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**Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)**

**REPORT**  
**OF THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE ON ITS SEVENTH MEETING**  
**AMMAN, 18-19 MARCH 2013**

**Summary**

The Technical Committee of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) held its seventh meeting in Amman on 18 and 19 March 2013, bringing together representatives of ESCWA member countries.

The Committee agenda included diverse items, specifically the proposed programme of work for the biennium 2014-2015; building the capacity of member States through technical cooperation and regional advisory services; progress towards the United Nations development agenda beyond 2015; follow-up on the outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20); the revision of ESCWA terms of reference and rules of procedure; the implementation of resolutions adopted by ESCWA at its twenty-seventh session; the implementation of recommendations made by the Technical Committee at its sixth meeting; and the implementation of the recommendations resulting from the evaluation of the intergovernmental mechanism of ESCWA and its subsidiary bodies.

This report reviews the most important issues raised in discussions, as well as the main recommendations adopted by participants following the discussion of each item on the agenda.

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## **Introduction**

1. The Technical Committee was established pursuant to the decision of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) at its twenty-fourth session, held in Beirut from 8 to 11 May 2006. It aims to enhance direct communication between the ESCWA secretariat and member countries on economic and social development issues undertaken by ESCWA. The Committee convenes periodically to follow up on global and regional developments and the implementation of ESCWA programme of work, as well as to provide support for its activities and projects.
2. The Technical Committee held its seventh meeting at the ESCWA Technology Centre in Amman on 18 and 19 March 2013. The opening session was held on 18 March 2013 at ten o'clock, followed by the morning session, during which participants discussed the agenda items and the proposed ESCWA programme of work for the biennium 2014-2015. During the afternoon session, discussion focused on building the capacity of member countries through technical cooperation activities and regional advisory services.
3. On 19 March 2013, representatives of member countries and the secretariat discussed the remaining agenda items, including progress on the elaboration of the United Nations development agenda beyond 2015; follow-up on the outcomes of Rio+20; revision of ESCWA's terms of reference and rules of procedure; implementation of the recommendations made by the Technical Committee at its sixth meeting; and implementation of the recommendations resulting from the evaluation of the intergovernmental mechanism of ESCWA and its subsidiary bodies.
4. This report covers the issues raised during discussions and the recommendations adopted by participants.

### **I. RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE AT ITS SEVENTH MEETING**

5. At the end of its seventh meeting, the Technical Committee reached a number of recommendations and suggestions related to topics on the agenda. They included:

#### **A. RECOMMENDATIONS MADE TO MEMBER COUNTRIES**

6. The Technical Committee made the following recommendations to member countries:
  - (a) To call on ESCWA member countries who are current members of the Economic and Social Council to ensure the implementation of the remaining paragraphs of ESCWA's twenty-seventh session resolution 302 (XXVII), concerning the requests of Libya, Morocco and Tunisia to join the Commission, by submitting a resolution to the Economic and Social Council in its next session in July 2013 for the re-designation of ESCWA as the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for the Arab States;
  - (b) To invite all other ESCWA member countries to support the re-designation of ESCWA;
  - (c) To specify that resolution 302 (XXVII) applies only to members of the League of Arab States;
  - (d) To ask the secretariat to draft a ministerial resolution accordingly and send it to the ministers who serve as focal points in member countries for its adoption if needed and in light of the results of the consultations between the secretariat and United Nations agencies;
  - (e) To intensify efforts to include regional priorities in drafting the United Nations development agenda beyond 2015;

(f) To participate actively in the negotiations on setting sustainable development objectives for the next two years, to ensure their relevance to the needs and priorities of the region.

#### B. RECOMMENDATIONS MADE TO THE SECRETARIAT

7. The Technical Committee made the following recommendations to the secretariat:

(a) To take into account the observations made by member countries concerning the agenda items, the programme of work for the biennium 2014-2015, and the field projects currently under consideration, and integrate them into the subprogrammes of ESCWA, within the limit of its budget and resources;

(b) To advise member countries of the amended ESCWA programme of work for the biennium 2014-2015;

(c) To intensify efforts towards resource mobilization and obtain extra-budgetary resources through partnerships with international and regional organizations;

(d) To further the implementation of ongoing projects that are part of ESCWA's technical cooperation programme in member countries to strengthen the link between analytical studies and planned activities. ;

(e) To submit proposals to the Technical Committee at its next meeting in favour of reconsidering the mandate of the Technical Cooperation Network to ensure more consistency with the work of the Committee which would increase benefits to the member countries;

