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## Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

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Item 3 of the provisional agenda\*

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

## Summary of progress in the implementation of Commission resolutions

### Note by the secretariat

#### *Summary*

The present note contains a summary of the progress made in the implementation of Commission resolutions, on which the secretariat is required to report to the Commission at its seventy-first session.

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

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## **I. Macroeconomic policy, poverty reduction and inclusive development**

### **A. Resolution 70/1 Implementation of the Bangkok Declaration on Regional Economic Cooperation and Integration in Asia and the Pacific**

#### **1. Requirements of the operative paragraphs**

1. In paragraph 2 of its resolution 70/1, the Commission requested the Executive Secretary:

(a) To accord priority to the implementation of the recommendations of the Bangkok Declaration on Regional Economic Cooperation and Integration in Asia and the Pacific;

(b) To assist members and associate members in setting up and supporting the work of the four area-specific expert working groups in accordance with section II, paragraphs 3 and 6 (b), of the Bangkok Declaration;

(c) To convene in 2015 the intergovernmental open-ended preparatory meetings for the second Ministerial Conference on Regional Economic Cooperation and Integration in Asia and the Pacific mentioned in section II, paragraph 3, of the Bangkok Declaration;

(d) To convene the second Ministerial Conference on Regional Economic Cooperation and Integration in Asia and the Pacific in 2015 to review the progress on the agenda of regional economic integration outlined in section III of the present Declaration, consider the recommendations of the intergovernmental open-ended preparatory meetings and decide on follow-up actions, as expressed in section II, paragraph 6 (d), of the Bangkok Declaration;

(e) To report to the Commission at its seventy-first and seventy-second sessions on the implementation of the present resolution.

## 2. Progress made

2. In response to paragraph 2 (a), a secretariat-wide task force, chaired by the Executive Secretary, was established to support the implementation of the resolution. More broadly, the Executive Secretary has made regional economic cooperation and integration a key priority in the strategic direction.

3. In response to paragraph 2 (b), the secretariat, in consultation with the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission, prepared the terms of reference of the four working groups. The working groups were tasked to prepare reports containing concrete recommendations for consideration by the intergovernmental open-ended preparatory meetings. To assist in the deliberations, the secretariat prepared an approach paper for each working group, highlighting existing regional initiatives, likely gaps and potential recommendations. The secretariat requested all members and associate members to nominate national experts who could substantively participate in the working groups in their personal capacities.

4. The working groups included experts nominated by a total of 25 member States of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP): Afghanistan; Armenia; Azerbaijan; Bangladesh; Bhutan; Cambodia; China; Fiji; Georgia; India; Japan; Malaysia; Mongolia; Micronesia (Federated States of); Nepal; New Zealand; Pakistan; Philippines; Russian Federation; Samoa; Sri Lanka; Thailand; Timor-Leste; Vanuatu; and Viet Nam.<sup>1</sup> The secretariat also invited two or three lead experts in each working group to assist in the preparation of the final reports.<sup>2</sup> The four working groups held their first face-to-face meetings in November and December 2014, in Bangkok, during which they discussed substantive issues and agreed on workplans and timelines. Some working groups conducted surveys to collect primary data with the support of the secretariat. The working groups will hold their second meetings in Bangkok on 26 and 27 March 2015 and completed their final reports by the end of April 2015.

<sup>1</sup> See the annex for the list of members of the working groups.

<sup>2</sup> The lead experts are also listed in the annex.

5. In response to paragraph 2 (c), the secretariat will invite all members and associate members of the Commission to participate in preparatory meetings tentatively scheduled for August and October 2015, in Bangkok. Those meetings will draft and negotiate an action plan for the consideration of the ministers during the second Ministerial Conference on Regional Economic Cooperation and Integration in Asia and the Pacific. Prior to the first preparatory meeting, the secretariat will circulate the final reports of the four working groups.

6. In response to paragraph 2 (d), the second Ministerial Conference is scheduled to be held from 2 to 4 December 2015, in Bangkok.

7. In response to paragraph 2 (e), the present note outlines the current status of the implementation of the report. Furthermore, the secretariat will report on the outcome of the second Ministerial Conference to the Commission at its seventy-second session.

## **B. Resolution 70/3**

### **Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020 in Asia and the Pacific**

#### **1. Requirements of the operative paragraphs**

8. In paragraph 2 of its resolution 70/3, the Commission requested the Executive Secretary:

(a) To organize the Asia-Pacific regional high-level policy dialogue on the Istanbul Programme of Action for the least developed countries in early 2015;

(b) To assist the Asia-Pacific least developed countries in implementing the Regional Road Map for Implementing the Istanbul Programme of Action in the Asian and Pacific Region from 2011 to 2020;

(c) To continue to assist Asia-Pacific least developed countries in achieving other internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals;

(d) To submit to the Commission at its seventy-first session a report on the progress achieved in the implementation of the present resolution.

#### **2. Progress made**

9. Through the implementation of the resolution, the following outcomes in the Asia-Pacific least developed countries are expected: (a) a review of the progress in the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action by these countries; (b) enhanced capacity of policymakers in these countries to implement the Istanbul Programme of Action; and (c) enhanced capacity of policymakers in these countries to adopt policies aimed at reducing poverty by promoting growth and inclusive development, in support of the internationally agreed development goals.

10. In response to paragraph 2 (a), the secretariat is working closely with the Government of Cambodia to organize the Asia-Pacific high-level policy dialogue on the Istanbul Programme of Action for least developed countries from 4 to 6 March 2015 in Cambodia. Representatives of member States, non-governmental organizations and the private sector, international

organizations and different United Nations bodies and agencies have been invited to the policy dialogue.

11. In response to paragraph 2 (b), the secretariat, together with the Government of Bangladesh and the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, jointly organized a regional meeting on financing graduation gaps of Asia-Pacific least developed countries to discuss resource requirements and suggest key policy measures on resource mobilization to close the gaps.

12. In 2014, ESCAP and the Korea Expressway Corporation negotiated a new three-year collaborative programme, based on the recognition expressed by Bangladesh and Myanmar on the utility of a similar programme in 2012 and 2013. The new programme, from 2015 until 2017, will advance the development of Asian Highway priority routes with targeted activities aimed at: (a) establishing road safety facility infrastructure standards; (b) developing model intelligent transport systems deployments; and (c) developing strategies on promoting and facilitating the implementation of the Asian Highway design standards. The programme will target a number of countries along Asian Highway routes AH1 and AH6, including Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar and Nepal.

13. The secretariat, in consultation with member States, is finalizing a regional cooperation framework for the facilitation of international railway transport. The framework identifies fundamental issues and areas for cooperation among the countries to promote railway transport. Least developed countries will benefit immensely from the operationalization of railway networks as it will increase their access to regional and global markets while promoting sustainable modes of transport.

14. The secretariat has developed four transport facilitation models to identify and propose solutions to mitigate inordinate delays that happen at border crossings: (a) the Secure Cross-border Transport Model, providing a concept for vehicle tracking systems using new technologies; (b) the Efficient Cross-border Transport Model, a methodology to identify non-physical barriers, evaluate alternatives and identify optimal solutions that can work best in a given subregion; (c) the Model on Integrated Controls at Border Crossings, providing ways to streamline the flow of information and equipment at borders; and (d) the Time/Cost-Distance Methodology, identifying bottlenecks along the corridors. The secretariat is planning to organize a series of workshops in least developed countries on disseminating details of the advantages of these models and their practical implementation to promote seamless international road transport and thus strengthen regional connectivity.

15. The secretariat continued to work with member States to develop and implement sustainable and inclusive transport policies and, in particular, such systems and policies in major and secondary cities. Consultations and workshops to facilitate sharing innovations, policies and successful interventions were organized in the Lao People's Democratic Republic (July 2014), Bangladesh (August 2014), Nepal (October 2014) and Myanmar (November 2014). Preparations are underway to organize a national road safety seminar in the Lao People's Democratic Republic in 2015.

16. The secretariat organized a regional expert group meeting in Ahmedabad, India, to discuss and share ideas and experiences in building better, more sustainable and inclusive national and urban transportation systems, summarize the lessons learnt from various country workshops and recommend future actions. The meeting contributed substantially to enhancing the knowledge and capacity of national and local governments, including those of the least developed countries on sustainable and inclusive national and urban transport policies and programmes. It also contributed towards progress in the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and raising awareness on road safety.

