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

**Seventy-third session**  
Bangkok, 15-19 May 2017

**Annotated provisional agenda**

The present document contains the provisional agenda for the seventy-third session of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (section I) and the annotations to the provisional agenda (section II).

**I. Provisional agenda****A. Senior officials segment**

1. Opening of the session:
  - (a) Opening addresses;
  - (b) Election of officers;
  - (c) Adoption of the agenda.
2. Special Body on Least Developed, Landlocked Developing and Pacific Island Developing Countries:
  - (a) Development issues relevant to least developed countries;
  - (b) Development issues relevant to landlocked developing countries;
  - (c) Development issues relevant to Pacific island developing countries;
  - (d) Asia-Pacific Countries with Special Needs Development Report 2017.
3. Review of issues pertinent to the subsidiary structure of the Commission, including the work of the regional institutions:
  - (a) Macroeconomic policy, poverty reduction and financing for development;
  - (b) Trade and investment;
  - (c) Transport;
  - (d) Environment and development;
  - (e) Information and communications technology, science, technology and innovation;
  - (f) Disaster risk reduction;
  - (g) Social development;
  - (h) Statistics;
  - (i) Subregional activities for development;
  - (j) Energy.

4. Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific:
  - (a) Fourth Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development;
  - (b) Financing for development.
5. Management issues:
  - (a) Proposed programme of work for the biennium 2018-2019;
  - (b) Programme changes for the biennium 2016-2017;
  - (c) Overview of partnerships, extrabudgetary contributions and capacity development.
6. Review of the implementation of Commission resolution 71/1.
7. Activities of the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission.
8. Dates, venue and theme topic for the seventy-fourth session of the Commission (2018).

## **B. Ministerial segment**

9. Policy issues for the Asia-Pacific region:
  - (a) Inclusive and sustainable economic and social development in Asia and the Pacific through regional economic cooperation and integration;
  - (b) Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific 2017.
10. Theme topic for the seventy-third session of the Commission: “Regional cooperation for sustainable energy”.
11. Other matters.
12. Adoption of the report of the Commission.

## **II. Annotations**

### **A. Senior officials segment**

#### **1. Opening of the session**

##### **(a) Opening addresses**

The detailed programme for the opening of the session will be made available upon finalization.

##### **(b) Election of officers**

Rule 13 of the rules of procedure of the Commission states: “The Commission shall, at its first meeting of each year, elect from among its representatives a Chairman and two Vice-Chairmen, designated as First and Second Vice-Chairmen, who shall hold office until their successors are elected. They shall be eligible for re-election.” If the plenary so decides, the rule may be applied differently to enable the Commission to elect more than

two Vice-Chairs, as has been the practice at previous sessions, in which case the Commission may elect a bureau of officers composed of a Chair and several Vice-Chairs.

The senior officials segment may decide to meet in two committees of the whole and a working group on draft resolutions. It would then elect Chairs and Vice-Chairs for each.

The ministerial segment will elect the Chair and Vice-Chairs of the Commission.

**(c) Adoption of the agenda**

**Documentation**

Provisional agenda (E/ESCAP/73/L.1)

Annotated provisional agenda (E/ESCAP/73/L.2)

**2. Special Body on Least Developed, Landlocked Developing and Pacific Island Developing Countries**

**(a) Development issues relevant to least developed countries**

**Documentation**

Regional implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020 (E/ESCAP/73/1)

Report on the Regional Capacity-building Workshop on Sustainable Development Goals Modelling for the Least Developed Countries in Asia and the Pacific (E/ESCAP/73/2)

**Regional implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020 (E/ESCAP/73/1)**

In May 2011, the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020 (Istanbul Programme of Action) was adopted by the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries. The Istanbul Programme of Action aims to overcome the structural challenges faced by least developed countries through support for graduation from least developed country status and by building human and productive capacities. Its overarching objective is to support the sustainable development of the least developed countries, in pursuit of that, one goal is to enable half of the least developed countries to meet the criteria for graduation by 2020. The sustainable development objective was strongly endorsed, in general, by the international community's adoption, in September 2015, of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Many least developed countries in the region have made significant progress in areas related to human development. As a group, the least developed countries in the region reduced poverty by half and are expected to halve the proportion of underweight children. They also achieved gender parity in primary and secondary education and reversed the prevalence of infectious diseases. Even when the targets of the Millennium Development Goals were not met, such as for maternal mortality or primary education, many least developed countries have progressed faster than the average country in the region.

However, there has been wide divergence in economic growth performance among the least developed countries; only the least developed countries in South-East Asia have achieved the threshold of 7 per cent annual growth set in the Istanbul Programme of Action. In addition, least developed countries in the region have witnessed limited structural transformation and continue to have wide gaps in infrastructure development. Furthermore, progress in addressing their needs for financial and technical assistance, official development assistance, trade capacity, market access and debt relief has been less than expected.

The socioeconomic development of the least developed countries also continues to be constrained by many factors, including limited productive capacities, high trade costs and geographic features. These countries are also the most vulnerable to climate change consequences and natural disasters, making economic growth, social inclusion and environmental management a far greater challenge.

The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) may wish to review the status of implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action in the Asia-Pacific region. It may also wish to provide further guidance on how the secretariat can assist least developed countries in the region, in cooperation with development partners and other international entities, while taking into account their respective mandates, in implementing the Programme of Action and in particular in graduating from the least developed country category.

**Report on the Regional Capacity-building Workshop on Sustainable Development Goals Modelling for the Least Developed Countries in Asia and the Pacific (E/ESCAP/73/2)**

In its resolution 72/6, the Commission requested the Executive Secretary to support the efforts of member States to develop integrated approaches, models and tools aimed at enhancing regional cooperation with regard to the Sustainable Development Goals. The least developed countries in the region have initiated work on a framework to integrate the Goals into national development planning frameworks. Yet, they require substantial financial and technical assistance to further develop their analytical and modelling capacities. Integrated approaches enable policymakers to appropriately assess medium- to long-term development perspectives and their policy implications. This would help guide national development policy management and responses, which can further support the use of integrated modelling approaches towards achieving sustainable development.