(f) To prepare a guide that clearly defines the procedure for submitting a request for technical cooperation and to organize more workshops to inform member countries, especially those that have joined ESCWA recently, of the ongoing activities in this field;

(g) To give priority to Arab expertise in the selection process of ESCWA consultants in accordance with United Nations rules and procedures;

(h) To provide data and support to member countries in negotiating the United Nations development agenda beyond 2015 and shed light on the priorities and needs of the Arab region;

(i) To promote integration between sustainable development goals and the United Nations development agenda beyond 2015, while taking into account the outcomes of relevant international negotiations;

(j) To accelerate the evaluation of the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals in the Arab region before 2015, and highlight successes and failures at the national level;

(k) To emphasize the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development and their complementarity at the national and regional levels through activities especially designed for this purpose;

(l) To organise consultative sessions with the participation of all member countries to reach a unified Arab position and contribute effectively to the international discussions on the follow-up of the outcomes of Rio+20 in the following fields: sustainable development goals, the international institutional framework for sustainable development and its mechanisms, and the strategies and financing mechanisms necessary to achieve sustainable development;

(m) To provide member countries with technical support to implement the outcomes of Rio+20 in accordance with national and regional priorities, and advise them on how to meet their commitments in the field of climate change;

(n) To consolidate the institutional frameworks of sustainable development at the national and regional levels so as to translate the outcomes of Rio+20 into programmes and activities;

(o) To update the document “Follow-up to the Outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20)”, which was prepared in the context of implementing resolution 305 (XXVII) on sustainable development in the region and as a follow up to the decisions of the Rio+20 conference;

(p) To implement the other paragraphs of the resolution on the re-designation of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia and, accordingly, draft a ministerial decree and submit it to the ministers who serve as focal points in member countries for its adoption, in light of results of the consultations between the ESCWA secretariat and concerned United Nations agencies;

(q) To amend the mandate of the Technical Committee to facilitate its work and its ability to take decisions; to reconsider the frequency of ESCWA sessions and how this affects the ability of the Technical Committee to respond to international and regional developments; and to bring these observations to the attention of the Committee at its next meeting, in order to discuss and then submit them to the twenty-eighth session of ESCWA for further consideration;

(r) To take note of the implementation of the recommendations contained in ESCWA’s intergovernmental mechanism evaluation report;

(s) To coordinate ESCWA’s various activities with the focal points of member countries;

(t) To consult with member countries prior to designating the experts responsible for preparing studies, while taking into account the relevant United Nations rules and procedures, and to reorganize the Committee’s meeting agenda so that all items related to follow-up on decisions taken during the last meeting, to avoid redundancy during discussions.

## **II. ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION**

### **A. PROPOSED ESCWA PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR THE BIENNIUM 2014-2015**

(Item 3 of the agenda)

8. The Technical Committee examined this item based on document E/ESCWA/2012/C.7/3 on the proposed ESCWA programme of work for the biennium 2014-2015. This item deals with the overall orientation of programme 19 on economic and social development in Western Asia; the strategies of its seven subprogrammes; the expected accomplishments and their indicators; and the mechanisms for cooperation with the member countries in the context of each subprogramme. The item also deals with the activities proposed under the regular budget, as well as those funded out of the United Nations Development Account and extrabudgetary resources. In preparing the work programme, the secretariat took into account the proposals made by member countries and emerging regional and global priorities.

9. ESCWA’s seven subprogrammes cover the following subjects: integrated management of natural resources for sustainable development; social development; economic development and integration; information and communication technology for regional integration; statistics for evidence-based policymaking; the advancement of women; and conflict mitigation and development.

10. The director of the Programme Planning and Technical Cooperation Division referred to the deliberations of the General Assembly concerning budget cuts and their potential effects on ESCWA programme of work for the biennium 2014-2015, in particular the possibility of cancelling or combining some of its activities. The secretariat clarified that it must seek extrabudgetary resources to compensate for the proposed budget cut and requested that member countries support its efforts in this regard.

11. While delegates commented that the proposed programme of work did not take their observations into account, the secretariat clarified that many observations were considered within the framework of the relevant activities in the programme. Other observations, despite their importance, were not included for reasons related to funding, but most of them will be included in the ESCWA programme of work for the biennium 2016-2017.