17. With regard to subregional connectivity in South and South-West Asia, Afghanistan officially joined the Trans-Asian Railway project and requested that its railway development plan be reflected on the Trans-Asian Railway network map as a first step towards becoming a party to the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Trans-Asian Railway Network. That initiative makes it easier to have a coordinated approach with its neighbouring countries in developing rail connectivity to ports in the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan.

18. The secretariat, jointly with the Asian Institute of Transport Development, convened a regional policy dialogue on strengthening transport connectivity in South Asia, in November 2014, to sensitize policymakers and key stakeholders to the potential of regional economic integration through improved transport connectivity. The dialogue highlighted key challenges to transport connectivity, facilitated sharing of knowledge and experience, and recommended solutions to strengthen connectivity in the subregion. The dialogue is part of a series of extensive stakeholder consultations, which will continue in the coming years.

19. Subregional connectivity in South-East Asia will be further strengthened through railway projects currently underway to connect China with Myanmar and the Lao People's Democratic Republic. The benefits of those projects were discussed with the railway managers of the two countries during a conference of railway chief executive officers in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) subregion.

20. The secretariat is assisting the national statistics bureaus of Bhutan and the Lao People's Democratic Republic in preparing for their respective population and housing censuses in 2015. In Bhutan, advice was provided to the questionnaire design team on a range of issues, including disability, migration, education, employment, fertility and housing. In the Lao People's Democratic Republic, advice was provided on the planning for the census and activities, including questionnaire design, census listing, and strategies for monitoring fieldwork and developing a timetable for key activities.

21. The secretariat has started the implementation of a United Nations Development Account project to build the capacity of Bhutan, Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Myanmar in designing, developing and managing public-private partnership projects. National workshops in each of the four countries (Thimphu, August 2014; Vientiane, September 2014; Nay Pyi Taw, November 2014; and Phnom Penh, December 2014) and a regional workshop in Bangkok (January 2015) were organized to share experiences and information on public-private partnerships.

22. The secretariat organized the Fourth Meeting of the Asia-Pacific Foreign Direct Investment Network for Least Developed and Landlocked Developing Countries in Colombo to discuss foreign direct investment

policies that could contribute to the forthcoming sustainable development goals. Representatives from Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar and Nepal participated in the meeting.

23. In December 2014, the secretariat, together with the International Labour Organization, the Institute for Human Development and the International Development Research Centre, organized a South-Asian subregional conference on employment and social protection for inclusive growth in the South-Asian subregion and its least developed countries. The secretariat continues to work on the issue of employment and inclusive growth through analytical work and research, and, in 2015, will publish country-specific studies on employment for five South-Asian countries: Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Similar activities will be conducted in 2015 for country-specific policy research on social protection.

24. The secretariat conducted a number of trainings and workshops to build the capacity of least developed countries in the area of trade. Those included: (a) training on electronic traceability for agricultural trade facilitation and smallholder integration (Cambodia); (b) a workshop on trade policy choices and accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement (Bhutan); (c) training on trade in goods negotiation skills (Lao People's Democratic Republic); (d) training on trade defence measures and other trade-related issues (Myanmar); (e) workshop on creating linkages between small and medium-sized enterprises and international investors (Myanmar); (f) advanced training on the WTO agreements and notification requirements (Myanmar); and (g) training for Afghanistan on WTO accession, effective utilization of the South Asian Free Trade Agreement and integration with Central Asian economies (India).

25. The secretariat is developing a comprehensive course intended for central and local government officials of the least developed countries on promotion and facilitation of foreign direct investment for inclusive and sustainable development. On request, the course can be delivered in any least developed country and, if required, can be translated into local languages. Similar courses on negotiating chapters on rules of origin, sanitary and phytosanitary measures/technical barriers, trade and intellectual property rights, and safeguards are being finalized; they will be offered in 2015 and 2016.

26. The secretariat, in partnership with the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) secretariat and the National Planning Commission of Nepal, is leading an initiative to develop capacity for macroeconomic planning for South-Asian least developed countries. The initiative will continue in 2015 through a series of workshops and technical training.

27. The secretariat, in collaboration with the Asian Development Bank (ADB), will support the development of trade and transport facilitation monitoring mechanisms in Bangladesh, Bhutan and Nepal, in 2015, as part of the implementation of the South Asian Subregional Economic Cooperation trade facilitation strategy.

28. Under a United Nations Development Account project on food security in the South-Asian subregion, the secretariat is conducting studies on regional cooperation for national food security strategies in Bangladesh, Nepal and other countries. The studies cover liberalization of agricultural trade, harmonization of standards and intellectual property rights. In 2015, an

online platform for food security will be set up in accordance with the demand from policymakers in the subregion and, in particular, its least developed countries. The platform will also recognize the priorities of the subregion and its least developed countries, share analysis on and contribute to strengthening food security strategies, shaping relevant regional mechanisms and knowledge networks, and facilitating collaboration. The results of the platform will guide future work on food security for the benefit of the subregion and, in particular, its least developed countries.

29. On 29 and 30 April 2015, ESCAP and the Ministry of Finance of Indonesia will co-host the Asia-Pacific High-level Consultation on Financing for Development in partnership with the Government of the Russian Federation, the Green Technology Center-Korea, ADB, the ADB Institute and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The consultation, to be held in Jakarta, will feature participants, including finance ministers, central bank governors, leading policymakers, representatives of private sector and non-governmental organizations, and regional think tanks, including from Asia-Pacific least developed, landlocked developing and Pacific Island countries. The consultation will deliberate on the financing and partnership framework for the implementation of a transformative development agenda beyond 2015. The outcome document of the consultation, conveying the Asia-Pacific region's perspectives and recommendations, will be submitted to the forthcoming third International Conference on Financing for Development to be held from 13 to 16 July 2015 in Addis Ababa.

30. Continuing its analytical work, including in support of least developed countries, the secretariat will produce and publish reports, policy briefs, technical papers, etc. to contribute to high-quality discussions and capacity-building activities. Some of the titles include: (a) the *Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific 2015*, which will monitor development progress and evaluate new challenges for Asia-Pacific countries with special needs; (b) the Asia-Pacific countries with special needs development report, which will provide a review of the status, challenges and prospects of the countries, along with targeted policy options to promote their inclusive growth and sustainable development; (c) a study on border economic zones between Bangladesh, India and Nepal; and (d) a South-Asian subregional development report that analyses the performance of the least developed countries vis-à-vis the Istanbul Programme of Action and provides policy options on graduation from the list of least developed countries.

31. The secretariat will continue to implement various programmes to support the region's least developed countries, including: (a) supporting the establishment of an economic think tank institute in Afghanistan, with further support to the country envisaged in the post-WTO accession period to facilitate transition and trade policy formulation; (b) assisting in research and building capacity in Bhutan on its accession to WTO and the Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement, and on trade facilitation and paperless trade; (c) assisting Myanmar to adopt the safeguard law (a draft has been prepared by the secretariat), to integrate into the ASEAN Economic Community, the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership and other regional integration initiatives, and to initiate work in the country using anti-dumping and countervailing duties legislation and economic and trade reforms; and (d) assisting the Government of Nepal, at its request, in developing a macroeconomic planning strategy that will also have the goal of achieving graduation from the list of least developed countries. Furthermore, the secretariat will, in 2015, undertake missions to Afghanistan and Bhutan to assess the technical capacity requirements for ESCAP programme planning



and activities that are designed to support development in the countries and facilitate regional economic integration.

32. In response to paragraph 2 (c), the secretariat organized a regional workshop on cross-sectoral policies and institutional coordination for achieving the Millennium Development Goals and the development agenda beyond 2015 in Asian least developed countries, in Siem Reap, Cambodia, to facilitate knowledge-sharing and to hold discussions on various case studies related to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, cross-sectoral policymaking and institutional coordination. A plan for building the capacity of least developed countries was agreed, and regional advocacy and capacity-building workshops are planned for 2015.

33. The fourth session of the Committee on Transport achieved significant outcomes for the future focus of the programme to support member States, in particular least developed countries, in the period beyond 2015, including the potential realization of an international integrated intermodal transport and logistics system in the region. The session recommended that a resolution on a regional cooperation framework for the facilitation of international railway transport be submitted to the Commission at its seventy-first session.

34. The secretariat is implementing a United Nations Development Account project to strengthen capacities in countries with special needs in order to design and implement economic and social development policies, in particular cost-effective, high-impact and cross-sectoral policies to accelerate progress towards achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Case studies on cross-sectoral issues regarding health, education, water and sanitation in these countries are being conducted, together with studies on ways to foster collaboration among ministries and institutional processes. The project focuses on Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, Nepal and Timor-Leste.

