Impacts of the Global Economic Crisis on International Migration: Follow-up to the Asia-Pacific High-level Meeting on International Migration and Development in Bangkok on 28 and 29 May 2009. The meeting brought together government officials from nine member States – including two least developed countries (Bangladesh and Nepal) – and experts on international migration, who discussed the impact of the global economic crisis on international migration and identified emerging issues that needed to be addressed from the perspectives of countries of origin and destination. The Dialogue provided a forum for the exchange of good practices on the protection of migrant workers in view of the crisis.

82. The Workshop on Strengthening Capacities to Deal with International Migration, held in Bangkok on 22 and 23 April 2010, focused on policies linking migration and development and provided a forum for the exchange of information and experience related to designing policies on international migration that can maximize development benefits and minimize the negative impact. The workshop was attended by 23 government officials who participated at the meeting in expert capacity; among them were seven experts from least developed and landlocked developing countries and small island developing States.

83. An expert group meeting on strengthening capacities for migration management in Central Asia, held in Bangkok on 20 and 21 September 2010, assessed migration trends in North and Central Asia, as well as the economic and social impacts of migration and remittances. It also provided a forum for the exchange of experiences in designing policies on international migration and remittances. The meeting was attended by government officials from six landlocked developing countries from Central Asia, as well as the Russian Federation as the main destination country.

84. The Asia-Pacific Regional Preparatory Meeting for the Global Forum on Migration and Development 2010, held in Bangkok from 22 to 24 September 2010, provided a forum for dialogue on the multidimensional aspects of international migration and formulated a common regional position and recommendations on international migration in Asia and the Pacific, which served as an input at the Fourth Global Forum for Migration and Development, held in November 2010. The Preparatory Meeting was attended by representatives of 31 Governments of Asia-Pacific countries, among them countries of origin and destination, and 19 least developed and landlocked developing countries and small island developing States.

85. In response to paragraph 2 (d), the Asia-Pacific High-level Meeting on International Migration and Development was convened in Bangkok on 22 and 23 September 2008 and attended by 53 government-nominated participants from 22 countries. Among the participating countries were nine least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States.⁶ The meeting was jointly organized by ESCAP, the Government of Thailand, the United Nations Population Division and IOM. The meeting provided a forum for ESCAP members and associate members to exchange experiences on migration management and to promote dialogue on the nexus between migration and development.

C. Resolution 64/9

Midpoint review of the implementation of the Plan of Action on Population and Poverty adopted at the Fifth Asian and Pacific Population Conference

1. Requirements of the operative paragraphs

86. In its resolution 64/9, the Commission requested the Executive Secretary, among other things:

(a) To assist members and associate members in building their capacity to integrate population factors into development planning;

(b) To conduct analytical studies, compile and disseminate relevant demographic and population-related information and data with a view to identifying key demographic trends and emerging issues in the Asian and Pacific region;

(c) To convene an expert group meeting in 2008 to review the implementation of the Plan of Action on Population and Poverty (E/ESCAP/1271, annex I) adopted at the Fifth Asian and Pacific Population Conference.

2. Progress made

87. In response to subparagraph (a), the secretariat continues to provide members and associate members with technical support and advisory services in building their capacity to integrate population dynamics into development planning. In this regard, the secretariat assisted the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific in delivering lectures on demographic analysis and population projection in February 2009. In their evaluations, participants indicated that they found the lectures highly effective in enhancing their

⁶ Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, Fiji, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mongolia, Nepal, Samoa, and Solomon Islands.

understanding regarding the linkages between population variables and development planning.

88. In cooperation with its partners, the secretariat organized several workshops and meetings related to international migration and development, including the above-mentioned Workshop on Strengthening Capacities to Deal with International Migration, which discussed integrating international migration into national development plans (see para. 82), and an expert group meeting on strengthening capacities for migration management in Central Asia (see para. 83).