12. The representative of Palestine stressed the need to strengthen the follow-up mechanisms for measuring the achievements of the ESCWA programme of work, suggesting the addition of a category for the mechanisms used to measure indicators of achievement. The secretariat explained that the work programme has a standardized format adopted by all organs of the United Nations Secretariat. Nevertheless, the suggestion could be pursued, whereby a special format is adopted for the Technical Committee and the ESCWA sessions.

13. The following subjects were also covered according to their sequence in the ESCWA programme of work:

#### **Integrated management of natural resources for sustainable development**

14. Participants stressed the importance of including environmental and economic diversification in the proposed ESCWA programme of work for the next biennium, providing member countries with the necessary financing and technology transfer to facilitate their transition to a green economy. The secretariat explained that ESCWA has already begun integrating these dimensions in its programme, enabling the implementation of projects such as the “green help desk”, which provides policy support to a number of countries with a demonstrated interest in the transition to a green economy, such as Jordan, Oman and Lebanon.

#### **Social Development**

15. The representative from Kuwait commented on ESCWA’s diverse and extensive programme of work, which requires enormous effort to implement. He pointed to the limited partnerships with specialised regional organizations that could be of benefit to ESCWA, highlighting the work of the Arab Planning Institute whose activities intersect with those of ESCWA. In connection to the Global Partnership for formulating the beyond 2015 development goals, he criticised the current MDG indicators as being unable to measure the region’s performance. He therefore argued that there was a need for partnerships to formulate more realistic beyond 2015 development goals which prevent the political and economic dominance of larger countries. In closing, he asked ESCWA to publish an annual report on the status of development in the Arab region.

16. The delegate from Yemen emphasized the importance of the secretariat’s work in building the capacity of member countries to establish economic models, given their role in assessing a country’s macroeconomic performance. He urged ESCWA to respond to Yemen’s request to train a team of experts on economic modelling, and to provide it with the necessary technical support to formulate its five-year plan.

17. The Executive Secretary assured the committee that the secretariat is realigning its programs in order to mitigate the impact of budget cuts. Through this realignment ESCWA is seeking to focus on the

Commission's areas of comparative strength while minimizing the duplication of the work of other international organizations. She further confirmed that ESCWA will focus its work on deepening regional integration through establishing a centre of excellence for this purpose, and based on requests from member countries ESCWA will enhance the secretariat's statistical capacity and its work on economic modelling by setting up an Economic Modelling Unit. She noted ESCWA's readiness to contribute to the preparation of an annual report on Arab development.

18. Participants emphasized the importance of the priorities set by the Executive Secretary and affirmed their support for the proposed new areas of focus for the Commission.

### **Economic Development and Integration**

19. Participants highlighted the importance of supporting macroeconomic policies, currently considered a high priority in the Arab region. The representative of Egypt inquired about a project on facilitating the passage of goods between countries undergoing political transformation, and its added value.

20. The representative of Morocco pointed to the heterogeneous business environment within the countries of the region, and called on ESCWA to enhance this environment by facilitating the exchange of experiences.

21. The request of the representative of Yemen to establish a platform to enhance public-private partnerships was supported by the representative of Jordan, who proposed conducting a survey to measure the achievements of countries in this field.

22. The representatives of Tunisia and Palestine stressed that ESCWA should seek consistency in its activities within its new vision and to focus on interdivisional coordination and integration, and to continue in its efforts towards entering into partnerships with civil society and other organizations.

23. The secretariat responded to the key points of the member countries' interventions:

- Budget cuts resulted in the merging of some activities and consequently limited the ability of the secretariat to meet the requests of all member countries;
- The project on facilitating the passage of goods between countries in political transition is a field project proposed following consultations between the five regional commissions of the United Nations. The scope of this project is regulatory and has regional, interregional and subregional dimensions that primarily cover countries in transition; modernize transit; and to complement previous projects implemented by ESCWA during the period 2002-2007;
- The improvement of the business climate is at the core of the ESCWA programme of work, and five reports on this subject are planned. The feasibility of ESCWA's work in this domain will be discussed in terms of trade, investment and macroeconomics;
- A new structure for public-private partnerships will be established following an expert group meeting scheduled to take place in Morocco in April 2013.

### **Information and communication technology for regional integration**

24. The representative of the secretariat reviewed the subprogramme of the Information and Communication Technology Division, entitled Information and Communication Technology for Regional Integration. He shed light on the region's progress in bridging the digital and knowledge divides, while

highlighting the primary accomplishments and expected achievements of the subprogramme and relevant emerging issues, partnerships and strategies.