35. The secretariat, in partnership with UNDP, the SAARC secretariat and ADB, held a South-Asia consultation workshop on the development agenda beyond 2015 and its means of implementation, in Nagarkot, Nepal, in August 2014. The workshop provided a highly visible platform for South-Asian countries, and in particular the least developed ones, to articulate their respective positions on the development agenda beyond 2015, to share the findings and recommendations of the ESCAP-UNDP-ADB *Asia-Pacific Millennium Development Goals Report*, as well as those of the Open Working Group of the General Assembly on Sustainable Development Goals. The secretariat will continue to support subregional processes through which least developed countries can make contributions to the development agenda beyond 2015, as well as its commitment to assisting them graduate from the list of such countries and to subregional integration.

## **II. Trade and investment**

### **Resolution 70/6**

#### **Implementation of the decision of the Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Meeting on a Regional Arrangement for the Facilitation of Cross-border Paperless Trade**

##### **1. Requirements of the operative paragraphs**

36. In paragraph 2 of its resolution 70/6, the Commission requested the Executive Secretary to support and facilitate the establishment and operation of the Interim Intergovernmental Steering Group on Cross-border Paperless Trade Facilitation in accordance with the terms of reference contained in section I.B of the report of the Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Meeting on a Regional Arrangement for the Facilitation of Cross-border Paperless Trade.

##### **2. Progress made**

37. In response to paragraph 2, the secretariat organized the first meeting of the Interim Intergovernmental Steering Group on Cross-border Paperless Trade Facilitation from 1 to 3 April 2015.<sup>3</sup> The meeting, attended by representatives of 27 member States, revised the draft regional arrangement for the facilitation of cross-border paperless trade, and discussed the preparation of a road map for the implementation of its substantive provisions. The meeting also established two working groups under it to expedite the revision of the draft regional arrangement and to work on the draft road map for its implementation. As recommended in the terms of reference of the Steering Group, a capacity-building workshop was also held in conjunction with the meeting to introduce the latest practices and issues related to cross-border paperless trade.

## **III. Transport**

### **A. Resolution 66/5**

#### **Implementation of the Jakarta Declaration on Public-Private Partnerships for Infrastructure Development in Asia and the Pacific**

##### **1. Requirements of the operative paragraphs**

38. In paragraph 4 of its resolution 66/5, the Commission requested the Executive Secretary, in collaboration with United Nations bodies and specialized agencies, the relevant offices of the United Nations Secretariat, international financial institutions, other organizations and bilateral donors:

(a) To assist members and associate members in meeting infrastructure development challenges through: (i) regional and interregional cooperation in the development of public-private partnerships; and (ii) the organization of meetings and regional networking arrangements aimed at promoting the exchange of experiences and information;

(b) To assist members and associate members, on a mutually agreed basis, with their capacity-building programmes, including public-private partnership policy framework formulation, legislative and regulatory reform, and administrative arrangements for public-private partnerships;

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<sup>3</sup> See E/ESCAP/71/41.

(c) To provide technical support, upon request, to help increase the public-private partnership readiness of members and associate members, including: (i) preparing regional financing and risk management tools to reduce transaction costs; and (ii) developing risk mitigation mechanisms against currency mismatches;

(d) To establish a task force to elaborate the elements of a regional financial architecture that could assist the Asia-Pacific region with increased capital availability for infrastructure development;

(e) To establish an Asia-Pacific network of public-private partnership units and programmes which would, among other things, provide ad hoc advisory and training services, disseminate information on public-private partnerships and coordinate regional meetings of national public-private partnership units and programmes;

(f) To take into consideration the special needs of landlocked and transit developing countries in the implementation of the present resolution;

(g) To undertake a periodic review of the progress made in infrastructure development through public-private partnerships and to report to the Commission at its seventy-first session on the implementation of the present resolution.

## 2. Progress made

39. In response to paragraph 4 (a), several meetings were organized to promote the exchange of experiences and information on public-private partnerships at the regional level and to assist members and associate members in meeting infrastructure development challenges. These included: (a) Regional Meeting of Public-Private Partnership Units and Programmes on Institutional Development and Support to Capacity Building in Public-Private Partnerships (New Delhi, February/March 2011); (b) High-Level Expert Group Meeting on Infrastructure Public-Private Partnerships for Sustainable Development and technical assistance in the Third Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Public-Private Partnerships for Infrastructure Development (Tehran, November 2012); (c) Expert Group Meeting on Road Maintenance and Management (Hanoi, May 2013); (d) Asian Highway Investment Forum (Bangkok, October 2013); (e) Asia-Pacific Outreach Meeting on Sustainable Development Financing (Jakarta, June 2014); and (f) Asia-Pacific Forum on Public-Private Partnerships for Transport Infrastructure Development (Bangkok, January 2015). Those meetings and activities successfully raised awareness among senior government officials, allowed an exchange of ideas on how to address the challenges in implementing public-private partnerships and provided a valuable platform for fostering cooperation among countries at the regional level.

40. In response to paragraph 4 (b), a number of capacity-building activities were conducted over the years. A course on model concession contracts was offered in 2009 and 2011, in which more than 100 participants were trained. Four national public-private partnership trainings were also organized in 2014 in Bhutan, Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Myanmar. To support members and associate members with their capacity-building programmes, the secretariat has also developed cutting-edge online training materials (updated in 2014), which have been used by hundreds of people.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> [www.unescap.org/our-work/transport/financing-and-private-sector-participation/resources](http://www.unescap.org/our-work/transport/financing-and-private-sector-participation/resources).

41. In response to paragraph 4 (c), the secretariat assisted the Government of Myanmar in conducting a public-private partnership readiness assessment workshop in January 2012. The ESCAP readiness assessment and diagnostic tool was used during the workshop and helped identify specific areas in which the Government of Myanmar should focus in order to create a public-private partnership enabling environment. A similar exercise was conducted in Bhutan and the Lao People's Democratic Republic in 2014. Technical assistance has also been provided for drafting public-private partnership procurement rules in Cambodia (2014) and to work on a public-private partnership policy document in both Bhutan and Myanmar (2014).

42. In response to paragraph 4 (d), the secretariat assisted members and associate members to set-up expert working groups in four areas, including one on enhancing financial cooperation. Those working groups were established as a follow-up to Commission resolution 70/1 on implementation of the Bangkok Declaration on Regional Economic Cooperation and Integration in Asia and the Pacific. The first meeting of the working group on financial cooperation took place in Bangkok on 25 and 26 November 2014.

43. In response to paragraph 4 (e), the secretariat has maintained updated information on the different public-private partnership units in the region to facilitate networking opportunities and to improve the overall understanding of current institutional arrangements.<sup>5</sup> The meetings mentioned in response to paragraph 4 (a) were also used to strengthen the links between the different public-private partnership units in the region. In addition, the secretariat has also actively supported the Asia Public-Private Partnership Practitioner's Network meetings since 2012. In that respect, ESCAP contributed to the last three conferences (November 2012, December 2013 and December 2014), which were co-organized by the Government of Korea, the Korea Development Institute, the World Bank Institute and ADB.

44. In response to paragraph 4 (f), the secretariat is implementing a United Nations Development Account project focusing mainly on building the capacity of four least developed countries (Bhutan, Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Myanmar). The project aims at supporting those countries to design and manage public-private partnerships for infrastructure development. National forums were organized in each country to establish effective public-private partnership policy frameworks (Thimphu, August 2014; Vientiane, September 2014; Nay Pyi Taw, November 2014; and Phnom Penh, December 2014). More than 200 representative from the public and private sectors gathered on those occasions.

45. In response to paragraph 4 (g), the secretariat maintains information on infrastructure development using public-private partnerships in ESCAP member States, primarily by consolidating information provided by countries at regional meetings and workshops, as well as by reviewing the latest developments in the region. Consolidated information was reported back to member States through policy and information documents prepared for legislative and other high-level meetings, such as the Ministerial Conference on Transport, the Forum of Asian Ministers of Transport and the Committee on Transport.<sup>6</sup> Information was also shared with the wider public through the

<sup>5</sup> [www.unescap.org/resources/ppp-units-and-programmes-asia-and-pacific](http://www.unescap.org/resources/ppp-units-and-programmes-asia-and-pacific).

