



**UNITED NATIONS**  
**ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL**

---

Distr.  
GENERAL  
E/ESCWA/C.1/14/7  
19 February 1987  
ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

**ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR WESTERN ASIA**

Technical Committee  
Fifth session  
31 March - 2 April 1987  
Baghdad

Item 8 of the provisional agenda

**CO-OPERATION AMONG DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AND  
REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**

Note by the Executive Secretary

CO-OPERATION AMONG DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AND  
REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

A. Introduction

Resolutions and operational guidelines adopted in relation to this subject were covered under agenda item 11 of the twelfth and thirteenth sessions of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA). The item refers essentially to co-operation among developing countries and between these countries and regional organizations, with a view to promoting inter- and intraregional self-reliance, supported as appropriate by the United Nations development system which, in this respect, assumes the role of catalyzer. In line with this concept, the ESCWA programme of work and priorities for the biennium 1986/1987 contains catalytic and supportive arrangements designed to promote and co-ordinate regional and interregional activities and co-operation.

B. ESCWA regional activities oriented towards technical co-operation among developing countries (TCDC) and economic co-operation among developing countries (ECDC)

ESCWA has numerous arrangements, regular contacts and good working relations with Arab organizations and institutions at both the regional and national levels. However, the extent of co-operative and joint activities has not grown significantly over the past years. The Executive Secretary visited a number of member States in 1986 and will visit others in the course of 1987 to promote the effective participation of all member States in the work of the Commission and foster linkages for regional co-operation with broader participation of Arab organizations and institutions.

Other visits were made in 1986 to countries outside the region and talks were held with the Governments of France, the Netherlands and the Federal Republic of Germany and with the European Economic Community (EEC) for the purpose of continuing the much-appreciated support and participation of the above in ESCWA activities. Priority areas were emphasized, including specific consultancy services, and attention was drawn to 25 project profiles prepared by ESCWA and contained in its main action programme for the biennium.

Such visits provide a general indication of the more active role that ESCWA member States can assume in supporting efforts directed towards their joint technical and economic co-operation. The secretariat has also initiated, supported and encouraged other meetings and contacts to promote co-operation and co-ordination of activities at the regional level. ESCWA activities supported by regional and international bodies included the following:

1. Co-operation with the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development in organizing the Intergovernmental Technical Meeting on Food Security;
2. Co-operation with the Arab Thought Forum in convening the Meeting of Eminent Persons on Programme Priorities Medium Term Plan 1990 1995 which was held in Amman on 29 and 30 January 1987;

3. Co-operation with the International Fund for Agricultural Development in the monitoring and evaluation of rural development projects;

4. Co-sponsoring the Second Baghdad International Conference on Computer Technology and Applications held from 24 to 26 March 1986. Other co-sponsors were: UNESCO, the Intergovernmental Bureau for Informatics (IBI), the national Computer Centre (NCC) and the Electronics and Computer Research Centre of Iraq.

5. Participation with the Algerian Commissariat aux Energies Nouvelles, Enterprise Nationale des Industries Electroniques, the French Direction de l'industrie electronique et de l'information (DIELI) and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) in co-sponsoring a study and workshop on the establishment of a silicon foundry and design centre in Algeria in 1986. ESCWA and UNIDO jointly prepared the following two reports:

(a) Silicon Foundry and Design Centres in the Arab Region: Issues and Approaches (E/ESCWA/ID/86/CRP/I and UNIDO/IS) of 12 January 1986;

(b) Workshop on Regional Silicon Foundry and Design Centres in the Arab Countries (E/ESCWA/ID/86/CPR.2 and UNIDO/IS.625) of March 1986.

6. Preparation by a consultancy firm of a feasibility study based on a techno-economic study of the manufacture of chemical equipment prepared by ESCWA in a previous biennium. The work of the consultant was drawn up and monitored by sponsoring organizations, namely the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC), the Arab Industrial Development Organization (AIDO), the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development (AFESD) and UNIDO in addition to ESCWA and the document was distributed to member States.

7. In line with the recommendations of the Expert Group Meeting on Scientific and Technological Co-operation among Western Asia Countries which ESCWA convened in October 1985 in co-operation with the Federation of Arab Scientific Research Councils and a number of regional and national Arab scientific centres, project proposals were formulated covering the following areas: solar energy, design of buildings appropriate to the climatic conditions of the region, desertification and wheat production. These proposals represent the first group of research projects designed to strengthen scientific research in the region, and were prepared to be presented to financing institutions inside and outside the region.

In addition, ESCWA provided factual information and prepared reports and research studies on the needs and capacities of its member States, raising issues regarding co-operation and regional economic integration. ESCWA is currently engaged in expanding and updating the Directory of Regional and National Training Institutes, Research Centers, Specialized Agencies, Training and Technical University Programmes in ESCWA countries. This Directory was published both in English and Arabic in 1983 and 1984 respectively to serve as an important tool for strengthening linkages and co-operation among ESCWA countries in areas essential for their socio-economic development. At the same time, ESCWA will undertake the preparation and compilation of a Directory of Arab Professional Women for activities in the field of technical co-operation among developing countries to serve the same purpose.

In addition to the 25 project profiles submitted to EEC and some European governments visited by the Executive Secretary, ESCWA prepared a number of project proposals to be considered by UNDP for financing. These projects are designed to lead to operational technical co-operation among developing countries at the subregional and regional levels and cover the following areas:

- Transport and communications
- Arab labour movement and human resources development
- Utilization of biogas
- Establishment of infrastructure for engineering industries
- Agricultural and marketing information
- Early warning system in connection with food security.

### C. Interregional ECDC/TCDC activities

In line with the aim of strengthening economic relations between the countries of the region and between them and other countries of the world, ESCWA identified and prepared two project proposals which will help to promote interregional ECDC/TCDC activities. These projects are indicated in a note by the Executive Secretary entitled "Co-operation among developing countries and regional organizations" (E/ESCWA/13/10) submitted to the Commission at its thirteenth session. The draft documents of these two projects and the question of their financing and possible sources of funding were on the agenda of the Executive Secretaries Meeting scheduled to be held in Bangkok in 1986. This meeting, however could not be convened as planned owing to the financial crisis of the United Nations and was postponed; it was held in February 1987.

During the high-level meeting of the Group of 77 on economic co-operation among developing countries, held from 18 to 23 August 1986 in Cairo, ESCWA represented the other regional commissions and briefed the participants on the activities of these commissions and the development among them of 18 interregional ECDC/TCDC projects, stressing the advanced stage of these projects and the need for financial resources to secure their implementation.