### **Statistics for evidence-based policymaking**

25. Delegates stressed the importance of using statistics in policymaking and planning, and asked the secretariat to help enhance the capacity of member countries in statistics and data production. In response to a question regarding inconsistencies in the information supplied by the United Nations Statistics Division and ESCWA, the secretariat explained that it had been agreed that the official statistics provided by the States would be used as the primary source of data. ESCWA will only use the Statistics Division data when the other numbers are not available.

### **Advancement of women**

26. The representative of Yemen inquired about the allocation of budgets for the implementation of national programmes for women, given that women's issues intersect with other issues. He stressed the importance of taking into account the religious and social specificities of the Arab countries when dealing with international conventions on women.

27. The representative of Tunisia asked member countries to concentrate their efforts on issues of real benefit to women, such as equality in economic opportunities, employment and education.

28. According to the representative of Egypt, it was irrelevant to mention the cultural specificities of the Arab countries in this debate, especially given that those countries reject any clause that conflicts with Islamic law. She stated that her country had no objection to the women's observatory project in the Arab region as long as it aims at collecting economic and social information on women in the Arab region, not at developing gender indicators.

29. The secretariat acknowledged the right of the Arab countries to have reservations on some aspects of international conventions, and affirmed that ESCWA would only monitor the other aspects. The observatory for women was established upon the request of member countries and will be funded by the Islamic Development Bank. The project will include a database on the economic, social and legal situation of women, and will be piloted in Lebanon. The secretariat explained that ESCWA includes gender mainstreaming in all its fields of work and that the ESCWA Centre for Women coordinates its activities with other organizations, such as UN Women.

30. The representative of the United Arab Emirates inquired about the progress made by member countries in implementing conventions on women. The representative of Palestine inquired about the overall orientation of the programme on the Advancement of Women and its planned outputs, which did not reflect the role of the Centre in mainstreaming gender equality in all ESCWA work programmes. He stressed the importance of highlighting the added value of the Centre, which had been upgraded to Division status, compared to other programmes such as UN Women and the United Nations Population Fund.

### **Conflict Mitigation and Development**

31. A number of representatives commented on the designation and activities of this subprogramme, explaining that the democratic transitions underway in certain member countries are not categorized as conflicts. The representative of Yemen asked the secretariat to define the concept of a 'conflict', because it contradicts the concept of democratic transition. Other representatives requested that the scope of the programme be expanded to include the impact of conflicts on neighbouring countries.



32. The secretariat noted that the Section for Emerging and Conflict-Related Issues was upgraded to a Division at the time when the region began witnessing democratic transitions and reforms and that the Division was addressing those changes through its programme of work. The designation, however, has not been changed to reflect these new responsibilities, which could be misleading. He further added that the division is preparing, in collaboration with the Economic Development and Globalization Division, a study on the impact of the Syrian crisis on neighbouring countries, and was planning to issue a monthly publication on countries experiencing conflict and the impact on neighbouring countries.

33. The chairman requested an amendment to the activities of the subprogramme in accordance with the proposals of member countries. Upon the approval of the delegations, the amendments were incorporated in ESCWA programme of work for the biennium 2014-2015, a copy of which is to be sent to member countries.

**B. BUILDING THE CAPACITY OF MEMBER COUNTRIES: BEST PRACTICE IN TECHNICAL  
COOPERATION ACTIVITIES AND REGIONAL ADVISORY SERVICES  
(Item 4 of the agenda)**

34. Under this item, the secretariat made a presentation on some of the projects and services that were delivered within the technical cooperation programme. These activities represent the operational dimension which complements the analytical and normative dimensions of the ESCWA mandate. They include the exchange of information and experiences with member countries, the organisation of workshops and field projects on designing policies and economic and social initiatives, and developing plans for their implementation. In this endeavour, ESCWA adopts an integrated, multidisciplinary and results-oriented approach.

35. Delegations inquired about the work mechanism of the Technical Cooperation Network, stressing the need to coordinate with the member country focal points and to give preference to national and regional expertise in the implementation of projects in the region. They also stressed the need to institutionalize technical cooperation between member countries and ESCWA, to be able to plan in advance the requested technical support. The representative of Libya requested clarification on the details of the application process for technical support, stressing the need to inform the national focal points about those applications. Meanwhile, other delegates highlighted the need to expedite the application process and clarify the relationship between the role of the Technical Committee focal points and that of the Technical Cooperation Network. Some questioned the need for the Network, given its weaknesses.