89. In response to the region's rapid demographic transition, ESCAP organized a series of seminars and forums to strengthen regional cooperation and government capacity to effectively address population ageing issues and the concerns of older persons. In collaboration with HelpAge International, the secretariat convened the Regional Seminar on Health Promotion and Active Ageing in Asia and the Pacific in Bangkok in November 2010. ESCAP also held the Regional Forum on Elderly Care Services in Asia and the Pacific in January 2011 in Nanjing, China. To support Governments' efforts in the second review and appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA), ESCAP held a preparatory meeting for the Asia-Pacific Intergovernmental Meeting on the Second Regional Review and Appraisal of the Plan of Action in Beijing from 22 to 24 November 2011. The Meeting facilitated the exchange of national experiences related to the review and identified policy gaps and key priorities for action related to population ageing.

90. In response to paragraph (b), the secretariat has undertaken a number of activities to further the understanding of the linkages between migration and development. In 2008, ESCAP produced a report entitled *Looking into Pandora's Box: The Social Implications of International Migration in Asia* (ST/ESCAP/2512). The report highlighted the increasing scale of female migration and migration of highly skilled professionals in the region, and addressed critical issues, such as the protection of the rights of migrants and access to basic social services. The Regional Thematic Working Group on International Migration, including Human Trafficking produced two situation reports, one on East and South-East Asia and one on South and South-West Asia. The reports provide a comprehensive overview of migration trends in 26 countries in the Asia-Pacific region and analysis on issues of concern, including labour migration, remittances, gender, migration and development.

91. ESCAP provides a wealth of policy-relevant information on population issues, including fertility, population ageing, migration and reproductive health, through the publication of the *Asia-Pacific Population Journal*. In print since 1986, it is a highly respected publication in which leading population experts share opinions and action-oriented research findings and provide policy recommendations regarding population and development issues in the region. Revamped in 2005 and 2010, this peer-reviewed publication reaches a broad audience of decision- and policymakers, programme planners and programme administrators, as well as researchers in over 75 countries worldwide.

92. In order to monitor and disseminate the most up-to-date data on demographic and socio-economic indicators, the secretariat publishes the annual *ESCAP Population Data Sheet*. It has also established a database on labour outflows from selected countries, in order to closely monitor migration

flows occurring within the region. The database will be published electronically in March 2012.

93. In response to paragraph (c), the secretariat held an expert group meeting to assess the progress in the implementation of the Plan of Action on Population and Poverty in Bangkok from 3 to 5 February 2009, in collaboration with the Asia and Pacific Regional Office of the United Nations Population Fund. It was attended by experts and government representatives from 14 countries in Asia, as well as by representatives of various non-governmental organizations active in the field of population and United Nations agencies. The meeting provided renewed impetus for the full implementation of the Plan of Action as a crucial means to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, thereby further fostering the integration of population concerns into development planning and strategies.

94. In order to assess progress in the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, ESCAP, in cooperation with the United Nations Population Fund, organized the Asia-Pacific High-level Forum on ICPD at 15: Accelerating Progress towards the ICPD and Millennium Development Goals, held in Bangkok on 16 and 17 September 2009. The Forum reviewed progress, identified challenges and addressed strategies and urgent actions required to accelerate progress towards the implementation of the Programme of Action.

D. Resolution 66/10

Regional call for action to achieve universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support in Asia and the Pacific

1. Requirements of the operative paragraphs

95. In paragraph 2 of its resolution 66/10, the Commission requested the Executive Secretary, within the existing ESCAP mandate, and in close coordination with the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), the World Health Organization and other relevant stakeholders:

(a) To support members and associate members in the implementation of the Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS⁷ and in reaching the Millennium Development Goal target of ensuring universal access to comprehensive prevention programmes, treatment, care and support, by promoting regional cooperation among countries of Asia and the Pacific, as appropriate, and partnerships with people living with HIV and AIDS, civil society and faith-based and private-sector groups, guided by the priorities of the UNAIDS Outcome Framework 2009-2011⁸ which most concern the drivers of the epidemic in each country;

(b) To support members and associate members in their efforts to enact, strengthen and enforce, as appropriate, legislation, regulations and other measures to eliminate all forms of discrimination against people living with HIV and AIDS and other key affected populations, and to develop, implement and monitor strategies to combat stigma and exclusion connected with the epidemic;

⁷ General Assembly resolution 60/262, annex.