As a follow-up to resolution 72/6, the secretariat, in cooperation with the Government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, held the Regional Capacity-building Workshop on Sustainable Development Goals Modelling for the Least Developed Countries in Asia and the Pacific, in Vientiane on 30 June 2016. At the Workshop, member States requested ESCAP to continue to facilitate regional cooperation to advance the development of modelling frameworks to assess the impact of policies on sustainable development in the region and to prepare a regional road map to guide and coordinate work in developing such capacities in relevant national agencies. It was recognized that the rich discussion and sharing of experiences would help to harness regional partnerships for building a modelling framework for effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda in the Asia-Pacific region.

The Commission may wish to review the key outcomes of the Regional Capacity-building Workshop and provide the secretariat with

further guidance on how least developed countries in Asia and the Pacific, and their development partners, can use modelling frameworks to assess the impact of policies on the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action and the 2030 Agenda at the regional and national levels.

**(b) Development issues relevant to landlocked developing countries**

**Documentation**

Regional implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014-2024 (E/ESCAP/73/3)

In the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014-2024, regional and subregional organizations, governing bodies of United Nations system entities and international organizations were invited to mainstream the Vienna Programme of Action into their programmes of work. In its resolution 71/3, the Commission requested the Executive Secretary to mainstream the Programme of Action into the programme of work of the Commission, as appropriate and within its mandate, and to submit annual analytical reports on the implementation of the Programme of Action.

The 12 Asia-Pacific landlocked developing countries continue to make significant efforts in achieving sustainable and inclusive development since the Vienna Programme of Action was adopted in November 2014. However, the continuing weakness in the global trade and investment environment and the failure of commodity prices to recover to their previous levels have compounded these countries' development challenges. They face significant infrastructure gaps and have limited financial capacities for maintaining infrastructure which is already in place. Consequently, growth in most of these countries has remained tepid, with declining export earnings, rising unemployment, falling remittances, rapid currency devaluations and widening income disparities.

Support for the regional implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action has been mainstreamed into the programme of work of the Commission. It outlines the mobilization of national, regional and international actions in support of the development efforts of the landlocked developing countries, with a focus on six interrelated priority areas: (1) fundamental transit policy issues; (2) infrastructure development and maintenance; (3) international trade and trade facilitation; (4) regional integration and cooperation; (5) structural economic transformation; and (6) means of implementation. ESCAP provides policy support for the integration of transboundary infrastructure and corridor development programmes and projects in national development strategies.

The Commission may wish to provide guidance to the secretariat on assisting landlocked developing countries, in cooperation with their development partners and other international entities, in the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action and in building their capacity to make appropriate policy responses that address their special development needs and challenges in a more integrated manner.

**(c) Development issues relevant to Pacific island developing countries****Documentation**

Report on progress made on the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway and the Sustainable Development Goals in the Pacific (E/ESCAP/73/4)

While the 2030 Agenda has gained global and regional prominence in the Asia-Pacific region, support must be tailored to subregional and national policy frameworks to address the unique context and special situation of Pacific small island developing States. In 2015, Pacific leaders called for the selection of subregional Sustainable Development Goal indicators to better reflect the Pacific context through open and inclusive processes that account for national priorities. The process for follow-up and review would use subregional Goal indicators to jointly monitor progress on the Goals, the Framework for Pacific Regionalism and the implementation of the Samoa Pathway, using existing work streams to avoid duplication and to reduce the reporting burden at the country level. A Pacific Sustainable Development Goals Taskforce was established to lead this process, with the ESCAP secretariat representing United Nations regional interests and the United Nations Development Programme representing national-level localization initiatives.

At the core of this process is a recognition that regional and subregional responses to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals must add value to national and global efforts and that they will be essential where goals cover regional public goods. In the Pacific, this includes the resources of the vast Pacific Ocean as well as those resources implied in the means of implementation of the Goals, including those on financing, trade and statistical capacity development. Throughout 2016, this country-led and regionally supported initiative made significant progress, including the assessment of an initial list of 145 indicators against existing Pacific subregional sectoral policy frameworks and agreements. The analysis also yielded valuable insights into the subregional public policy process in the Pacific, the vastly differing levels of ambition and coherence of existing policy commitments and the limited attention to defining measurable benchmarks for monitoring and review. The secretariat will continue to support Pacific island member States and align support for the Samoa Pathway and the Goals in the Pacific subregion with Asia-Pacific regional processes for monitoring, follow-up and review.

The Commission may wish to take note of the report and provide the secretariat with further guidance on the issues identified therein.

**(d) Asia-Pacific Countries with Special Needs Development Report 2017****Documentation**

Summary of the Asia-Pacific Countries with Special Needs Development Report 2017 (E/ESCAP/73/5)

*Asia-Pacific Countries with Special Needs Development Report 2017: Investing in Infrastructure for an Inclusive and Sustainable Future* focuses on the development challenges of the region's least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States. Its main purpose is to provide in-depth and policy-oriented socioeconomic analysis of the status, challenges and prospects of each of these groups of countries as

well as targeted policy options to promote their inclusive growth and sustainable development.

The main theme of the 2017 issue of the *Report* is challenges in infrastructure development. The 36 economies in this group have made uneven progress during the past decades in developing their physical infrastructure and improving its overall quality. Traditional sources of financing will be inadequate to meet the infrastructure investment needs of these countries. Document E/ESCAP/73/5 summarizes the main results and policy recommendations included in *Asia-Pacific Countries with Special Needs Development Report 2017*. The emphasis is on the need for a broader regional discussion on financing strategies for infrastructure development in countries with special needs in Asia and the Pacific. The findings are based on the results of an analytical framework and a survey of expert opinions from a representative sample on the priorities within various sectors of infrastructure, as well as a survey of the sources of financing in the countries with special needs in Asia and the Pacific.

The Commission may wish to take note of the document and provide further guidance to the secretariat on the issues identified therein.

### **3. Review of issues pertinent to the subsidiary structure of the Commission, including the work of the regional institutions**

The documents listed below cover the work of the subprogrammes, and the relevant sections will be deliberated under each subprogramme as appropriate.