36. The secretariat asked member countries to designate focal points and coordinate their role at the internal level and to facilitate the mission of the regional advisers by informing them of the activities implemented by other organizations in their countries, to avoid duplication of work. It proposed the inclusion of an agenda item on how to activate the work of the Network in the next meeting of the Technical Committee.

**C. PROGRESS ACHIEVED IN THE PREPARATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS  
DEVELOPMENT AGENDA BEYOND 2015  
(Item 5 (a) of the agenda)**

37. Under this item, participants reviewed the progress achieved by the United Nations regional commissions in the preparation of the joint publication, the Post-2015 United Nations Development Agenda: A Regional Perspective. They reviewed the preparation process at the regional and global levels; the goals of the publication; and the role of the parties involved in the preparation; as well as the actions taken so far in light of the agreed time schedule; the United Nations bodies to which the report will be submitted; and the submission mechanism.

38. In response to a question raised by the representative of Oman on the goals of the United Nations development agenda beyond 2015, the secretariat clarified that the final versions of these goals are expected by the end of 2013. He urged Arab countries to participate actively in the development of this plan at the national and regional levels and through the subsidiary bodies of the United Nations Headquarters to ensure that it includes the regional dimension of development.

D. FOLLOW-UP ON THE OUTCOMES OF THE UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE  
ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (RIO+20)  
(Item 5 (b) of the agenda)

39. Under this item, delegates discussed the participation of ESCWA and its member countries in the Rio+20 Conference; the outcome document of the Conference: “The Future We Want”; and the regional dimension of sustainable development with its economic, social and environmental pillars. The outcome document presented to the Committee stressed the need for the Arab region to undertake the necessary measures to translate the outcomes of Rio+20 into programmes for sustainable development that address the needs and priorities of the Arab region.

40. The representative of Saudi Arabia had reservations on the issue of green economy due to the dependency of his country’s economy on oil resources. The secretariat explained that countries could choose the aspects of the outcome document that suits their needs. In the absence of funding to support the transition to green economy, they could benefit from the funding provided by several green development organizations. The representative of Jordan suggested that ESCWA hold consultative meetings for Arab countries to reach a joint position that reflects the specificity and priorities of the region in this context, and that this joint position be communicated to the international working groups. In this way, Arab countries would contribute to the international efforts towards green development and ensure their aspirations are reflected in the decisions taken by the different international committees.

E. REVISION OF THE TERMS OF REFERENCE AND RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE ECONOMIC  
AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR WESTERN ASIA  
(Item 6 of the agenda)

41. The Technical Committee considered, under this item, the ESCWA Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure following the admission of Libya, Morocco and Tunisia to its membership, pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 2012/1 of 10 July 2012 on approving the membership of those countries. ESCWA resolution 302(XXVII) of 10 May 2012 concerning the requests from Libya, Morocco and Tunisia to become members of the Commission, requested that the secretariat recommend to the Council the approval of those requests; to invite all other Arab countries to become members of ESCWA; and to coordinate, alongside the relevant United Nations entities and the League of Arab States, the re-designation of ESCWA to represent all Arab countries. The secretariat outlined its efforts to implement this resolution, as well as the communications it had with the relevant bodies within the United Nations and the League of Arab States in this regard.

42. The members of the Committee discussed the progress made in implementing resolution 302(XXVII), commending the efforts made by the secretariat and expressing concern about the delay in implementing some clauses, mainly concerning the re-designation of ESCWA. Following the discussion, they agreed that the new name will be The Economic and Social Commission for Arab States, and recommended the following:

- To call upon ESCWA member countries that are also members of the Economic and Social Council to ensure the implementation of the rest of the paragraphs of resolution 302(XXVII) during the next session of the Council in July 2013, in coordination with the other members of

the Council, through drafting a resolution to re-designate the Commission as The Economic and Social Commission for Arab States;

- To ask the other ESCWA member countries to support the re-designation process through submitting the proposed resolution to the Economic and Social Council;
- To limit the countries covered by the resolution to the States member of the League of Arab States;
- To ask the secretariat to draft a ministerial decision accordingly and submit it to the focal points of ESCWA for adoption, if needed, in the light of the results of the secretariat's consultations with concerned parties within the United Nations.