⁸ Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, "Joint action for results: UNAIDS outcome framework 2009-2011" (2010) (UNAIDS/09.13E – JC1713E).

(c) To support and collaborate with subregional organizations, including the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation and the Pacific Islands Forum, in enhancing cooperation in developing and implementing effective interventions to deal with HIV/AIDS as a development challenge, giving special attention to transboundary issues which require intercountry collaboration, such as cross-border movement of people and HIV vulnerability, access to affordable medicines, the identification of regionally appropriate and innovative intervention paradigms and models and the promotion of South-South sharing of expertise and experience;

(d) To convene a high-level intergovernmental review for the Asian and Pacific region to assess progress against commitments in the Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS and the Millennium Development Goals and efforts to ensure universal access, and identify areas for regional cooperation, in particular in such areas as identifying and removing policy and legal barriers to universal access and promoting dialogue between health and other sectors, including justice, law and order and drug control;

(e) To bring the resolution to the attention of the General Assembly AIDS Review, which was held in June 2010, with a view to presenting issues of concern to the Asian and Pacific region;

(f) To report to the Commission at its sixty-eighth session on progress in the implementation of the resolution.

2. Progress made

96. In response to paragraph 2 (a), the secretariat, in collaboration with UNAIDS and other United Nations entities, brought together government officials, members of civil society organizations and members of parliament from 26 countries in Asia and the Pacific to identify the fundamental barriers to achieving universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support in Asia and the Pacific. At the Asia-Pacific Regional Consultation on Universal Access to HIV Prevention, Treatment, Care and Support, held in Bangkok on 30 and 31 March 2011, good practices were shared and issues, such as enhancing regional cooperation, were discussed. Furthermore, such issues were put on the agenda of the sixty-seventh session of the Commission. On the basis of its deliberations, the Commission adopted resolution 67/9 on the Asia-Pacific regional review of the progress achieved in realizing the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS and the Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS.

97. In response to paragraph 2 (b), the secretariat, in collaboration with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and UNAIDS, undertook reviews examining stigma and discrimination regarding drug use and HIV by bringing together experts from government, civil society, academia and development partners. These reviews were deliberated at the Regional Consultation on Compulsory Centres for Drug Users, which was held in Bangkok from 14 to 16 December 2010.

98. In addition, the secretariat, in collaboration with UNAIDS and other United Nations entities, undertook studies that (a) reviewed legal and policy barriers impeding universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support programmes, including for key affected populations, and (b) considered means of addressing stigma and discrimination against people living with HIV and AIDS in the region. In connection with this, the

secretariat, in collaboration with UNAIDS and other United Nations entities, convened the Asia-Pacific Regional Dialogue of the Global Commission on HIV and the Law in Bangkok on 16 and 17 February 2011. The outcome of the Dialogue, the first in a series of regional dialogues, provided a basis for the preparation of a background document for the consideration of governments.

99. In response to paragraph 2 (c), representatives of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation were brought together with officials from governments and members of civil society organizations to develop and implement interventions with the capacity to address a range of challenges posed by HIV/AIDS at the aforementioned Asia-Pacific Regional Consultation on Universal Access to HIV Prevention, Treatment, Care and Support. Further measures to support and collaborate with the subregional organizations will be taken.

100. In response to paragraph 2 (d), the secretariat, in collaboration with UNAIDS and six other United Nations entities, convened the Asia-Pacific High-level Intergovernmental Meeting on the Assessment of Progress against Commitments in the Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS and the Millennium Development Goals in Bangkok from 6 to 8 February 2012. The Meeting focused on accelerating regional efforts to achieving universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support and promoting multisectoral cooperation and building national capacity in addressing policy and legal barriers to universal access. In addition, deliberations took place on how to most effectively use a regional framework to support the implementation of international and region-specific commitments.