#### **Documentation**

Summary of progress in the implementation of Commission resolutions (E/ESCAP/73/6)

Interim programme performance report for the biennium 2016-2017 (E/ESCAP/73/INF/7)

Item 3 of the provisional agenda focuses on (1) addressing the work of the nine subprogrammes, including the work of the regional institutions, in the context of recent globally agreed development agendas, including the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals, and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development; (2) the reports of subsidiary bodies of the Commission (of which sessions have been held since the most recent Commission session); (3) reports of other intergovernmental bodies; and (4) progress in the implementation of Commission mandates.

The expected outcomes under this agenda item are (1) identification of emerging development issues, including those emanating from the 2030 Agenda, that merit policy dialogue; (2) identification of progress made and gaps requiring priority attention, with regard to the implementation of Commission mandates; (3) follow-up actions to major global conferences; (4) articulation of Asian and Pacific perspectives on issues that will be addressed in major global forums in 2017; (5) endorsement of the reports of the subsidiary bodies that have held sessions since the seventy-second session of the Commission; and (6) identification of key issues to be taken up in meetings of subsidiary bodies in 2017.

The document entitled “Interim programme performance report for the biennium 2016-2017” contains an assessment of the implementation of outputs and activities for the biennium measured against the expected accomplishments for each subprogramme as set out in the strategic framework for the biennium. The interim report consists of highlights of programme achievements and results, by subprogramme, for the first year of the biennium.

The Commission may wish to provide the secretariat with guidance on how the work of the subprogrammes, including that of the regional institutions, can further support member States’ implementation of the 2030 Agenda by identifying, for example, priorities, gaps in implementation and any required technical assistance at the subregional or regional level.

**(a) Macroeconomic policy, poverty reduction and financing for development**

**Documentation**

Summary of progress in the implementation of Commission resolutions (E/ESCAP/73/6, resolution 71/4)

Report of the Governing Council of the Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Sustainable Agriculture on its thirteenth session (E/ESCAP/73/8)

Report on the Regional Workshop on the Adaptation of the 2030 Agenda and the Istanbul Programme of Action at the National Level for the Least Developed Countries in Asia and the Pacific (E/ESCAP/73/9)

**Summary of progress in the implementation of Commission resolutions (E/ESCAP/73/6, resolution 71/4)**

The document contains a summary of progress made in the implementation of resolution 71/4 on the implementation of the Samoa Pathway.

The Commission may wish to review the progress made and provide the secretariat with further guidance for the effective implementation of the resolution.

**Report of the Governing Council of the Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Sustainable Agriculture on its thirteenth session (E/ESCAP/73/8)**

The Commission may wish to review the report of the Governing Council of the Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Sustainable Agriculture and provide the secretariat with guidance on the future work of the Centre.

**Report on the Regional Workshop on the Adaptation of the 2030 Agenda and the Istanbul Programme of Action at the National Level for the Least Developed Countries in Asia and the Pacific (E/ESCAP/73/9)**

The Regional Workshop on the Adaptation of the 2030 Agenda and the Istanbul Programme of Action at the National Level for the Least Developed Countries in Asia and the Pacific was organized with the cooperation of the Government of the Lao People’s Democratic Republic and held in Vientiane on 28 and 29 June 2016. The aim was to examine effective ways to address the challenges involved in the simultaneous implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020 (Istanbul Programme of Action) and the 2030 Agenda for Asia-Pacific least developed countries.

The importance of promoting cross-sectoral and integrated approaches in the adaptation of the 2030 Agenda was highlighted. Policymakers and other stakeholders need to be aware of development strategies and policy options, including, for example, those related to the implementation of Istanbul Programme of Action that focus on similar priority areas and development goals. For that purpose, regional cooperation can play a key role in this effort and can be promoted through the dissemination of good practices and lessons learned and capacity-building efforts.

The document contains a summary of the outcomes and policy discussions considered by the government representatives at the Workshop and recommendations on regional cooperation for advancing the creation of a space for dialogue on effectively adapting the 2030 Agenda to the national realities of least developed countries and other countries with special needs in the region.

The Commission may wish to take note of the report.

**(b) Trade and investment**

**Documentation**

Summary of progress in the implementation of Commission resolutions (E/ESCAP/73/6, resolutions 70/6, 72/4 and 72/12)

Report of the Committee on Information and Communications Technology, Science, Technology and Innovation on its first session (E/ESCAP/73/10)

Report of the 3rd meeting of the Interim Intergovernmental Steering Group on Cross-border Paperless Trade Facilitation (E/ESCAP/73/11)

Report on trade, investment, science, technology and innovation as means of implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (E/ESCAP/73/12)

Report of the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology on its twelfth session (E/ESCAP/73/13)

Report of the Governing Council of the Centre for Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization on its twelfth session (E/ESCAP/73/14)

**Summary of progress in the implementation of Commission resolutions (E/ESCAP/73/6, resolutions 70/6, 72/4 and 72/12)**

The document contains summaries of the progress made in the implementation of the following resolutions:

(1) 70/6 on the implementation of the decision of the Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Meeting on a Regional Arrangement for the Facilitation of Cross-border Paperless Trade;

(2) 72/4 on the Framework Agreement on Facilitation of Cross-border Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific;

(3) 72/12 on harnessing science, technology and innovation for inclusive and sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific.

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

**Report of the Committee on Information and Communications Technology, Science, Technology and Innovation on its first session (E/ESCAP/73/10)**

The Committee on Information and Communications Technology, Science, Technology and Innovation held its first session in Bangkok from 5 to 7 October 2016. The Committee proceeded with parallel sessions, one focusing on information and communications technology (ICT) and the other on science, technology and innovation. During the sessions on the latter topic, the Committee reviewed potential policy priority areas in which ESCAP could support member countries. The Committee considered draft terms of reference for a biennial innovation forum. It also heard from various subregional institutions working on science, technology and innovation.

The Commission may wish to consider matters calling for action or brought to its attention, as contained in the report of the Committee, especially the terms of reference for an innovation forum and matters of policy prioritization, and provide the secretariat with further guidance.

**Report of the 3rd meeting of the Interim Intergovernmental Steering Group on Cross-border Paperless Trade Facilitation (E/ESCAP/73/11)**

The Interim Intergovernmental Steering Group on Cross-border Paperless Trade Facilitation held its 3rd meeting on 23 and 24 March 2017 to further develop the draft road map in support of the implementation of the provisions of the Framework Agreement on Facilitation of Cross-border Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific.