F. IMPLEMENTATION OF RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY ESCWA  
AT ITS TWENTY-SEVENTH SESSION  
(Item 7 (a) of the agenda)

43. Under this item, participants reviewed the action taken towards implementing the resolutions adopted by ESCWA at its twenty-seventh session (Beirut, 17-20 May 2012), concerning the various areas of work under ESCWA's mandate and the issues of importance to member countries. The representative of Palestine stressed the importance of establishing a mechanism for reporting on the implementation of the decisions related to countries, and of including relevant reports in the document on the implementation of ESCWA resolutions. Participants welcomed his proposal.

G. IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY THE TECHNICAL  
COMMITTEE AT ITS SIXTH MEETING  
(Item 7 (b) of the agenda)

44. Under this item, the secretariat made a presentation on the measures it took to implement the recommendations of the sixth meeting of the Technical Committee (Beirut, 1-2 December 2011), related either to organizational and procedural matters or to technical issues. The main organizational recommendations relate to ESCWA membership; the frequency of the meetings of its seven committees; encouraging donors to provide ESCWA with extrabudgetary funds; the organization of national workshops to inform the relevant departments of the advisory services provided by the Commission; and the holding of meetings between ESCWA and the focal points of member countries.

45. The main measures undertaken by ESCWA in this context included maintaining the current frequency of the meetings of the seven committees; sending notes and letters to inform the focal points and the members of the advisory body of the activities of ESCWA; organizing national workshops in the field of technical cooperation such as in the Sudan and Yemen; and sending meeting documents to member countries prior to the meetings.

H. IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS MADE IN THE EVALUATION OF THE  
INTERGOVERNMENTAL MECHANISM OF ESCWA AND ITS SUBSIDIARY BODIES  
(Item 7 (c) of the agenda)

46. Under this item, the Committee noted all the measures taken by the secretariat to implement the recommendations included in the assessment report of the intergovernmental mechanism of ESCWA and its subsidiary bodies. The secretariat had initiated this assessment pursuant to resolution 291 (XXV) concerning the frequency of the sessions of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies, which was adopted by the Commission at its twenty-fifth session (Sana'a, 26-29 May 2008). The resolution requested the secretariat to

carry out an in-depth evaluation of the intergovernmental structure of ESCWA in the light of programme priorities, as determined by member countries and the ongoing United Nations reforms.

47. To this end, the secretariat commissioned an independent consultant to conduct the assessment, which began in late 2009, and a preliminary report was prepared and submitted to the Commission at its twenty-sixth session (Beirut, 17-20 May 2010). The report was completed in July 2010 and submitted at the fifth meeting of the Technical Committee (Beirut, 6-7 April 2011), which approved most of its conclusions and selected the executable recommendations, taking into account the work environment and the rules of procedure of ESCWA. A summary of the recommendations, including the actions taken for their implementation, was presented to the Commission at its twenty-seventh session.

48. Concerning the recommendation on establishing sub-offices for ESCWA in the member countries, the representative of Libya stated that his country looks forward to hosting one of those sub-offices and to enhance cooperation with the secretariat and benefit from its activities. Other representatives explained that the proposal was previously rejected due to the small number of member countries.

49. Other representatives stressed that official government parties must be informed of the official correspondence between ESCWA and member countries. They pointed to the measures taken by different divisions and sections when communicating with member countries and proposed to establish guidelines on those measures. The acting Secretary of the Commission explained that ESCWA has, in that regard, a special policy focused on coordinating and communicating directly with the countries' focal points.

50. At the end of the discussion, member countries called for restructuring the Technical Committee by amending its mandate to enable it to adopt decisions and thus support the sessions of ESCWA. It was agreed that the secretariat would review the experiences of the other regional commissions prior to submitting, at the next meeting of the Committee, a proposal to regulate its relationship with the sessions of ESCWA on one hand, and with the other Committees on the other hand.

**I. DATE AND VENUE OF THE EIGHTH MEETING OF THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE**  
(Item 8 of the agenda)

51. Participants agreed to hold the eighth meeting of the Technical Committee at the United Nations House in Beirut in early September, to coincide with the fortieth anniversary of ESCWA, and to hold its ninth meeting at the end of December, to prepare for the twenty-eighth ministerial session. The secretariat was to set the date in consultation with the chairmanship of the Committee.

**J. OTHER MATTERS**  
(Item 9 of the agenda)

52. No discussion points were addressed under this item.

**III. ADOPTION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY THE  
TECHNICAL COMMITTEE AT ITS SEVENTH MEETING**  
(Item 10 of the agenda)

53. At the conclusion of the seventh meeting, the Technical Committee adopted the recommendations before it. The Committee presented its observations on the recommendations with the provision that these would incorporate any suggested amendments thereto, and would be included in a comprehensive report on the actions and results of the meeting.