101. In response to paragraph 2 (e), on 10 June 2010, the Executive Secretary submitted the text of the resolution to the President of the General Assembly, requesting that it be brought to the attention of the High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on AIDS held from 8 to 10 June 2010.

VI. Subregional activities for development

A. Resolution 66/2

Five-year review of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States

1. Requirements of the operative paragraphs

102. In paragraph 4 of its resolution 66/2, the Commission requested the Executive Secretary:

(a) To ensure that the activities of the Commission, consistent with its programme of work, took into account the special needs of the Pacific small island developing States, as contained in the Port Vila Outcome Statement, including the submission of the Outcome Statement to the General Assembly and the Pacific Islands Forum;

(b) To continue to review, analyse and disseminate information, as appropriate, on economic and social development in small island developing States, in line with the Port Vila Outcome Statement;

(c) To encourage the United Nations system to function as a cohesive platform to assist small island developing States in implementing the Mauritius Strategy and in making better use of the United Nations intergovernmental process at the regional level to report to regional member States on its support of the implementation of the Mauritius Strategy;

(d) To report to the Commission at its sixty-eighth session on the implementation of the resolution.

2. Progress made

103. In response to paragraph 4 (a), the Port Vila Outcome Statement was brought to the attention of the General Assembly (see A/65/115, para. 2), and, in August 2010, the Pacific Islands Forum. The secretariat held a Pacific Ministerial Meeting on Sustainable Development and Green Growth in Astana, Kazakhstan, in September 2010, to discuss national and regional perspectives on the midterm review of the Mauritius Strategy. The meeting, attended by 24 ministers and senior officials, requested ESCAP support to analyse how low-carbon growth and the Rio+20 green economy theme could be pursued as possible strategies to support sustainable development. As a result, the secretariat held a Pacific Rio+20 preparatory meeting in Apia, Samoa, in July 2011, bringing together finance and environmental ministers from Pacific countries, development partners and civil society representatives. The meeting agreed on a series of recommendations on how sustainable development could be strengthened in the Pacific through the Rio+20 process. The meeting also agreed to reinforce the “special case” of the Pacific small island developing States within the context of their oceanic environment, a message which was taken to the 2011 Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting and the Asia-Pacific Rio+20 preparatory meeting, and was a core message of the Pacific regional submission to Rio+20. To further support the implementation of the Port Vila Outcome Statement, the secretariat has also provided technical assistance to Vanuatu in the midterm review of its National Sustainable Development Strategy and the peer review of the national development planning, budgeting and aid coordination processes of Tuvalu.

104. In response to paragraph 4 (b), a series of analytical papers on sustainable development issues, such as national sustainable development frameworks, climate change financing and green growth, were prepared and disseminated through the website of the ESCAP Pacific Office. In response to a request from Pacific member States for support in the Rio+20 process, national assessments of opportunities of greening the economies were undertaken. These assessments identified key features of the national enabling environment for a green economy, key sectors of a green economy in the Pacific, and the constraints and challenges that countries face in integrating low-carbon approaches into national planning and budgetary processes. To reinforce the findings of these assessments, the secretariat conducted three expert group meetings to discuss the green economy in the Pacific subregion. The secretariat also organized workshops – some in partnership with ADB and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) – to develop the capacity of national statistical systems to communicate statistics for effective use by policymakers. The secretariat supported Pacific delegations in their preparations for the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, which was held in Istanbul, Turkey, in May 2011, and made substantive contributions to the regionalization of the Istanbul Programme of Action, emphasizing the unique needs of Pacific

island member States and reinforcing the key messages of the Mauritius Strategy.