<sup>6</sup> See the finance and private sector participation section (available in (a) E/ESCAP/CTR(2)/1, (b) E/ESCAP/MCT.2/1, (c) E/ESCAP/CTR(3)/1, (d) E/ESCAP/FAMT(2)/1 and (e) E/ESCAP/CTR(4)/1), available from [www.unescap.org/our-work/transport/financing-and-private-sector-participation/committees](http://www.unescap.org/our-work/transport/financing-and-private-sector-participation/committees).

2011 and 2013 editions of the *Review of Developments in Transport in Asia and the Pacific*. To draw lessons from practical experience, the secretariat has also developed case studies on public-private partnership projects in 2014. Four new case studies are available on the ESCAP website.<sup>7</sup>

## **B. Resolution 68/4**

### **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**

#### **1. Requirements of the operative paragraphs**

46. In paragraph 2 of its resolution 68/4, the Commission requested the Executive Secretary:

(a) To accord priority to the implementation of the Regional Action Programme and the Regional Strategic Framework;

(b) To carry out in 2016 an evaluation of the implementation of phase II of the Regional Action Programme and submit a report with recommendations to the Ministerial Conference on Transport at its third session;

(c) To report to the Commission at its seventy-first and seventy-third sessions on the implementation of the present resolution.

#### **2. Progress made**

47. In response to paragraph 2 (a), the Regional Action Programme provides a framework for promoting cooperation and integration in transport for inclusive and sustainable development in the region, and serves as the basis for the secretariat programme of work for the period between 2012 and 2016.

48. To promote policy guidance at the ministerial level, the second session of the Forum of Asian Ministers of Transport (November 2013) adopted the Ministerial Declaration on Transport as a Key to Sustainable Development and Regional Integration, making a strong commitment to the development and implementation of transport policies and strategies at the national and regional levels to support sustainable development and regional integration. The Ministerial Declaration was endorsed by the Commission at its seventieth session in 2014.

49. In the area of transport infrastructure, following several years of negotiation, the Commission adopted the Intergovernmental Agreement on Dry Ports at its sixty-ninth session in 2013. The Agreement was opened for signature at the second session of the Forum of Asian Ministers of Transport. To date, 17 member States have signed the Agreement and three have become parties to it.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>7</sup> [www.unescap.org/our-work/transport/financing-and-private-sector-participation/publications](http://www.unescap.org/our-work/transport/financing-and-private-sector-participation/publications).

<sup>8</sup> The status of signatories/parties is available from [https://treaties.un.org/pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtdsg\\_no=XI-E-3&chapter=11&lang=en](https://treaties.un.org/pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtdsg_no=XI-E-3&chapter=11&lang=en).

50. Regarding the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Asian Highway Network and the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Trans-Asian Railway Network, the total number of parties are 29 and 18, respectively. The definition and formalization of a regional network of dry ports through the above-mentioned Agreement, together with the existing Asian Highway and Trans-Asian Railway networks, aim at promoting activities encompassing road, rail and port infrastructure as well as logistics services as a way to push forward the development agenda and progress towards the realization of an international integrated intermodal transport and logistics system for the region.

51. In the areas of inter-island shipping and connecting subregional transport networks, the Commission, at its seventieth session, adopted resolution 70/7 on implementation of the Suva Declaration on Improving Maritime Transport and Related Services in the Pacific in order to address the inherent transport connectivity barriers that currently exist in archipelagic and island developing countries.

52. For transport facilitation, the Regional Strategic Framework for the Facilitation of International Road Transport provides a strategic vision and common approach to address challenges to international road transport in the region. Notable activities under the Framework include the establishment of the Regional Network of Legal and Technical Experts on Transport Facilitation in 2012 and studies on major subregional agreements under it. The secretariat's efforts in the formulation of the Agreement of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Member States on Facilitation of International Road Transport culminated in the signing of the Agreement in 2014.

53. In addition, a series of policy dialogues in South and South-West Asia since 2013 has resulted in a strong commitment among the member States to strengthen transport connectivity through the secretariat's proposal for a connectivity master plan for the subregion. Furthermore, the secretariat, jointly with ADB, developed a feasibility study on pilot implementation of a secure cross-border transport model along the Bhutan-India transit corridor to enhance the operational efficiency of the transit process.

54. With the financial support of the Government of the Russian Federation, the secretariat drafted a regional cooperation framework for facilitation of international railway transport, which identifies key issues and provides areas for cooperation among member States to promote railway transport.

55. In the area of transport logistics, the annual regional meetings of freight forwarders, multimodal transport operations and logistics service providers and their national associations were organized as a regional platform to share knowledge and experience and discuss emerging issues. Training activities and workshops were also implemented on the development of accredited training systems for freight forwarders, multimodal transport operators and logistics service providers to raise the professional standards of these industries in the target countries.

56. As regards finance and private sector participation, in order to support Asia-Pacific countries in engaging the private sector in infrastructure development, the secretariat has, over the years, become a centre of excellence on public-private partnerships and has collaborated with other development partners active in this field. Significant knowledge products have been developed and are being disseminated through national and regional forums. National forums also provide an opportunity to support member States in the development of their public-private partnerships policy.

57. Regarding sustainable transport, road safety, transport and the Millennium Development Goals, a series of subregional, regional and national meetings and workshops were organized to raise awareness and strengthen the capacities of related transport officials to implement sustainable and inclusive transport and road safety policies. A project on strengthening capacities in countries with special needs to accelerate progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals is being implemented. The eighty-fourth issue of the *Transport and Communications Bulletin for Asia and the Pacific* contains five papers that cover the state of transport services, their contribution to improving health and education and their impact on the communities.

58. In response to paragraph 2 (b), the evaluation of the implementation of phase II of the Regional Action Programme will be conducted, based on the criteria of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability, United Nations coherence and partnerships, and the results of the evaluation with recommendations will be presented to the Ministerial Conference on Transport at its third session.

59. In response to paragraph 2 (c), activities implemented in support of the resolution were reported to the Ministerial Conference on Transport (second session, March 2012), the Forum of Asian Ministers of Transport (second session, November 2013) and the Committee on Transport (third and fourth sessions in October 2012 and October 2014, respectively). The secretariat will prepare a report on the implementation of the resolution for the consideration of the Commission at its seventy-third session.

### **3. Issues for consideration of the Commission**

60. With regards to operative paragraphs 2 (a) and (b), and in light of the recommendation of the Committee on Transport at its fourth session, the Commission is invited to consider for adoption the regional cooperation framework for facilitation of international railway transport. The Commission is also invited to consider for endorsement the holding of the third session of the Ministerial Conference on Transport in 2016 in lieu of the fifth session of the Committee on Transport.

## **C. Resolution 69/7 Intergovernmental Agreement on Dry Ports**

### **1. Requirements of the operative paragraphs**

61. In paragraph 6 of its resolution 69/7, the Commission requested the Executive Secretary:

(a) To assist member States in the process of becoming parties to the Agreement;

(b) To accord priority to the development of dry ports of international importance within the programme of work of the Commission;

(c) To collaborate effectively with international and regional financing institutions, multilateral and bilateral donors and international and subregional organizations for the development and operation of dry ports of international importance;

(d) To continue to work towards the development of a sustainable, international, integrated, intermodal transport and logistics system for the

region, including through the development of the Asian Highway, the Trans-Asian Railway and dry ports of international importance, as appropriate;

(e) To discharge effectively the functions of the secretariat of the Agreement;

(f) To report to the Commission at its seventy-first session on the implementation of the present resolution.

## **2. Progress made**

62. In response to paragraph 6 (a), the secretariat continued to work towards the implementation of the Intergovernmental Agreement on Dry Ports. Since the opening for signature of the Agreement during the Forum of Asian Ministers of Transport at its second session, the secretariat has used a number of opportunities to encourage member States to expedite their internal formalities to become parties to the Agreement so as to enable its entry into force as soon as possible. In particular, it used the fourth session of the Committee on Transport (October 2014) to brief member States on the legal requirements and process to become a party to the Agreement. In accordance with its article 5, paragraph 1, the Agreement shall enter into force on the thirtieth day following the date on which the eighth instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval of or accession to the Agreement is deposited, pursuant to its article 4, paragraph 4. To date, 17 member States have signed the Agreement, and 3 have become parties.<sup>9</sup>

63. In response to paragraphs 6 (b) and (d), the secretariat, with funding support from the Russian Federation, implemented the project on Capacity-building for the Development and Operation of Dry Ports of International Importance. Under that project, the secretariat implemented the following activities: (a) a visit to dry ports in India and discussions with transport policymakers and private operators on the challenges related to the development and operation of dry ports (New Delhi, 14-16 May 2013); (b) a review of best practices on the development and operation of dry ports both within and outside the region; (c) two related seminars in Busan, Republic of Korea (11-12 June 2013), and Bangkok (18-19 March 2014); and (d) updates to the integrated map of the Asian Highway, Trans-Asian Railway and dry ports.