## **IV. ORGANIZATION OF THE MEETING**

### **A. DATE AND VENUE OF THE MEETING**

54. The Technical Committee held its seventh meeting at the ESCWA Technology Centre in Amman on 18 and 19 March 2013. In accordance with the terms of reference of the Technical Committee, which stipulate that the chairmanship of the Committee shall coincide with the chairmanship of the ESCWA ministerial session, the United Arab Emirates chaired this meeting in its capacity as chair of the twenty-seventh ministerial session, held in Beirut from 7 to 10 May 2012.

### **B. OPENING OF THE SESSION**

55. The opening session of the seventh meeting of the Technical Committee convened at 10 a.m. on Monday, 18 March 2013 at the ESCWA Technology Centre, Amman, Jordan. Mr. Mohamed Saleh al-Shalwah, assistant secretary of the United Arab Emirates Ministry of Economy and Chairman of the seventh meeting of the Technical Committee, delivered the speech of the United Arab Emirates.

56. Ms. Rima Khalaf, Under-Secretary-General, United Nations and Executive Secretary, ESCWA, welcomed the participants and stressed the role of the Technical Committee in determining the priorities of the work and activities of ESCWA, in line with the development needs of member countries. She discussed ESCWA's targets of expanding its activities in support of the decisions of the third Arab Economic and Social Development Summit (Riyadh, 21-22 January 2013) and in support of Arab regional integration. She then highlighted ESCWA's decision to establish a specialised working group to assist member countries and the League of Arab States in this regard, confirming that ESCWA attached great importance to economic modelling activities in the context of developing its capacities and those of member countries to produce statistical data. She concluded her statement with a look forward to celebrating ESCWA's fortieth anniversary in August 2013, commending ESCWA's role in the region for having been able, despite all challenges, to provide a strategic vision to promote its work and contribute to achieving the aspirations of member countries.

### **C. PARTICIPANTS**

57. The seventh meeting of the Technical Committee was attended by representatives of member countries. A list of participants is included in annex I of this report.

### **D. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS**

58. The Technical Committee adopted the agenda of its seventh meeting in the version set forth in document E/ESCWA/2012/C.7/L.1. The agenda in its adopted form was as follows:

1. Opening of the meeting.
2. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters.
3. Proposed ESCWA programme of work for the biennium 2014-2015.
4. Building the capacity of member countries: best practice in technical cooperation activities and regional advisory services.
5. Regional and global priorities:

- (a) Progress achieved in the preparation of the United Nations development agenda beyond 2015;
  - (b) Follow-up on the outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20).
6. Revision of the Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia.
7. Progress Achieved in the work of the secretariat:
- (a) Implementation of resolutions adopted by ESCWA at its twenty-seventh session
  - (b) Recommendations made by the Technical Committee at its sixth meeting;
  - (c) Implementation of recommendations made in the evaluation of the intergovernmental mechanism of ESCWA and its subsidiary bodies.
8. Date and venue of the eighth meeting of the Technical Committee.
9. Other matters.
10. Adoption of the recommendations made by the Technical Committee at its seventh meeting.
59. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted the proposed organization of work that is contained in document E/ESCWA/2012/C.7/L.2.

#### E. DOCUMENTS

60. Annex II of this report contains the documents examined by the Technical Committee in its seventh meeting.

## Annex I

### **LIST OF PARTICIPANTS**

#### Jordan

Mr. Ziad Ahmad Obeidat  
Director, Development Plans and Programs  
Ministry of Planning and International  
Cooperation

Mr. Mutasim Al-Kilani  
Head, Sustainable Development Section  
Ministry of Planning and International  
Cooperation

Ms. Wafaa Al-Saket  
Consultant, Asian Relations Section  
International Cooperation Department  
Ministry of Planning and International  
Cooperation

Ms. Raghed Al-Shakhanbeh  
World Bank and United Nations Relations Section  
Ministry of Planning and International  
Cooperation

#### United Arab Emirates

Mr. Mohamed Saleh Al-Shalwah  
Assistant Undersecretary for Economic Policies  
Affairs  
Ministry of Economy

Mr. Nizar Faisal Al-Mashaal  
Director, Cooperation and Economic Agreement  
Department  
Ministry of Economy