The Commission may wish to take note of the report and provide the secretariat with further guidance on the future work of the Steering Group.

**Report on trade, investment, science, technology and innovation as means of implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (E/ESCAP/73/12)**

There has been a great deal of attention on financing and science, technology and innovation as means of implementation of the 2030 Agenda. However, trade and foreign direct investment remain vital means of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Trade is an important part of the process of generating sustainable resource consumption, decent work and economic growth, while foreign direct investment can provide non-debt financing in a targeted and equally sustainable manner.

The Commission may wish to take note of the report, which contains a review of efforts to support trade, investment, science, technology and innovation as means of implementation in the region, and provide the secretariat further guidance on the issues identified therein.

**Report of the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology on its twelfth session (E/ESCAP/73/13)**

The Commission may wish to review the report of the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology and provide the secretariat with guidance for the future work of the Centre.

**Report of the Governing Council of the Centre for Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization on its twelfth session (E/ESCAP/73/14)**

The Commission may wish to review the report of the Governing Council of the Centre for Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization and provide the secretariat with guidance for the future work of the Centre.

**(c) Transport**

**Documentation**

Summary of progress in the implementation of Commission resolutions (E/ESCAP/73/6, resolutions 68/4, 70/7, 70/8, 71/7 and 71/8)

Report of the Ministerial Conference on Transport on its third session (E/ESCAP/73/15)

Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Transport Connectivity in Asia and the Pacific, including the Regional Action Programme for Sustainable Transport Connectivity in Asia and the Pacific, phase I (2017-2021) (E/ESCAP/73/15/Add.1)

Global attention to sustainable transport development (E/ESCAP/73/INF/6)

**Summary of progress in the implementation of Commission resolutions (E/ESCAP/73/6, resolutions 68/4, 70/7, 70/8, 71/7 and 71/8)**

The document contains summaries of the progress made in the implementation of the following resolutions:

(1) 68/4 on the implementation of the Ministerial Declaration on Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific, including the Regional Action Programme for Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific, phase II (2012-2016), and the Regional Strategic Framework for the Facilitation of International Road Transport;

(2) 70/7 on the implementation of the Suva Declaration on Improving Maritime Transport and Related Services in the Pacific;

(3) 70/8 on the implementation of the Ministerial Declaration on Transport as a Key to Sustainable Development and Regional Integration;

(4) 71/7 on the adoption of the Regional Cooperation Framework for the Facilitation of International Railway Transport;

(5) 71/8 on strengthening intraregional and interregional connectivity in Asia and the Pacific.

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

**Report of the Ministerial Conference on Transport on its third session (E/ESCAP/73/15)**

**Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Transport Connectivity in Asia and the Pacific, including the Regional Action Programme for Sustainable Transport Connectivity in Asia and the Pacific, phase I (2017-2021) (E/ESCAP/73/15/Add.1)**

The Ministerial Conference on Transport held its third session in Moscow from 5 to 9 December 2016. The Conference reviewed and deliberated on emerging issues in transport, which led to the creation of recommendations on policy actions and initiatives to enhance regional transport cooperation and connectivity for sustainable development. The Conference culminated in the adoption of the Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Transport Connectivity in Asia and the Pacific, including the Regional Action Programme for Sustainable Transport Connectivity in Asia and the Pacific, phase I (2017-2021).

The Commission may wish to consider matters calling for action or brought to its attention, as contained in the report of the Conference, and provide the secretariat with further guidance.

**Global attention to sustainable transport development (E/ESCAP/73/INF/6)**

Sustainable transport drives poverty alleviation and sustainable development. There are a number of Sustainable Development Goals linked to transport, including Goal 3 on health, Goal 7 on energy, Goal 8 on decent work and economic growth, Goal 9 on resilient infrastructure, Goal 11 on sustainable cities, Goal 12 on sustainable consumption and production, and Goal 14 on oceans, seas and marine resources. In addition, sustainable transport enables the implementation of nearly all the Goals through connectivity-access impacts. In recognition of the comprehensive role of sustainable transport, the United Nations convened the first ever Global Conference on Sustainable Transport in Ashgabat on 26 and 27 November 2016. The information paper includes a brief introduction to the Conference, its major discussions and outcomes.

The Commission may wish to take note of the document.

**(d) Environment and development**

**Documentation**

Summary of progress in the implementation of Commission resolutions (E/ESCAP/73/6, resolutions 71/9, 72/6 and 72/8)

Urbanization and sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific: linkages and policy implications (E/ESCAP/73/16)

Starting implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the Asia-Pacific region: a focus on integration and environment and development issues (E/ESCAP/73/17)

Report of the Coordinating Committee for Geoscience Programmes in East and South-East Asia (CCOP) (E/ESCAP/73/INF/1/Rev.1)

Report of the Mekong River Commission (E/ESCAP/73/INF/2)

**Summary of progress in the implementation of Commission resolutions (E/ESCAP/73/6, resolutions 71/9, 72/6 and 72/8)**

The document contains summaries of the progress made in the implementation of the following resolutions:

- (1) 71/9 on strengthening cooperation on sustainable management of water resources in Asia and the Pacific;
- (2) 72/6 on committing to the effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific;
- (3) 72/8 on fostering regional cooperation and partnerships to respond to the climate change challenge in the Asia-Pacific region.

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

**Urbanization and sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific: linkages and policy implications (E/ESCAP/73/16)**

The Asia-Pacific region has experienced rapid urbanization, and this trend is projected to accelerate in the coming years and to bring about unprecedented demographic, economic and social shifts. Urban development in the region will have an important impact on prospects for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Furthermore, the adoption of the New Urban Agenda by the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) provides an opportunity to advance sustainable urban development in the region in support of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The document includes a review of trends, linkages between urbanization and sustainable development, and policy implications in the region.

The Commission may wish to take note of the document and provide the secretariat with further guidance.

**Starting implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the Asia-Pacific region: a focus on integration and environment and development issues (E/ESCAP/73/17)**

The document includes a regional outlook for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda which focuses on critical interlinked issues, bright spots, hotspots and emerging issues. By highlighting the interlinkages across the environment-related Sustainable Development Goals, the way multiple benefits and improved efficiency can be achieved is demonstrated. The document also includes an analytical tool for planning the implementation of the Goals with water and sanitation (Goal 6) at its core as a practical example of how the indivisibility of Goals might be delivered.

