



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
21 May 2020

Original: English

Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

Seventy-sixth session

Agenda item 4

Resolution adopted by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

76/2. Regional cooperation to address the socioeconomic effects of pandemics and crises in Asia and the Pacific

The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific,

Expressing condolences and grave concern about the loss of life as a result of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic and the significant adverse social and economic effects it has posed globally, and in particular in the Asia-Pacific region, especially with regard to vulnerable developing countries and countries with special needs, and recognizing that the prioritization of fighting the disease is saving lives and protecting people in vulnerable situations from the pandemic by stopping its spread and mitigating its effects on the health of people, and that increased poverty and inequalities may affect the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals,

Expressing grave concern also about the uneven effects the COVID-19 pandemic has had on countries and individuals, and, in this regard, reaffirming that all efforts to address and recover from the effects of the pandemic should be people-centred, with no one left behind, and that all countries and individuals have unimpeded access to assistance and support that is available,

Guided by the spirit of unity, solidarity and multilateral cooperation, and resolving to pursue coordinated and decisive actions, to contain, mitigate and defeat the pandemic through reinforced regional and global cooperation,

Declaring our profound solidarity with the most affected countries and people in different parts of the world who have suffered from the spread of the pandemic and mindful of the need to support those who may require assistance, in particular by providing technical assistance to those most affected, with particular emphasis on developing countries, whose health systems are often weaker and whose populations are more vulnerable to the impact of such outbreaks,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 74/274 of 20 April 2020 on international cooperation to ensure global access to medicines, vaccines and medical equipment to face COVID-19, resolution 74/270 of 2 April 2020 on the global solidarity to fight COVID-19 and resolution 60/35 of 30 November 2005 on enhancing capacity-building in global public health,

Recalling also resolutions 60/2 of 28 April 2004 and 61/12 of 18 May 2005 of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific on the regional call for action to enhance capacity-building in public health and resolution 74/11 of 16 May 2018 on strengthening regional cooperation to tackle inequality in all its forms in Asia and the Pacific,

Noting General Assembly resolution 67/81 of 12 December 2012 on global health and foreign policy and resolution 73/2 of 10 October 2018 on the political declaration of the third high-level meeting of the Assembly on the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases,

Reaffirming the political declaration of the high-level meeting on universal health coverage, entitled “Universal health coverage: moving together to build a healthier world”,¹

Welcoming current international, regional and subregional cooperation efforts and commitments and national actions to address and alleviate the adverse effects of the COVID-19 pandemic,

Reaffirming the fundamental role of the United Nations system, in particular the importance of the World Health Organization, in coordinating the global response to control and contain the spread of COVID-19 and in supporting Member States,

Noting the wide range of efforts across the United Nations system to support actions by countries to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, including the report of the Executive Secretary,²

Expressing appreciation for the launch of the United Nations COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund to help support low- and middle-income countries and the poor and most vulnerable to economic hardship and social disruption,

Recognizing that recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and other related future crises should not hinder the continued progress towards implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development³ and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals,

Recognizing also that a regional approach will enable a collective examination of the impacts to the Asia-Pacific region, economic and social measures, and sharing of best practices and lessons learned,

Recognizing further that the COVID-19 pandemic is an opportunity for governments and other relevant stakeholders in the region to build their crisis resilience by including risk assessment in all development action,

1. *Reaffirms* the importance of international and regional cooperation to strengthen the resilience of all members and associate members, in particular least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States, as well as developing countries, with regard to the socioeconomic effects of pandemics and other related crises;

¹ General Assembly resolution 74/2.

² ESCAP/76/34.

³ General Assembly resolution 70/1.

2. *Acknowledges* the importance of ensuring the continued flow of essential goods and services and the movement of people in order to face the challenges of the adverse effects of the pandemic and other related crises in the spirit of good neighbours;

3. *Encourages* countries, in the spirit of multilateralism, to highlight the inequality gaps, poverty and escalating health risks for millions of people due to the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19);

4. *Emphasizes* that recovery from the COVID-19 crisis provides an opportunity to build back better in Asia and the Pacific, including by building more equal, inclusive and sustainable institutions, economies and societies that respect human rights and are more resilient in the face of any future pandemic, and other related crises faced by the region, in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;³

5. *Reaffirms* the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development, and in this regard underlines the need for the United Nations system to work as one to support all Governments;

6. *Reiterates* the importance of multilateralism and international cooperation, and encourages action by all members of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific to promote measures that may reinforce global solidarity in responding to the outbreak of COVID-19;

7. *Requests* the Executive Secretary, in close coordination and consultation with member States and other relevant United Nations bodies and organizations, to analyse the ability of the Asia-Pacific region to recover from COVID-19 and other pandemics and similar widescale crises, to develop ideas for concrete and coordinated actions by countries, the United Nations system and other relevant stakeholders, including proposals for responding to the socioeconomic impacts of COVID-19 and future pandemics and related widescale crises in the region, keeping in mind the experience and best practices of the initial response, to enable countries to build back better in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and to submit a report to the Commission at its seventy-seventh session for its consideration.

*2nd plenary meeting
21 May 2020*