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Agenda item 4 (a)

Management issues: Draft programme of work for the biennium 2014-2015

Draft report

Draft programme of work for the biennium 2014-2015

1. In the introductory statement on management issues, the Executive Secretary stated that results, partnerships and building ESCAP as a learning organization were the key drivers underpinning the Commission's work to make a real and lasting difference in the lives of people in Asia and the Pacific. In recognizing the power of partnerships, ESCAP worked with a number of different partners and sought different types of partnerships in terms of skills, ideas, local knowledge, technologies, dynamism and networks. Learning from experience, including through effective monitoring and evaluation systems, was an essential part of strengthening ESCAP as a learning organization.

2. The Commission had before it the draft programme of work for the biennium 2014-2015 and corrigendum (E/ESCAP/69/16 and E/ESCAP/69/16/Corr.1), as well as the note by the secretariat containing a summary of progress in implementation of Commission resolutions (E/ESCAP/69/4), in particular the progress made in the implementation of resolution 68/8 on enhancing coordination within the United Nations system and cooperation with regional organizations for promoting regional development.

3. A representative of Malaysia made a statement.

4. In introducing the draft programme of work, the Executive Secretary indicated that during the biennium 2014-2015, ESCAP would continue to unlock its value as the most comprehensive multilateral platform for promoting cooperation among member States to achieve inclusive and sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific. In preparing the programme of work, the secretariat had drawn on the Commission's mandates, expertise and comparative advantages as a regional platform with significant convening power and had strived to make optimal use of a multidisciplinary approach and South-South cooperation, in responding to

the many interlinked opportunities and challenges. In the programme of work emphasis would be placed on mainstreaming gender perspectives and the priorities of countries with special needs. Those efforts were aimed at achieving three shared development results: (a) Governments of member States would have more effective, inclusive and sustainable development policies for addressing development from a multidisciplinary perspective in order to narrow development gaps and build resiliency; (b) global processes would be shaped by a stronger, coordinated regional voice and countries would be supported in implementing international commitments; and (c) regional cooperation mechanisms and institutional frameworks would be in place to promote regional integration and inclusive development.

5. The Executive Secretary outlined the review process that had taken place prior to the submission of the draft programme of work to the Commission, as well as subsequent steps that would be taken, including review by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions. In noting that ESCAP had been asked to reduce its programme support by nearly \$1.4 million, and its programme of work and the regular programme of technical cooperation by \$2.5 million during the biennium 2014-2015, the Executive Secretary pointed out that those reductions could have an impact on the proposed programme of work, and requested member States to convey their support through their representatives in New York who might be instrumental in gaining approval for the programme budget.

6. The delegation of Malaysia expressed its appreciation for the draft programme of work, noting that the document would serve as an invaluable guide for members and associate members by providing a practical plan of action for the achievement of maximum benefits from the work of ESCAP. The delegation looked forward to further deliberations at each of the relevant committees.

7. The Executive Secretary expressed appreciation for the extensive support shown by members through the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission during the preparation of the draft programme of work and looked forward to their ongoing support in the next phase of the process of finalization and approval in New York.

8. In the introduction of the summary of progress in the implementation of Commission resolution 68/8 on enhancing coordination within the United Nations system and cooperation with regional organizations for promoting regional development (E/ESCAP/69/4), the Executive Secretary highlighted that the Regional Coordination Mechanism convened by ESCAP was key to enhancing coordination of the United Nations system at the regional level, including the articulation of Asia-Pacific perspectives on the United Nations development agenda beyond 2015 and implementation of the outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development.

9. ESCAP initiatives to strengthen collaboration with regional and subregional organizations included the signing of a memorandum of understanding with the Shanghai Cooperation Organization to enhance cooperation in trade, energy, transport, environment, information and communication technologies, and social development, as well as stepped-up work with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations in connectivity and energy. Other collaborative initiatives were taken together with the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, the Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia, the Economic Cooperation Organization, the

Pacific Islands Forum, and the Group of Seven plus fragile and conflict-affected States. Enhanced joint work on the Millennium Development Goals, water, environment, statistics, social development and connectivity were agreed with the Asian Development Bank.

10. The Commission expressed support for the work of the secretariat and endorsed the draft programme of work for the biennium 2014-2015.