The Commission may wish to take note of the document and provide further guidance.

**Report of the Coordinating Committee for Geoscience Programmes in East and South-East Asia (CCOP) (E/ESCAP/73/INF/1/Rev.1)**

The Commission may wish to take note of the report.

**Report of the Mekong River Commission (E/ESCAP/73/INF/2)**

The Commission may wish to take note of the report.

**(e) Information and communications technology, science, technology and innovation**

**(f) Disaster risk reduction**

**Documentation**

Summary of progress in the implementation of Commission resolutions (E/ESCAP/73/6, resolutions 70/13, 71/10, 71/12 and 72/7)

Report of the Committee on Information and Communications Technology, Science, Technology and Innovation on its first session (E/ESCAP/73/10)

Report of the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development on its eleventh session (E/ESCAP/73/18)

Report of the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management on its first session (E/ESCAP/73/19)

Space applications for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (E/ESCAP/73/20)

Report on regional cooperation mechanisms for multi-hazard risk assessment and early warning (E/ESCAP/73/21)

Report of the Typhoon Committee (E/ESCAP/73/INF/3/Rev.1)

Report of the Panel on Tropical Cyclones (E/ESCAP/73/INF/4)

**Summary of progress in the implementation of Commission resolutions (E/ESCAP/73/6, resolutions 70/13, 71/10, 71/12 and 72/7)**

The document contains summaries of the progress made in the implementation of the following resolutions:

(1) 70/13 on regional cooperation for building resilience to disasters in Asia and the Pacific;

(2) 71/10 on strengthening regional ICT connectivity through the Asia-Pacific information superhighway;

(3) 71/12 on strengthening regional mechanisms for the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 in Asia and the Pacific;

(4) 72/7 on regional cooperation to combat sand and dust storms in Asia and the Pacific.

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

**Report of the Committee on Information and Communications Technology, Science, Technology and Innovation on its first session (E/ESCAP/73/10)**

The Committee on Information and Communications Technology, Science, Technology and Innovation held its first session in Bangkok from 5 to 7 October 2016. The Committee called for the active participation of Governments and other stakeholders in the implementation of the Asia-Pacific information superhighway initiative and requested the secretariat to continue to accord priority to work supporting the initiative through analysis, capacity-building, promotion of regional cooperation, sharing of best practices, and development and promotion of common standards. The Committee subsequently endorsed the Master Plan for the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway and the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway Regional Cooperation Framework Document. The Committee further emphasized the need to continue strengthening human capacity development in ICT in the region and welcomed the Women ICT Frontier Initiative, the new flagship programme of the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development.

The Commission may wish to consider the matters calling for action or brought to its attention, as contained in the report of the Committee, and provide the secretariat with further guidance.

**Report of the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development on its eleventh session (E/ESCAP/73/18)**

The Commission may wish to review the report of the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development and provide the secretariat with guidance on the future work of the Centre.

**Report of the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management on its first session (E/ESCAP/73/19)**

The establishment of the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management helps to strengthen regional capacity and to fill in critical information and knowledge gaps, with an initial focus on seismic risk, dust and sandstorms, and droughts in South and South-West Asia and Central Asia.

The Commission may wish to review the report and provide the secretariat with guidance for the future work of the Centre.

**Space applications for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (E/ESCAP/73/20)**

Space applications have great potential as a tool to address some critical areas of the new global development landscape, in particular for the attainment of the objectives of the 2030 Agenda and of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030. Through its 20-year-old Regional Space Applications Programme for Sustainable Development, the Commission brings together space agencies and related stakeholders to discuss and address the challenges of space technology applications and geographic information systems for disaster risk reduction and sustainable development. With the end of the current Asia-Pacific Plan of Action for Applications of Space Technology and Geographic Information Systems for

Disaster Risk Reduction and Sustainable Development, 2012-2017, which guides the work of the Regional Space Applications Programme, consultations have started on a new Asia-Pacific plan of action for space applications (2018-2030), including on priority areas to support work on the Sustainable Development Goals. The heads of national space agencies met in New Delhi in November 2016 and provided recommendations on how to reposition the Regional Space Applications Programme and the Commission's space applications programme in this new development environment. They underlined that though significant gaps still exist between the spacefaring countries and those that lack the capacity to access space-derived information, there was great potential in the use of space applications in areas such as disaster risk management, food security and environmental resource management, including land, water, air and oceans, as well as many other sectors.

The Commission may wish to review the document and provide the secretariat with further guidance on a draft Asia-Pacific plan of action on space applications for sustainable development.

**Report on regional cooperation mechanisms for multi-hazard risk assessment and early warning (E/ESCAP/73/21)**

The report contains an outline on how, within the overall context of the regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda in Asia and the Pacific, ESCAP has prioritized the Asia Regional Plan for Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, which was adopted at the seventh Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction. To implement the Asia Regional Plan, ESCAP will focus on transboundary multi-hazard early warning systems and disaster risk assessment and use its unique role as the intergovernmental platform for the Asia-Pacific region to strengthen regional cooperation mechanisms. The establishment of the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management and the proposed Asia-Pacific plan of action for space applications (2018-2030) together with the Regional Space Applications Programme for Sustainable Development network will strengthen multi-hazard risk assessment and early warning systems, particularly for cross-border disasters. For the implementation of the above initiatives, it is envisaged that the Asia-Pacific Regional Coordination Mechanism – particularly through its Thematic Working Group on Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience – will serve as a platform for a one United Nations approach to building disaster resilience in the region.

The Commission may wish to review the report and provide the secretariat with further guidance

**Report of the Typhoon Committee (E/ESCAP/73/INF/3/Rev.1)**

The Commission may wish to take note of the report.

**Report of the Panel on Tropical Cyclones (E/ESCAP/73/INF/4)**

The Commission may wish to take note of the report.