64. In response to paragraph 6 (c), the secretariat has been developing synergies with other subregional organizations to promote issues relating to the development of dry ports, in particular with the Asian Institute of Transport Development and the secretariat of the Economic Cooperation Organization. Given the importance of dry ports in the emergence of international intermodal freight corridors, the Busan and Bangkok seminars (see preceding paragraph) were jointly organized with the International Union of Railways.

65. In response to paragraph 6 (e), the secretariat is providing, on request, advisory services to member States on becoming parties to the Agreement. Such services were provided to Bangladesh. The secretariat is also preparing to organize the first meeting of the Working Group on Dry Ports, which is tentatively scheduled to take place in November 2015 to review existing and planned policies and initiatives relating to the ongoing and future development of dry ports.

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<sup>9</sup> The status of signatories/parties is available from:  
[https://treaties.un.org/pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtdsg\\_no=XI-E-3&chapter=11&lang=en](https://treaties.un.org/pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtdsg_no=XI-E-3&chapter=11&lang=en).



## **IV. Environment and development**

### **A. Resolution 69/8**

#### **Enhancing knowledge-sharing and cooperation in integrated water resources management in Asia and the Pacific**

#### **1. Requirements of the operative paragraphs**

66. In paragraph 2 of its resolution 69/8, the Commission requested the Executive Secretary:

(a) To coordinate with other United Nations agencies to make effective use of technology and innovation on all relevant aspects of water management for the benefit of the Asia-Pacific region;

(b) To facilitate the sharing, by members and associate members at the regional and subregional levels, of experiences, best practices and technologies in managing integrated water resources management;

(c) To continue to provide and support, in consultation with members and associate members, a capacity development programme to build resilience to water-related disasters and to manage water-related risks in Asia-Pacific countries that suits various groups of stakeholders through knowledge-sharing;

(d) To take appropriate steps to promote awareness of the importance of integrating water into sustainable development within the framework of the mandate and programme of the work of the secretariat;

(e) To report to the Commission at its seventy-first session on the progress made in implementation of the present resolution.

#### **2. Progress made**

67. In response to paragraphs 2 (a) to (e), the secretariat has conducted an online Survey on the Status of Integrated Water Resources Management in Asia and the Pacific. Questionnaires were sent to all members and associate members and relevant and international organizations in the Asia-Pacific region, the main purpose of which was to identify the status of implementation of integrated water resources management, the challenges being faced and capacity-building needs of members and associate members. Furthermore, questionnaires to international organizations included questions on the promotion of technologies and innovations in achieving efficient water resources management and cooperation with each other in water-related areas and activities at regional and country level.

68. In response to paragraphs 2 (b) and (d), the secretariat has completed a status report on integrated water resources management in Asia and the Pacific in preparation for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, and a report on the “Capacity-building needs of the water sector in South-East Asia and South Asia”. Furthermore, a report on “Water resources in Central Asia: current status, problems and perspectives of use” has also been completed to provide information on good practices and technologies in different subregions. In response to a request from member States, the secretariat organized a training session in order to build capacity in urban water management in Yangon, Myanmar, with a focus on management of water supplies, wastewater and drainage in urban areas. The case studies of good practices from different countries and exercises for each of the areas are also included.

69. In response to paragraphs 2 (a) and (c), the secretariat continues to work with UN-Water, ADB, relevant international forums, such as the World Water Forum and the Asia-Pacific Water Forum, and member States in identifying and assisting capacity development in the field of water resources management. With UN-Water, the secretariat worked on generic policy developments on regional-level coordination as well as on substantive issues of water security. The secretariat also worked with ADB and other international organizations in the development of the *Asian Water Development Outlook 2013* as well as the *Framework Document on Water and Climate Change Adaptation: for Leaders and Policy-makers in the Asia-Pacific Region*.<sup>10</sup> Currently, the secretariat is jointly organizing a workshop with K-water of the Government of Republic of Korea on water resources management to prepare the thematic session on water and the green economy at the seventh World Water Forum. Resource persons and national participants are invited to share their experiences and best practices.

**B. Resolution 70/11**  
**Implementing the outcome of the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development**

**1. Requirements of the operative paragraphs**

70. In paragraph 1 of its resolution 70/11, the Commission requested the Executive Secretary:

(a) To launch an intergovernmental consultative process, within the broad framework of General Assembly resolution 67/290, to determine the future architecture of the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development, including its mandate, scope of work and other procedural aspects, and to submit a report on those matters to the Commission at its seventy-first session;

(b) To convene, without prejudice to the outcome of the intergovernmental consultative process, the second session of the Forum back-to-back with the seventy-first session of the Commission;

(c) To conduct a study on and analysis of the programmatic, organizational and budgetary implications of constituting a new committee on science, technology and innovation and a new committee on financing for development, bearing in mind the process for implementation of Commission resolution 69/1, and to submit a report on the findings to the Commission at its seventy-first session.

**2. Progress made**

71. In response to paragraph 1 (a), the secretariat launched an intergovernmental consultative process with representatives of the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission to discuss the future architecture of the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development. The secretariat submitted background information to the Advisory Committee in December 2014 and briefed it on 15 January 2015. The views of the Advisory Committee were sought on the broad parameters for the future process of the Forum as an effective regional platform for promoting and reviewing progress on sustainable development. The results will be submitted for adoption at the second session of the Forum, in 2015. In line with General

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<sup>10</sup> [www.apwf.org/doc/Framework.pdf](http://www.apwf.org/doc/Framework.pdf).

Assembly resolution 67/290, the secretariat proposed to invite inputs from relevant regional entities, major groups and other stakeholders, as appropriate, in this consultative process.

72. With regard to the broad parameters of the future process of the Forum, the secretariat suggested, *inter alia*, that the Forum be convened as a stand-alone event prior to the Commission session in the years in which the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development meets under the aegis of the Economic and Social Council, while it is held as an integral part of the Commission session in the years in which the High-level Political Forum meets under the aegis of the United Nations General Assembly. The sessions of the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development after 2015 will be closely aligned on the role and themes of the High-level Political Forum.

73. In response to paragraph 1 (b), the secretariat plans to organize the second session of the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development on 21 and 22 May 2015 in Bangkok, immediately preceding the seventy-first session of the Commission. The theme for the Forum will be in line with the theme of the 2015 High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, namely “Strengthening integration, implementation and review — the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development after 2015”. The secretariat also proposed that the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development include a session on accountability for the development agenda beyond 2015, support regional preparations for the Annual Ministerial Review, and be supported by the theme topic for the seventy-first session of the Commission, which is entitled “Balancing the three dimensions of sustainable development: from integration to implementation”.

74. In response to paragraph 1 (c) of the resolution, the Executive Secretary has submitted a report presenting recommendations on, and an analysis of, the programmatic, organizational and budgetary implications of constituting new committees on science, technology and innovation, and on financing for development, in the context of the implementation of Commission resolution 69/1 (E/ESCAP/71/33).

## **V. Social development**

### **A. Resolution 68/6**

#### **Asia-Pacific regional preparations for the special session of the General Assembly on the International Conference on Population and Development beyond 2014**

##### **1. Requirements of the operative paragraphs**

75. In paragraphs 1 to 8 of its resolution 68/6, the Commission:

(a) Decided to postpone the convening of the sixth Asian and Pacific Population Conference in Bangkok to 2013 with a view to utilizing the Conference as an intergovernmental platform for regional preparations for the special session of the General Assembly on the International Conference on Population and Development beyond 2014;

(b) Also decided that critical population and development issues, such as (i) sexual and reproductive health, including maternal health, family planning and prevention and treatment of HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases, (ii) gender equality and women’s empowerment, (iii) population ageing, (iv) international migration, (v) urbanization, (vi) education, and

(vii) regional and international cooperation in the field of population and development, be considered in the work of the sixth Asian and Pacific Population Conference as part of the process of assessing the status of implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and recommending actions required at all levels for the full achievement of its goals and objectives, with particular attention to accelerating the reduction of maternal mortality and access to sexual and reproductive health information and services for all, especially for young people and vulnerable groups;

(c) Further decided that the outcome of the sixth Asian and Pacific Population Conference would serve as a regional input to the special session of the General Assembly on the International Conference on Population and Development beyond 2014;

(d) Emphasized the need for all members and associate members to recommit themselves to fully implementing the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development;

(e) Also emphasized that financial resources should be used effectively by recipient countries to meet national population and development objectives, so as to assist donors to secure commitment to further resources for programmes;

(f) Further emphasized the need for complementary resource flows from the international community, including donor countries, for the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development;

(g) Underlined the need for national capacity-building for population and development and transfer of appropriate technology and know-how to developing countries to be core objectives and central activities for international cooperation at the programme level. It should be stressed that the international community was called on to consider such measures as the transfer of technologies to developing countries to produce and distribute high-quality items for reproductive health services in order to strengthen the self-reliance of these countries;

(h) Encouraged all members and associate members to undertake national reviews of the progress achieved in the implementation of the Programme of Action and the constraints faced therein.