#### Bahrain

Mr. Fouad Sadek Al-Baharneh  
Consultant  
Department of Organizations  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

#### Tunisia

Mr. Al-Barni Al-Salhi  
Director-General  
Tunisian Agency for Technical Cooperation  
Ministry of Development and International  
Cooperation

Mr. Abdullah Al-Zakari  
Director-General, multilateral cooperation  
Ministry of Development and International  
Cooperation

#### The Sudan

Mr. Abdul Aziz Mabruk  
Director-General, Foreign Trade  
Ministry of Foreign Trade

Ms. Ikkal Sabil Abkar Ismail  
First Inspector, in charge of relations with  
ESCWA  
Ministry of Trade

Mr. Salah Al-Din Al-Shiekh Khider  
Banking Affairs Directorate  
Central Bank of Sudan

Ms. Asia Abdul Rahman Mohamed  
First Inspector, in charge of relations with  
ESCWA  
Ministry of Finance and National Economy

#### Oman

Mr. Hamed Bin Jaber Bin Saud Al-Mahrooqi  
Director General for Services Sector Development  
Higher Council of Planning

Ms. Suad bent Mohammed Al-Fadhel  
Director of the Technical Cooperation  
Department  
Higher Council of Planning

#### Palestine

Mr. Mahmoud Ataya  
Acting General Director, Social Planning  
Ministry of Planning and Administrative  
Development

Kuwait

Ms. Nadia Salem Al-Jandal  
Assistant Secretary-General for Planning  
General Secretariat  
Supreme council for Planning and Development

Mr. Badr Osman Malallah  
Director-General  
Arab Planning Institute

Ms. Imene Ibrahim Al-Haddad  
Director, Department of International  
Organizations  
International Economic Co-operation Department  
Ministry of Finance

Ms. Hassa Ibrahim Al-Hamlan  
Economic Coordinator  
International Economic Co-operation Department  
Ministry of Finance

Lebanon

Mr. Ali Al-Mawla  
Charge d'Affaires, Lebanese Embassy in Amman  
Jordan

Lybia

Mr. Issam Abd Al-Latif Korboh  
Director, Department of Technical Cooperation  
Ministry of Planning

Mr. Mootaz Al-Sheikhi  
Department of Technical Cooperation  
Ministry of Planning

Egypt

Ms. Amani Fahmi  
Deputy-Assistant Foreign Minister for  
International Economic Relations  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Morocco

Ms. Sara Bou Khabza  
In charge of studies, Office of the Prime Minister  
Ministry of General Affairs and Governance

Saudi Arabia

Mr. Bandar A. Al-Waily  
Deputee Minister for Planning Affairs

Mr. Abdullah Ali Al-Marwani  
Director of Research and Studies Department  
Ministry of Economy and Planning

Yemen

Mr. Mohammed Ahmad Al-Hawiri  
Undersecretary of the Ministry of Planning  
International Economic Studies and Forecasts  
Sector  
Ministry of Planning and International  
Cooperation



Annex II

**LIST OF DOCUMENTS**

Title	Item	Symbol
Provisional agenda and annotations	2	E/ESCWA/2012/C.7/L.1
Organization of work	2	E/ESCWA/2012/C.7/L.2
ESCWA working programme for the 2014-2015 biennium.	3	E/ESCWA/2012/C.7/3
Building capacity of member countries: Best practice in technical cooperation activities and regional advisory services	4	E/ESCWA/2012/C.7/4
Regional and global priorities	5	E/ESCWA/2012/C.7/5
Progress achieved in the preparation of the United Nations development agenda beyond 2015	5 (a)	E/ESCWA/2012/C.7/5(Part I)
Follow-up on the outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20)	5 (b)	E/ESCWA/2012/C.7/5(Part II)
Progress Achieved in the work of the Secretariat	7	E/ESCWA/2012/C.7/6
Implementation of resolutions adopted by ESCWA at its twenty-seventh session	7 (a)	E/ESCWA/2012/C.7/6(Part I)
Implementation of recommendations made by the Technical Committee at its sixth meeting	7 (b)	E/ESCWA/2012/C.7/6(Part II)
Implementation of recommendations made in the evaluation of the intergovernmental mechanism of ESCWA and its subsidiary bodies	7 (c)	E/ESCWA/2012/C.7/6(Part III)
Report of the Technical Committee on its seventh meeting	9	E/ESCWA/2012/C.7/8/Report