**(g) Social development****Documentation**

Summary of progress in the implementation of Commission resolutions (E/ESCAP/73/6, resolution 70/14)

Preparations for the third regional review of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing in Asia and the Pacific (E/ESCAP/73/22)

Preparations for the high-level intergovernmental meeting on the midpoint review of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013-2022 (E/ESCAP/73/23)

**Summary of progress in the implementation of Commission resolutions (E/ESCAP/73/6, resolution 70/14)**

The document contains a summary of the progress made in the implementation of resolution 70/14 on enhancing participation of youth in sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific.

The Commission may wish to review the progress made and provide the secretariat with further guidance for the effective implementation of the resolution.

**Preparations for the third regional review of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing in Asia and the Pacific (E/ESCAP/73/22)**

Population ageing is one of the key challenges to sustainable development in the Asia-Pacific region, one which has a profound impact on economies and societies. In 2050, one quarter of the population in the Asia-Pacific region will be older than 60, and the proportion of the working-age population in the region as a whole is already shrinking. While countries in Europe with ageing populations had almost a century to prepare, many countries in the Asia-Pacific region are ageing within 20 to 30 years and without adequate social protection systems in place.

The Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, which was adopted in 2002, is the first global action plan to address population ageing and to seek to improve the well-being of people of all ages. The third regional review of the Plan of Action, which is mandated by resolution 2015/5 of the Economic and Social Council, will take place in 2017; an intergovernmental meeting will be held in Bangkok from 12 to 14 September 2017. In the lead-up to the intergovernmental meeting, in 2016, ESCAP administered a survey to assess progress in the implementation of the Plan of Action. The analysis of the responses will be submitted to the intergovernmental meeting as an official document.

The Commission may wish to provide the secretariat with guidance and comments on the preparations for the third regional review of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing.

**Preparations for the high-level intergovernmental meeting on the midpoint review of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013-2022 (E/ESCAP/73/23)**

In Asia and the Pacific, there are 650 million persons living with disabilities, many of whom are left behind by development opportunities.

Commission resolution 69/13 on the implementation of the Ministerial Declaration on the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013-2022, and the Incheon Strategy to “Make the Right Real” for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific provides the region with a tool to promote disability-inclusive development for the Decade by emphasizing evidence-based policymaking.

The high-level intergovernmental meeting on the midpoint review of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013-2022, will be hosted by the Government of China and convened in the fourth quarter of 2017. The meeting will review the progress made in implementing the Incheon Strategy over the first half of the Decade and adopt an outcome document to promote expedited action for the remaining five years, from 2018 to 2022. In the lead-up to the meeting, the secretariat conducted a midpoint survey on the Incheon Strategy, targeting Governments, civil society organizations and international organizations. The analysis of the responses will be submitted to the meeting as an official document.

The Commission may wish to provide the secretariat with guidance and comments on the preparations for the high-level intergovernmental meeting.

#### **(h) Statistics**

##### **Documentation**

Report of the Committee on Statistics on its fifth session (E/ESCAP/73/24)

Report on the Regional Steering Group for Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific on its 2nd meeting (E/ESCAP/73/25)

Report of the Governing Council of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific on its twelfth session (E/ESCAP/73/26)

##### **Report of the Committee on Statistics on its fifth session (E/ESCAP/73/24)**

The Committee on Statistics held its fifth session in Bangkok from 14 to 16 December 2016 with an agenda that focused on the advancement of official statistics for the 2030 Agenda. The Committee deliberated on a proposed collective vision and framework for action; the vision communicated the shared ambition for 2030 and the framework for action translated the vision into priority actions and implementation mechanisms.

The vision and framework for action constitute the Asia-Pacific statistical community’s response to the commitments set out in the 2030 Agenda, including those on systematically following up and reviewing its implementation in support of effective implementation and accountability for development results. It will function as a reference for strengthening statistical capacity in support of the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and it will inform the ongoing intergovernmental process to develop a regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda in Asia and the Pacific.

In the report, the Committee recommended that the Commission consider convening the sixth session of the Committee, in 2018, at a higher decision-making level, given the critical importance of high-level government commitment to the successful implementation of the framework of action, to secure political, institutional and resource support, and to mobilize broad-based partnership in order to achieve the collective vision of

transforming national statistical systems in support of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

The Commission may also wish to take note of the matters brought to its attention, as contained in the report of the Committee, and provide the secretariat with further guidance.

**Report on the Regional Steering Group for Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific on its 2nd meeting (E/ESCAP/73/25)**

The Regional Steering Group for Civil Registration and Vital Statistics was established by the Commission at its seventy-first session to oversee the implementation of the Regional Action Framework on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific. The Steering Group held its 2nd meeting in Bangkok on 6 and 7 September 2016 and reviewed key issues in the region with regard to progressing towards the goals and targets of the Regional Action Framework, particularly in the context of the 2030 Agenda. It identified priority actions and made recommendations on strengthening regional collaborations to accelerate the implementation of the Regional Action Framework that leverage the opportunities proffered by the emphasis on the 2030 Agenda.

The Commission may wish to review and endorse the report and provide guidance to the secretariat on strengthening support for the implementation of the recommendations contained therein.

**Report of the Governing Council of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific on its twelfth session (E/ESCAP/73/26)**

The Commission may wish to review the report of the Governing Council of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific and provide the secretariat with guidance on the future work of the Institute.

**(i) Subregional activities for development**

**Documentation**

Report of the Governing Council of the Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia on its eleventh session (E/ESCAP/73/27)

Subregional perspectives on sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific (E/ESCAP/73/28)

**Report of the Governing Council of the Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia on its eleventh session (E/ESCAP/73/27)**

The Commission may wish to review the report of the Governing Council of the Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia and provide the secretariat with guidance on the future work of the Programme.

**Subregional perspectives on sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific (E/ESCAP/73/28)**

The document contains an outline of key issues and priority areas related to sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific and in particular the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. It also contains an examination of the opportunities for deepening regional economic cooperation and integration as a key strategy to effectively achieve the Sustainable

Development Goals. The steps taken and activities planned by the subregional offices of the secretariat to support member countries through policy analysis, dialogue and capacity-building, in line with the various subprogrammes of the Commission, are highlighted.

The Commission may wish to provide the secretariat with further guidance.