105. In response to paragraph 4 (c), the secretariat has facilitated the establishment of the Pacific Green Growth Partnership and Pacific National Sustainable Development Partnership to provide small island developing States in the Pacific with ongoing support in developing their capacity to implement sustainable development policies and programmes in support of the Mauritius Strategy. Secretariat activities are implemented in partnership with regional organizations through the Sustainable Development Working Group of the Council of Regional Organizations in the Pacific (CROP). The secretariat continues to embed sustainable development in the work of key United Nations partners in the Pacific through, among other things, the Rio+20 process. The secretariat, through its Pacific Office, has taken a lead role in the planning for the 2013-2017 United Nations Development Assistance Framework with the United Nations country teams in Fiji and Samoa, including membership of the steering committee and task forces conducting country reviews of development priorities. Through the strong advocacy and leadership of the Pacific Office, the mission of the United Nations in the Pacific is centred on sustainable development as articulated in the Mauritius Strategy.

B. Resolution 66/7 Pacific Urban Agenda

1. Requirements of the operative paragraphs

106. In its resolution 66/7, the Commission:

(a) Requested the Executive Secretary, in cooperation with UN-Habitat and other relevant United Nations entities, to continue to support Pacific members and associate members in implementing the Pacific Urban Agenda and Regional Action Framework in collaboration with regional and development partners;

(b) Invited partner agencies, including regional organizations, to provide members and associate members with technical and financial support to cooperate in the implementation of the Pacific Urban Agenda and the Regional Action Framework;

(c) Requested the Executive Secretary to support members and associate members in assessing progress in implementing the Pacific Urban Agenda, to convene a subregional workshop in the biennium 2010-2011 for exchange of experience and capacity-building requirements and to report to the Commission at its sixty-eighth session on the outcome of this exercise.

2. Progress made

107. In response to paragraph 1, the secretariat, through the ESCAP Pacific Office, has continued its support for UN-Habitat as secretariat for a coalition of willing partners⁹ in sustainable management of urbanization. The secretariat also assisted UN-Habitat and the Commonwealth Local Government Forum (CLGF) Pacific office in supporting and reviewing urban

⁹ Partners include: UNDP Pacific Centre, UNISDR, Commonwealth Local Government Forum, New Zealand Aid Programme, UNICEF, EU, FSPI, SPC, OHCHR and some bilateral AusAID agencies.

analysis, and strengthening ties with partners, including AusAID, ADB and the Pacific Region Infrastructure Facility (PRIF). These partnerships improved the visibility and legitimacy of the Pacific Urban Agenda and Regional Action Framework and provided a strong foundation for ESCAP Pacific Office's work in providing technical assistance and financial support for activities related to the implementation of the Pacific Urban Agenda. The secretariat successfully implemented joint activities to develop capacity in urban management in the Pacific. In Tuvalu, the secretariat supported the preparations for the development of an urban management plan. The ESCAP Pacific Office participated in the development of urban profiling systems as preparatory work for advocating for inclusive urban policy in Solomon Islands.

108. In support of paragraph 2, the secretariat organized two technical working group sessions at the 2010 Pacific Local Government Symposium (hosted by CLGF) in collaboration with UN-Habitat and UNISDR, and attended the annual general meeting of the Pacific Capital Cities Forum as well as the development partners round-table meeting. The resulting Port Vila declaration garnered commitment to the Pacific Urban Agenda from local governments across the Pacific. The secretariat is a partner in the approved (March 2011) Cities Alliance proposal with UN-Habitat for "Regional Institutional Strengthening and Knowledge Management Support to Pacific Island Countries to Strengthen Implementation of the Pacific Urban Agenda under the Pacific Plan". The secretariat takes the lead on developing a Pacific Regional Urban Knowledge Management framework to coordinate structured documentation of urban experiences.