76. In paragraph 9 of the resolution 68/6, the Commission also requested the Executive Secretary:

(a) To prepare a regional overview on the basis of the national reviews of the progress achieved in the implementation of the Programme of Action and the constraints faced therein for the consideration of the sixth Asian and Pacific Population Conference;

(b) To report to the Commission at its seventy-first session on the implementation of the present resolution.

## 2. Progress made

77. All requested actions by the secretariat in the resolution have been delivered, as follows:

(a) The Sixth Asian and Pacific Population Conference was held in Bangkok from 16 to 20 September 2013. The Conference was attended by more than 400 delegates, including a head of state, ministers, policymakers and civil society representatives from 46 countries;

(b) The following issues were fully considered in the agenda and outcome document of the Conference: (i) sexual and reproductive health, including maternal health, family planning and prevention and treatment of HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases; (ii) gender equality and women's empowerment; (iii) population ageing; (iv) international migration; (v) urbanization; (vi) education; and (vii) regional and international cooperation;

(c) On 17 February 2014, the Executive Secretary submitted the outcome of the Conference to the Chair of the forty-seventh session of the Commission on Population and Development as a regional input to the special session of the General Assembly on the International Conference on Population and Development beyond 2014;

(d) As outlined in paragraph 70 of the Asian and Pacific Ministerial Declaration on Population and Development (hereafter referred to as the "Ministerial Declaration"), members and associate members of ESCAP recommitted themselves to fully implement the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development;

(e) As identified in paragraph 210 of the Ministerial Declaration, members and associate members of ESCAP stressed that a key priority is to ensure adequate financing to fully implement the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, with a focus on domestic resource mobilization, resource tracking, and public and private financing, while ensuring the continuation and fulfilment of official development assistance commitments made by international donors;

(f) As pointed out in the "Report of the Sixth Asian and Pacific Population Conference" (E/ESCAP/70/16), members and associate members of ESCAP emphasized the need for regional and global mechanisms for further implementation of the Programme of Action and for addressing the development agenda beyond 2015, including through financial support from international organizations and through triangular cooperation as well as South-South cooperation;

(g) As referred to in paragraph 40 of the Ministerial Declaration, members and associate members of ESCAP emphasized that priority actions required for population and development include national capacity-building and transfer of appropriate technology and know-how;

(h) In order to support members and associate members to undertake national reviews of the progress achieved in the implementation of the Programme of Action, ESCAP, in cooperation with the United Nations Population Fund, conducted the regional component of the International Conference on Population and Development Beyond 2014 Global Survey in 2012. Responses from 51 Governments indicated that there had been significant progress in the Asia-Pacific region in terms of increasing the availability of sexual and reproductive health services, including family planning, improving maternal health and promoting gender equality.

78. All requested actions stated in paragraph 9 of the resolution have been delivered by the secretariat, as follows:

(a) In order to prepare a regional overview of the progress achieved and constraints faced in the implementation of the Programme of Action in Asia and the Pacific, the secretariat carried out three key actions: a regional intergovernmental survey; a regional preparatory meeting in May 2013; and the Sixth Asian and Pacific Population Conference;

(b) The 51 responses by Governments to the aforementioned intergovernmental survey were consolidated into a regional review report with an assessment of the progress made towards achieving commitments made at the International Conference on Population and Development in the region, the challenges and future priorities;

(c) ESCAP, in cooperation with the United Nations Population Fund, organized the Regional Preparatory Meeting for the Sixth Asian and Pacific Population Conference, in Bangkok from 8 to 10 May 2013. The preparatory meeting brought together population and development focal points and experts from Governments, research institutes and civil society organizations from 27 ESCAP members and associate members, as well as from international organizations;

(d) The regional review report and outcomes of the regional preparatory meeting informed the discussions during the Sixth Asian and Pacific Population Conference. The discussions identified key persistent and emerging population and development issues, including ensuring universal access to reproductive health, responding to population and sustainable development linkages and enhancing social integration in the context of demographic change. The Conference set the population and development agenda for the region over the next decade.

**B. Resolution 69/14**  
**Implementation of the Bangkok statement on the Asia-Pacific review of the implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing**

**1. Requirements of the operative paragraphs**

79. In paragraph 2 of its resolution 69/14, the Commission requested the Executive Secretary:

(a) To accord priority to the implementation of the recommendations contained in the Bangkok statement;

(b) To report to the Commission at its seventy-first session on the implementation of the present resolution.

**2. Progress made**

80. In response to the resolution, the secretariat has accorded priority to its work in the area of population ageing through dedicated staff resources, enhanced analytical work and mobilization of extrabudgetary funds.

81. Extrabudgetary resources have been mobilized to supplement the regular budget of the programme of work in order to address the needs of member States as regards the challenges posed by rapid population ageing in the region.

82. Using the available resources, dedicated staff have been called upon to undertake applied research and promote regional cooperation in order to accelerate the implementation of the recommendations contained in the Bangkok statement. In this regard, the secretariat has focused on critical issues related to population ageing, including the provision of social protection, income security, health and long-term care as well as the promotion and protection of the rights of older persons.

83. The secretariat has conducted a regional analysis of key challenges affecting older persons to support Governments in the formulation and implementation of inclusive and sustainable development policies and programmes. These analytical outputs are elaborated upon in detail below.

84. In order to provide policy options to address social protection for older persons, the secretariat conducted a research project on existing income support schemes for vulnerable groups, including for older persons, in the region. Various analytical products produced under the project, consolidated in the form of a publication, provided policymakers and development practitioners with knowledge and tools to improve income support schemes or to integrate existing income support schemes into a more comprehensive social protection system covering the different phases of the life cycle.

85. To further strengthen income security for older persons in Asia and the Pacific, the secretariat undertook a follow-up analytical project on the coverage, targeted beneficiaries, sustainability and suitability of existing pension systems and other income support schemes for older persons. The project provides a platform for South-South cooperation and sharing of experiences among countries in the Asia-Pacific region on the issue of income security for older persons. With initial studies completed in two countries in South Asia and one in East Asia, this ongoing project will include national, subregional and regional consultations to identify key measures to strengthen income security for older persons in the region.

86. To address the rights of older persons in legal and policy frameworks, ESCAP, in cooperation with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, brought together experts from Governments, national human rights institutions, civil society and the United Nations system in the Workshop on the Social Integration and the Rights of Older Persons in the Asia-Pacific Region, which was held from 30 September to 2 October 2014 in Bangkok. Through the exchange of national experiences and focused thematic discussions, the workshop raised the awareness of key policymakers on priority issues as regards the rights of older persons in Asia and the Pacific and identified measures to address gaps in implementing existing legislation so as to contribute to the social integration of older persons.

87. In order to identify key priorities in the provision of effective long-term care for older persons in the region, ESCAP, in co-operation with the National Health and Family Planning Commission of China, organized the Regional Expert Consultation on Long-term Care of Older Persons, in Bangkok on 10 and 11 December 2014. Furthermore, in order to enhance knowledge in this area and meet the increasing demand for long-term care, ESCAP also conducted an analytical study in three countries in the region, with a focus on current modalities and facilities available as well as the gaps and challenges in the provision of long-term care in the region. The outcome of the Regional Expert Consultation and the study will feed into a comprehensive analytical report with clear policy recommendations on the provision of long-term care for older persons in Asia and the Pacific.