**(j) Energy**

**Documentation**

Summary of progress in the implementation of Commission resolutions (E/ESCAP/73/6, resolution 70/9)

Report of the Committee on Energy on its first session (E/ESCAP/73/30)

Status of the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 7 in Asia and the Pacific (E/ESCAP/73/INF/5)

**Summary of progress in the implementation of Commission resolutions (E/ESCAP/73/6, resolution 70/9)**

The document contains a summary of the progress made in the implementation of resolution 70/9 on the implementation of the outcomes of the first Asian and Pacific Energy Forum.

The Commission may wish to review the progress made and provide the secretariat with further guidance for the effective implementation of the resolution.

**Report of the Committee on Energy on its first session (E/ESCAP/73/30)**

The Committee on Energy held its first session in Bangkok from 17 to 19 January 2017. The Committee deliberated on issues related to the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 7 and strengthening energy security as a building block in developing a resilient society based on cooperation and collaboration. The Committee also deliberated on the integration of the different dimensions of sustainable development with a view to transforming the energy sector to support sustained economic growth that is socially inclusive and environmentally sustainable.

The Commission may wish to consider the matters brought to its attention, as contained in the report of the Committee, provide the secretariat with further guidance and take any appropriate action as needed.

**Status of the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 7 in Asia and the Pacific (E/ESCAP/73/INF/5)**

The document provides up-to-date information on the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 7 on ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all, including (7.1) by 2030, ensuring universal access to affordable, reliable, modern energy services; (7.2) by 2030, increasing substantially the share of renewable energy in the overall global energy mix; and (7.3) by 2030, doubling the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency.

The Commission may wish to take note of the document.

#### **4. Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific**

##### **(a) Fourth Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development**

###### **Documentation**

Report of the Fourth Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (E/ESCAP/73/31)

The Fourth Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development was held from 29 to 31 March 2017 as a preparatory event for the high-level political forum on sustainable development of the Economic and Social Council. As the primary regional platform for cohesive and coordinated implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development has the objectives of (1) supporting countries, in particular countries with special needs, including by enhancing their capacity for implementation of the 2030 Agenda; (2) providing a regional perspective on the implementation of the sustainable development agenda by identifying regional trends and consolidating and sharing best practices and lessons learned, taking into account the contributions of other United Nations system bodies at the regional level, other regional and subregional organizations and relevant stakeholders; and (3) supporting follow-up and review of progress on the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals at the regional level. At the Fourth Forum, a regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda in the Asia-Pacific region was discussed.

The Commission may wish to consider matters calling for action or brought to its attention, as contained in the report of the Forum, and provide the secretariat with further guidance.

##### **(b) Financing for development**

###### **Documentation**

Report on the fourth High-level Dialogue on Financing for Development in Asia and the Pacific (E/ESCAP/73/32)

In the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, which was adopted at the Third International Conference on Financing for Development in 2015, States Members of the United Nations committed to strengthening the framework for financing sustainable development and the goals of the post-2015 development agenda, including their means of implementation. They encouraged the United Nations regional commissions, in cooperation with regional banks and organizations, to mobilize their expertise and existing mechanisms which could focus on thematic aspects of the Action Agenda. Since 2014, ESCAP has been organizing annual regional high-level dialogues on financing for development, aimed at building consensus and sharing knowledge, country approaches, experiences and success stories for tapping additional financial resources. The fourth High-Level Dialogue on Financing for Development in Asia and the Pacific discussed regional perspectives and country experiences in four areas: public resource mobilization and regional tax cooperation; infrastructure financing and the role of public-private partnerships; financial inclusion; and climate finance. The document includes the Chair's summary of the meeting.

The Commission may wish to provide the secretariat with further guidance on future work on financing for development in the Asia-Pacific region.

## **5. Management issues**

Under this agenda item, the secretariat is submitting, for the consideration of the Commission, documents on a range of management issues relevant to the continued effectiveness of the work of ESCAP.

### **(a) Proposed programme of work for the biennium 2018-2019**

#### **Documentation**

Proposed programme of work for the biennium 2018-2019 (E/ESCAP/73/33)

The document contains four sections: (a) overall orientation; (b) results framework and strategy by subprogramme; (c) proposed output citations by subprogramme; and (d) legislative mandates. Sections (a), (b) and (d) are developed in the context of the strategic framework for the biennium 2018-2019, as endorsed by the Commission at its seventy-second session, in May 2016, and recommended by the Committee for Programme and Coordination for approval by the General Assembly at the Committee's fifty-sixth session held in New York in June 2016. Section (c) contains the proposed outputs which are designed to enable ESCAP to achieve the planned results as set out in the strategic framework.

The draft programme of work for 2018-2019 was prepared taking into account the lessons learned from the implementation of past programmes of work as well as the results of a series of external evaluations. The document is based on the priorities of member States, aims to balance the secretariat's normative, analytical and operational work, and builds upon the areas of comparative strength of ESCAP, namely its roles as a regional policy centre and intergovernmental and knowledge platform.

Each Committee, as a subsidiary body of the Commission, provided the secretariat with guidance on the future focus of the subprogrammes under its purview. In addition, the draft programme of work was reviewed in its entirety by the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission.

The document is submitted for the Commission's review and endorsement.

### **(b) Programme changes for the biennium 2016-2017**

#### **Documentation**

Programme changes for the biennium 2016-2017 (E/ESCAP/73/34)

Programme changes for 2016-2017 may be required following the identification of emerging global priorities by the Economic and Social Council, the General Assembly and global conferences since the endorsement of the draft programme of work by the Commission at its seventy-first session.

The Commission may wish to consider the proposed changes with a view to endorsing them for incorporation into the programme of work for 2016-2017.

**(c) Overview of partnerships, extrabudgetary contributions and capacity development**

**Documentation**

Overview of partnerships, extrabudgetary contributions and capacity development (E/ESCAP/73/35)

The document contains an overview of the secretariat's partnerships in 2016, including with regional and subregional intergovernmental organizations, which facilitate the efforts of the United Nations to work together as one at the regional level in support of its capacity development work. It also provides an overview of the extrabudgetary resources mobilized for implementing the programme of work. The delivery of the Commission's capacity development work in 2016 is discussed.

Individual members and associate members may wish to announce their intended contributions for 2017.

The Commission may wish to take note of the document and provide the secretariat with further guidance on the development of partnerships and mobilizing resources.