109. In response to paragraph 3, the Pacific Urban Forum was held in Nadi, Fiji, in 2011 and was attended by Pacific island representatives of ministries of national planning, urban agencies and local governments and development partners. As guided by the Pacific Urban Agenda, the Pacific Urban Forum sought to form linkages between national development plans and: (a) access to urban services and infrastructure; (b) land, housing and urban policy development; (c) population and economic development/management and effective planning systems; and (d) climate change and adaptation in an urban environment. The Pacific Urban Forum generated a groundswell of interest with participants agreeing on mechanisms for providing support to the Pacific to urgently address the challenges of urbanization and enhance the contribution of urban centres. The Pacific Urban Agenda sets out a range of issues that should be considered and adopted by national, provincial and local governments and presented opportunities for regional cooperation and knowledge sharing. Participants were encouraged to become champions of urbanization and the committed leaders needed to initiate change. Some countries are now planning to hold independent national urban forums to highlight their own specific urban issues and address policy and strategic planning gaps. The Forum confirmed that the Pacific Urban Agenda is an effective mechanism for raising awareness and improving understanding of urban matters at the country and regional levels and should be used as a basis for the inclusion of urban issues in national development plans. It also provides a platform for regular progress reports on urban management issues in the region to Pacific Islands Forum Leaders via the Pacific Plan Action Committee process.

VII. Management issues

A. Resolution 67/14

Cooperation between the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and other United Nations and regional and subregional organizations serving Asia and the Pacific

1. Requirements of the operative paragraphs

110. In paragraph 3 of its resolution 67/14, the Commission requested the Executive Secretary:

(a) To assess the manner in which the secretariat carries out its mandate and coordinates its work with regional and subregional organizations operating in Asia and the Pacific, and describe the functioning, decision-making and results of the regional coordination mechanism, including how the secretariat leverages synergies and other efficiencies that could serve as a model for coordination;

(b) Consult with member States, including with the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission, and present the results to the Commission as part of the biennial reporting on the secretariat's evaluation activities, beginning with the sixty-eighth session of the Commission and continuing in future biennial reports.

2. Progress made

111. Implementation of this resolution will be reported in the report on evaluation activities of ESCAP during the biennium 2010-2011 (E/ESCAP/68/15).

112. In response to paragraph 3 (a), the secretariat surveyed the thematic working groups of the regional coordination mechanism and received feedback on achievements, operations, lessons and areas for improvement. The secretariat will seek further comments from RCM members.

113. ESCAP provided extensive inputs into the United Nations joint report by the regional commissions entitled *The Regional Dimension of Development and the UN System*, which included compiling information on ESCAP cooperation with other United Nations entities and regional/subregional organizations.

114. In response to paragraph 3 (b), the secretariat briefed the Advisory Committee at its 340th session on progress in implementing the resolution. It also provided and sought feedback from member States.

B. Resolution 67/15

Midterm review of the functioning of the conference structure of the Commission

1. Requirements of the operative paragraphs

115. In its resolution 67/15, the Commission:

(a) Commended the initiative of the Executive Secretary to seek participation by Heads of State and Government at Commission sessions and

associated events, as was done at the sixty-sixth session, and encouraged the Executive Secretary to continue to do so;

(b) Decided to move towards paperless Commission sessions with the possibility of electronic early delivery of all pre-session documents and communications, with fewer but higher quality documents, and, in this regard, requested the Executive Secretary to submit to the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission at its 339th session a report that would serve as the basis for a decision at the sixty-eighth session of the Commission which would take effect as of its sixty-ninth session and affect the preparations therefor;

(c) Requested the Executive Secretary to explore practical and cost-effective ways of convening the Asia-Pacific Business Forum in conjunction with the Commission session to facilitate bringing a business perspective to the discussion, at the same time ensuring that the focus on deliberations at Commission sessions, including on the theme topic, is not taken away by side events;

(d) Decided to reshape the list of issues addressed by the Committee on Information and Communications Technology, namely moving the component "Information and communications technology applications for disaster risk reduction" to the agenda of the Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction;

(e) Requested the Executive Secretary to ensure that Committee sessions are scheduled evenly throughout the year in order to provide sufficient time for their preparation and avoid overlap with other important intergovernmental meetings, as part of the proposed calendar of ESCAP meetings;