88. ESCAP has also built strong partnerships with all relevant stakeholders to strengthen its work on implementing the Bangkok statement and the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing. ESCAP has collaborated closely with the World Health Organization Regional Offices for the Western Pacific and South-East Asia to develop regional strategies for the health care of older persons. ESCAP has also cooperated with ADB to support work on pensions and income security for older persons in the

region. Additionally, ESCAP works with civil society, including HelpAge International, to promote and protect the rights of older persons in the region.

## **VI. Statistics**

### **Resolution 69/15**

#### **Implementing the outcome of the High-level Meeting on the Improvement of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific**

##### **1. Requirements of the operative paragraphs**

89. In paragraph 8 of its resolution 69/15, the Commission requested the Executive Secretary:

(a) To convene, in 2014, an intergovernmental regional meeting of ministers of health, ministers responsible for civil registration and heads of national statistical organizations, other relevant government stakeholders and senior officials of relevant development partners to endorse the Regional Strategic Plan for the Improvement of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific and to foster further regional action to support the improvement of civil registration and vital statistics in the region;

(b) To collaborate closely with relevant donors and development partners to establish a well-coordinated funding and advocacy campaign in consultation with Governments to support country actions and to fully develop and help fund the regional support activities of the Regional Strategic Plan for the Improvement of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific;

(c) To establish a regional steering group on civil registration and vital statistics under the auspices of the Committee on Statistics comprising representatives of the health, civil registration and statistics sectors and of relevant development partners, bearing in mind the urgency of initiating further consultations on the Regional Strategic Plan for the Improvement of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific and initiating its implementation, as well as taking into account the confines of the existing conference structure of the Commission;

(d) To ensure that the established regional steering group is tasked with considering and proposing a more appropriate governance structure that would fully facilitate the required multisectoral engagement, which would be considered for adoption by the regional meeting of ministers;

(e) To report to the Commission at its seventy-first session on the implementation of the present resolution.

##### **2. Progress made**

90. In response to paragraph 8 (a) of the resolution, the secretariat convened the Ministerial Conference on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific in Bangkok from 24 to 28 November 2014. The Conference was co-organized with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Population Fund, the World Health Organization, ADB and Plan International, in collaboration with the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health, the World Bank Group, the Asia Pacific Observatory on Health Systems and Policies, the Secretariat of the Pacific Community, the Partnership in Statistics for



Development in the 21st Century and World Vision International. In total, 44 members and associate members were represented at the Conference, including 20 at the ministerial level, and 17 United Nations, international and non-governmental organizations participated. The Conference reached significant outcomes that will augment and guide action at national and international levels, including the adoption of the Ministerial Declaration to “Get Every One in the Picture” in Asia and the Pacific, endorsement of the Regional Action Framework on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific, and declaration of the years 2015 to 2024 as Asian and Pacific Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Decade. Those outcomes have reinforced and extended the secretariat’s mandate to continue its multisectoral approach to improving civil registration and vital statistics, and will contribute to growing recognition that the improvement of civil registration and vital statistics is fundamental for effectively realizing and measuring inclusive and sustainable development.

91. In response to paragraph 8 (b) of the resolution, the secretariat continued to strengthen the regional partnership of international organizations supporting Asian and Pacific countries to improve their civil registration and vital statistics systems. The secretariat formed and chaired the working group of co-organizers to oversee preparations for the Ministerial Conference on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific. In addition, the secretariat collaborated with similar regional initiatives in Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Western Asia as well as partners at the global level to promote interregional cooperation and support the growing global momentum for civil registration and vital statistics. Examples of collaborative advocacy and fundraising activities undertaken by the secretariat in 2013 and 2014 include: contributing to the development of the *Global Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Scaling Up Investment Plan 2015-2024*, which was published by the World Bank Group and the World Health Organization; participating in consultations on the Global Financing Facility in Support of Every Woman Every Child, which was established by the World Bank Group and the Governments of Canada, Norway and the United States of America; being a founding member of the Global Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Group, which was established by the Statistics Division; developing the “Get Every One in the Picture” branding in collaboration with the co-organizers of the Conference; initiating a United Nations Development Account project with the Economic Commission for Africa; and forming a partnership with Data2x, an initiative of Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, to advance the gender dimension of civil registration and vital statistics.

92. In response to paragraphs 8 (c) and (d) of the resolution, the secretariat, with guidance from the Bureau of the Committee on Statistics, established the Regional Steering Group for Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific in September 2013. The Regional Steering Group is composed of representatives of 19 members and associate members of ESCAP, and five international organizations, spanning the civil registration, health and statistics sectors. The Regional Steering Group provided strategic guidance to the planning of the Ministerial Conference on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific and oversaw the development of the draft outcome documents and negotiations during a regional preparatory meeting in August 2014 and the Conference itself. Considering the need for multisectoral engagement, the Regional Steering Group considered options for an appropriate long-term governance structure, and recommended direct oversight by the Commission, a recommendation

that was supported by the Conference.<sup>11</sup> Draft revised terms of reference will be presented to the Committee on Statistics at its fourth session in March 2015 for consideration and subsequent transmission to the Commission for adoption at its seventy-first session.

### **3. Issues for consideration of the Commission**

93. With regard to paragraph 8 (d), and in light of the recommendation of the Regional Steering Group, the support of the Ministerial Conference on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific and the recommendation of the Committee on Statistics at its fourth session, the Commission is invited to consider the draft revised terms of reference for adoption and decide upon the composition of the Regional Steering Group.

## **VII. Subregional activities for development**

### **Resolution 69/17**

#### **Sustainable management, conservation and use of ocean resources for the development of Asia-Pacific small island developing States**

### **1. Requirements of the operative paragraphs**

94. In paragraph 2 of its resolution 69/17, the Commission requested the Executive Secretary:

(a) To support capacity development in Asia-Pacific small island developing States for the sustainable management of oceans and seas in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea as part of their efforts to eradicate poverty and ensure food security in the context of sustainable development;

(b) To undertake analysis in order to develop the evidence base for determining how the sustainable use of oceans and seas and their resources can contribute to poverty eradication and sustained economic growth in Asia-Pacific small island developing States;

(c) To submit a report detailing the manner in which the secretariat can support member States in the sustainable management of oceans and seas for sustainable development and poverty eradication to the Special Body on Pacific Island Developing Countries at the seventieth session of the Commission.

95. In paragraph 3 of the resolution, the Commission also requested the Executive Secretary to report to the Commission, at its seventy-first session, on the progress in implementation of the resolution.

### **2. Progress made**

96. In response to paragraph 2 (a), the secretariat prepared the *Pacific Perspectives on Fisheries and Sustainable Development* report, and undertook analysis on the valuation of marine resources and ecosystem services for sustainable development. The report was presented to all Pacific leaders at the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States, which was held in Apia in September 2014. The analysis has supported ESCAP Pacific island member States in their advocacy for the

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<sup>11</sup> This recommendation can be found in the report of the Regional Steering Group to the Committee on Statistics in E/ESCAP/CST(4)/4.

inclusion of a dedicated goal on oceans and seas on the proposal of the Open Working Group of the General Assembly on Sustainable Development Goals. As a member of UN-Oceans, the secretariat also contributed to the analysis of the Technical Support Team on Oceans. Key issues identified by the secretariat for capacity development in Pacific small island developing States for the sustainable management of oceans in order to achieve poverty eradication and food security included: (a) improving the management of coastal fisheries; (b) enhancing regional solidarity in fisheries; (c) strengthening the focus of gender in fisheries; (d) improving governance in the fisheries sector; (e) supporting the greater use of offshore tuna resources for domestic purposes (including nutrition); and (f) strengthening the vessel day scheme, which has been successful in increasing access fees from purse seine vessels. The secretariat is developing the capacity of Pacific small island developing States to utilize the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting, which provides an internationally agreed framework to reflect the environment in a national accounting framework. A number of countries are focusing on marine sector accounts as an important component of evidenced-based policymaking and planning.

97. In response to paragraph 2 (b), the secretariat published an analysis of how the sustainable use of oceans and seas and their resources can contribute to poverty eradication and sustained economic growth in Asia-Pacific small island developing States. Key messages to emerge from this analysis emphasized the important role of coastal fisheries for Pacific small island developing States, the gender dimensions of fisheries and governance challenges in marine sector management. That analysis will be used to further inform the work of the secretariat, and the work of development partners through UN-Oceans and the Marine Sector Working Group of the Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific.