**6. Review of the implementation of Commission resolution 71/1**

**Documentation**

Review of the implementation of Commission resolution 71/1 (E/ESCAP/73/36)

In its resolution 71/1, the Commission decided to conduct a review of the reforms initiated as a result of that resolution and requested the Executive Secretary to submit a report, which would serve as the basis for that review, on the implementation of the resolution.

The document also contains additional recommendations on further adjustments to the conference structure for the consideration of the Commission.

The Commission may wish to review the progress made and endorse the recommendations.

**7. Activities of the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission**

**Documentation**

Report of the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission (E/ESCAP/73/37)

The report includes a summary of the main activities of the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission since the seventy-second session of the Commission, including its support to the Executive Secretary on matters related to programme planning, implementation and monitoring.

The Commission may wish to comment on the role of the Advisory Committee and provide further guidance regarding its work.

**8. Dates, venue and theme topic for the seventy-fourth session of the Commission (2018)**

**Documentation**

Dates, venue and theme topic for the seventy-fourth session of the Commission (2018) (E/ESCAP/73/38)

Unless the Commission decides otherwise, the seventy-fourth session of the Commission will be held in Bangkok in April or May 2018. Under this agenda item, the Commission may also wish to select a theme topic for that session.

**B. Ministerial segment**

**9. Policy issues for the Asia-Pacific region**

**(a) Inclusive and sustainable economic and social development in Asia and the Pacific through regional economic cooperation and integration**

**(b) Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific 2017**

**Documentation**

Enhancing regional economic cooperation and integration in Asia and the Pacific (E/ESCAP/73/39)

Summary of the Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific 2017 (E/ESCAP/73/29)

**Enhancing regional economic cooperation and integration in Asia and the Pacific (E/ESCAP/73/39)**

The document includes an examination of regional economic cooperation and integration as a key strategy for the region to effectively pursue the Sustainable Development Goals. In the Bangkok Declaration on Regional Economic Cooperation and Integration in Asia and the Pacific annexed to Commission resolution 70/1, member States, inter alia, recognized the important progress made by regional groupings and organizations in integrating their subregions and proposed an agenda aimed at deepening and broadening economic cooperation and integration in Asia and the Pacific and at moving towards the formation of an Asia-Pacific economic community as a long-term goal. The Declaration included a proposal to establish four focus areas: (1) moving towards the formation of an integrated market; (2) developing seamless connectivity in the region; (3) enhancing financial cooperation; and (4) increasing economic cooperation to address shared vulnerabilities, risks and challenges. A multisectoral integrated approach that incorporates all these elements is critical to enhancing regional cooperation and integration in the region.

The document includes a summary of the analysis of critical issues for these four areas and of policy considerations to move forward regional cooperation and integration in the region. The Commission may wish to consider the recommendations contained in the document and provide comments and guidance to further facilitate the implementation of the Bangkok Declaration.

## Summary of the Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific 2017 (E/ESCAP/73/29)

The Asia-Pacific region is undergoing growth transitions characterized by, inter alia, a rebalancing towards consumption, services and innovation in China; policy reforms to boost manufacturing and investment in India, Indonesia and other economies; and severe adjustments and renewed interest in economic diversification in commodity exporters. At the same time, the region faces several challenges and risks, such as subdued investment and trade flows, pressures on private sector balance sheets, and financial spillovers. In addition, employment prospects seem weak and efforts to further reduce poverty and mitigate inequalities need to be reinvigorated.

Managing these challenges requires more than just demand management measures (such as countercyclical monetary and fiscal policies). Supply-side structural reforms (policy, legal and regulatory changes to increase the productivity of land, labour and capital), accompanied by enhanced social protection, are also needed. However, such reforms are less likely to succeed without broad political support, better governance and effective public institutions.

The region's transition to its next phase of dynamism further requires a conceptual transition from a growth-centric framework to sustainable development; rather than focusing on economic growth before dealing with social, environmental, structural and governance issues, there is a need to consider the diverse dimensions of development upfront in a holistic manner. This transition also requires better governance and effective public institutions.

In this context, the *Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific 2017*, with the research theme “Better governance in support of financing for development”, was written with an emphasis on how better and effective governance represents a long-term challenge and, in addition to its intrinsic value, plays an instrumental role in development, particularly through the channels of fiscal management and financial sector development. Also highlighted are policies that have contributed to better governance outcomes within countries and challenges that countries face with regard to strengthening governance, with examples of how some of these challenges can be overcome. The 2017 *Survey* also includes an assessment of the region's progress and its near-term economic outlook as it contends with emerging challenges to economic growth. A discussion of some selected social and environmental issues is also included, as a focus on economic growth alone is not sufficient to effectively pursue the 2030 Agenda.

The Commission may wish to take note of the key messages and findings of the 2017 *Survey* as contained in document E/ESCAP/73/29.

### 10. Theme topic for the seventy-third session of the Commission: “Regional cooperation for sustainable energy”

#### Documentation

Enhancing regional cooperation for sustainable energy in Asia and the Pacific (E/ESCAP/73/7)

The document contains a call for member States in Asia and the Pacific to take urgent action to transition their national energy sectors in order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goal 7.

Such a transition has been held back owing to a sizeable energy deficit, which impedes improvements to energy access in a number of member countries. The document also shows how the gaps between current commitments under the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement are affected by a lack of coherent strategies, policy frameworks and actions on energy.

National actions and policy recommendations on energy sector transition that could be enhanced and reinforced by regional energy cooperation, taking into account the progress made under the existing relevant global, regional, and subregional processes, are identified. Strengthening regional energy cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region will require stronger regional cooperation, including the creation of new architecture to address institutional arrangements for facilitating the energy sector transition.

The Commission may wish to take note of the document and endorse its recommendations.

**11. Other matters**

The result of the elections for the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology will be announced.

The Commission may also wish to consider other matters brought to its attention.

**12. Adoption of the report of the Commission**

The Commission will consider and adopt the report on its seventy-third session. Pursuant to annex I of resolution 71/1, the report of the Commission will be composed of the decisions and the resolutions of the Commission. The draft record of proceedings of the Commission session, prepared by the secretariat, will be circulated among members and associate members for comments within 15 days after the conclusion of the session.

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