(f) Commended the significant role played by the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission in dealing with all matters related to programme planning, administrative and budgetary issues, including extrabudgetary funding, and encouraged the Executive Secretary to continue close consultation with the Advisory Committee;

(g) Decided to explore ways to strengthen the role of the Advisory Committee and entrusted this task to the Advisory Committee;

(h) Also decided to entrust the Advisory Committee to review its terms of reference and submit the results of that review to the sixty-eighth session of the Commission;

(i) Further decided to set clear rules of procedure for the Advisory Committee and for the Informal Working Group on Draft Resolutions and, in this respect, requested the Executive Secretary to submit a proposal on each of the subjects to the Advisory Committee at its 337th and 338th sessions, respectively, which would serve as the basis for a decision that will have an effect on its subsequent sessions;

(j) Requested the Executive Secretary to carry out further study and analysis, as well as the formulation of a new comprehensive questionnaire to facilitate the final review of the functioning of the conference structure of the Commission, and to submit the findings,

including the questionnaire results, and recommendations to the Commission at its sixty-ninth session, especially on the following issues:

(k) The duration of the Commission session in order to gain efficiencies in time and cost;

(l) The governance structure of the regional institutions vis-à-vis the respective roles and relevant mandates of the Commission, the committees and the governing councils;

(m) With a view to further integrating the regional institutions into the work of the relevant subprogrammes, the relevance of regional institutions to each subprogramme and committee, and the review of budget allocations to improve support for regional institutions through such mechanisms as staff exchanges and joint projects to support their work;

(n) The feasibility of promoting and developing the role of the Advisory Committee in order for it to assist the Commission in carrying out and coordinating its tasks during the intersessional period;

(o) Also requested the Executive Secretary, as part of the final review of the functioning of the conference structure, to carry out further study on proposals for improving the utilization of, and participation in, expert group and other meetings, and possible dissemination of outcomes, in order to engage more fully and constructively with member States and to provide a clearer contribution to the intergovernmental process and further strengthen programme delivery.

2. Progress made

116. In response to paragraph 4, the Executive Secretary has sought the participation of Heads of State and Government at the sixty-eighth session of the Commission and associated events.

117. In response to paragraph 8, the secretariat prepared a report that was considered by the Advisory Committee at its 339th session. This report is contained in an annex to the report of the Advisory Committee to the Commission (E/ESCAP/68/19).

118. In response to paragraph 10, the secretariat is preparing an information note to be considered at a future session of the Advisory Committee.

119. In response to paragraph 12, the component “Information and communications technology applications for disaster risk reduction” was moved to the agenda of the Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction starting with its second session, which was held in 2011 (see E/ESCAP/68/11, para. 110).

120. In response to paragraph 13, the secretariat scheduled the Committee sessions, ad hoc ministerial conferences and other intergovernmental meetings for 2012 evenly throughout the year in order to provide sufficient time for their preparation and avoid overlap with other important intergovernmental meetings.

121. In response to paragraph 14, the Executive Secretary continued to consult closely with the Advisory Committee on all matters related to programme planning, including holding one regular and one special session

on the strategic framework for the biennium 2014-2015, and reported regularly on administrative and budgetary issues.

122. In response to paragraphs 15 to 17, the Advisory Committee established an informal working group to explore ways to strengthen its role and to review its terms of reference. The Advisory Committee also agreed at its 337th and 338th sessions to include in the work of the informal working group the task of setting clear rules of procedure for the Advisory Committee as well as for its Informal Working Group on Draft Resolutions. The report of the informal working group is contained in an annex to the report of the Advisory Committee to the Commission (E/ESCAP/68/19).

123. In response to paragraphs 19 and 20, the secretariat is in the process of preparing the terms of reference for an evaluation of the conference structure of the Commission to be undertaken in 2012. This evaluation, along with its recommendations and the management response, will be submitted to the Commission at its sixty-ninth session as the basis for the Commission's final review of the conference structure.