98. In response to paragraph 2 (c), the secretariat prepared a report for the Special Body on Least Developed, Landlocked Developing and Pacific Island Developing Countries at the seventieth session of the Commission, which provided an overview of how Pacific small island developing States can conserve, sustainably manage and realize the benefits of fisheries in support of sustainable development, including the identification of opportunities for strengthening fisheries' contribution to sustainable development. Recommendations on the manner in which the secretariat can support the sustainable management of oceans and seas were also provided.

## **Annex**

### **List of experts of the four working groups established under resolution 70/1**

#### **A. Moving towards the formation of an integrated market**

##### **Lead experts:**

- Mr. Florian Alburo, Professor, University of the Philippines, and President, Center for the Advancement of Trade Integration and Facilitation, Philippines
- Mr. Saman Kelegama, Executive Director, Institute of Policy Studies, Sri Lanka

##### **National experts:**

- Afghanistan: Mr. Habibullah Asadullah, Trade Adviser, Ministry of Commerce and Industries
- Armenia: Ms. Hasmik Sargsyan, Chief Expert, International Economic Cooperation Department, Ministry of Economy
- Bangladesh: Mr. Monoj Kumar Roy, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Commerce
- Bhutan: Mr. Chhime Tshering, Chief, Trade Negotiation Division, Department of Trade, Ministry of Economic Affairs
- Cambodia: Mr. Tan Yuvaroath, Director, Department of Notifications and Legal Compliance (WTO Affairs), Ministry of Commerce
- China: Mr. Zhen Chen, Deputy General Manager, China EXIM Bank
- Malaysia: Ms. Che Mazni Che Wook, Director, Free Trade Agreements — policy and negotiations, Ministry of International Trade and Industry
- Micronesia (Federated States of): Mr. Jean Bertrand Azapmo, National Trade Adviser, Department of Resources and Development
- Mongolia: Mr. Enkbold Vorshilov, International Think Tank for Land Locked Developing Countries
- Nepal: Mr. Swarnim Wagle, Member, National Planning Commission
- New Zealand: Mr. Robert David John Scollay, Director, APEC Study Centre, University of Auckland, Associate Professor, Economics Department, University of Auckland
- Pakistan: Mr. Ali Bat Khan, Chief (International Trade and Finance)

- Philippines: Ms. Ramonette B. Serafica, Senior Research Fellow, Philippine Institute for Development Studies
- Thailand: Mr. Winichai Chaemchaeng, Executive Director, International Institute for Asia-Pacific Studies, Bangkok University
- Vanuatu: Mr. Sumbue Antas, Director, Department of External Trade, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and External Trade
- Viet Nam: Mr. Thai Son, Director, Office of the National Committee for Economic Integration

**B. Development of seamless connectivity across the region in the areas of transport, energy and information and communications technology**

**Lead experts:**

- Mr. Abdelmoula Ghzala, Former Lead Infrastructure Specialist at the World Bank, United States of America
- Mr. Abu Saeed Khan, Senior Policy Fellow, LIRNEasia, Bangladesh
- Mr. Benoit Felten, Chief Executive Officer, DA Asia, Hong Kong, China
- Mr. Derek Atkinson, Infrastructure and Resource Management Specialist, Australia

**National experts:**

- Afghanistan: Mr. Abdul Karim Malikyar, Head, WTO Section, Ministry of Commerce and Industries
- Azerbaijan: Mr. Farid Valiyev, Senior Adviser, International Relations Department, Ministry of Transport
- Bhutan: Mr. Bhimlal Suberi, Chief Planning Officer, Policy and Planning Division, Ministry of Information and Communications
- China: Mr. Zhao Ruyu, Deputy Chief Engineer, Transport Planning and Research Institute, Ministry of Transport
- Malaysia: Mr. Somasundram Ramasamy, Senior Undersecretary for Energy, Ministry of Energy, Green Technology and Water
- Nepal: Mr. Kamal Pande, Infrastructure Specialist and Former Joint Secretary, Economic Division, National Planning Commission
- Pakistan:
  - Mr. Muhammad Shoaib, Director (Road Transport), Ministry of Communications

- Mr. Muhammad Shahid Chaudhry, Member (Implementation and Monitoring), Ministry of Planning Development and Reform
- Mr. Syed Akhtar Ali, Member (Energy), Ministry of Planning, Development and Reform
- Russian Federation:
  - Ms. Irina Smygalina, Consultant, Division of United Nations International Organizations, Department of International Organizations, Ministry of Economic Development
  - Mr. Konstantin Kozlov, Third Secretary and Assistant Permanent Representative to ESCAP, Embassy of the Russian Federation, Bangkok
- Samoa: Ms. Oketevi Savea, Chief Executive Officer, Computer Services Limited
- Thailand:
  - Mr. Aniruth Hiranraks, Vice-President, CAT Telecom Public Company Limited
  - Mr. Prasert Sinsukprasert, Deputy Director General, Energy Planning and Policy Office, Ministry of Energy
  - Dr. Poonpat Leesombatpiboon, Chief, International Energy Cooperation, Ministry of Energy
- Timor-Leste: Mr. Joao Freitas, Information Technology Consultant, Office of the Director General, Ministry of Transport and Communications

### **C. Enhancing financial cooperation**

#### **Lead experts:**

- Mr. Duvvuri Subbarao, Former Governor of the Reserve Bank and Former Finance Secretary of India
- Mr. Masahiro Kawai, Former Dean of the Asian Development Bank Institute, and Professor at the Graduate School of the University of Tokyo

#### **National experts:**

- Azerbaijan: Mr. Nuraddin Eynullayev, Chief Adviser, Ministry of Economy and Industry
- Bangladesh: Mr. Moinul Islam, Additional Secretary, Finance Division, Ministry of Finance
- Bhutan: Mr. Sonam Tenzin, Chief Planning Officer, Policy and Planning Division, Ministry of Finance, Royal Government of Bhutan

- Cambodia: Mr. Bora Meas, Deputy Secretary-General, National Committee for ESCAP
- China: Mr. Huijiang Liang, Director General of International Finance Department, China Development Bank Corporation
- Georgia: Mr. Ivane Shamugia, Donor Coordination Adviser, Administration of the Government of Georgia
- Japan: Mr. Naoki Yamashita, Second Secretary and Financial Attaché, Embassy of Japan, Bangkok
- Nepal: Mr. Lal Shanker Ghimire, Joint Secretary, National Planning Commission Secretariat
- Samoa: Ms. Faiane Susana Laulu, Chief Executive Officer, Development Bank of Samoa
- Sri Lanka: Ms. Rupasingha Arachchige Swarnalatha Gunaratne, Director of Economic Research, Central Bank of Sri Lanka
- Thailand: Mr. Rit Syamananda, Senior Expert on International Financial and Fiscal Policy, Fiscal Policy Office, Ministry of Finance
- Timor-Leste: Mr. Helder Lopes, Chief Economist, Ministry of Finance
- Vanuatu: Mr. August Letlet, Director, Department of Finance and Treasury, Ministry of Finance and Economic Management
- Viet Nam: Mr. Vu Chi Long, Deputy Director General, Ministry of Finance, International Integration and Cooperation

**D. Increasing economic and technical cooperation to address shared vulnerabilities and risks**

**Lead experts:**

- Mr. Ramesh Chand, Director, National Centre for Agricultural Economics and Policy Research (NCAP), Indian Council for Agricultural Research, India
- Mr. Heinz Schandl, Senior Science Leader, Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation, Australia
- Mr. Frank Thomalla, Senior Research Fellow, Stockholm Environment Institute — Asia, Thailand

**National experts:**

- Armenia: Mr. Artak Aghanik Baghdasaryan, Head of Economic Development Policy Department, Ministry of Economy
- Bhutan: Ms. Tshering Lhamo, Planning Officer, Perspective Planning Division, Gross National Happiness Commission

- Cambodia: Mr. Pagnathun Theng, Director General, Ministry of Planning
  - Fiji: Mr. Krishna Dutt Prasad, Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Strategic Planning, National Development and Statistics
  - Georgia: Mr. Paata Brekashvili, Expert in Economic Policy/Researcher, Georgian Association for International Development, Caucasus University
  - India: Mr. Arvind Kumar Srivastava, Director, National Climate Centre, India Meteorological Department, Office of the Additional Director General of Meteorology
  - Japan: Mr. Michikazu Kojima, Senior Research Fellow, Institute of Developing Economies, Japan External Trade Organization
  - Nepal: Mr. Rabi Shanker Sainju, Programme Director/Section Chief, National Planning Commission Secretariat
  - Vanuatu: Mr. Davidson Gibson, Acting Director, Vanuatu Meteorological and Geo-Hazards Department
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