



Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific**Seventy-fourth session**

Bangkok, 11–16 May 2018

Agenda item 9

**Policy issues for the Asia-Pacific region:
theme topic for the seventy-fourth session of
the Commission, “Inequality in the era of the
2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”****Draft resolution****Sponsored by: China****Co-sponsored by: Bangladesh, Nepal and Pakistan****Strengthening regional cooperation to tackle inequality
in all its forms in Asia and the Pacific***The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific,*

Recalling General Assembly resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015, entitled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, in which Heads of States and Governments committed themselves to leaving no one behind and, inter alia, to combating inequality within and among countries,

Recalling also General Assembly resolution 71/186 of 19 December 2016 on human rights and extreme poverty, in which the Assembly reaffirmed that extreme poverty, deep inequality and exclusion constituted a violation of human dignity and that urgent national and international action was therefore required to eliminate them,

Recalling further resolution 73/9 of 19 May 2017 of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, and recalling the regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific,¹ in which six thematic areas of cooperation were specified for their multisectoral impact on sustainable development,

Emphasizing the important role of integrated and seamless connectivity in promoting sustainable and inclusive development, eradicating poverty and tackling inequality in Asia and the Pacific,

¹ E/ESCAP/73/31, annex II.

Recognizing inequality as a cross-cutting issue that can take different forms, such as inequality of outcome, inequality of opportunity and inequality of impact, and that its reduction requires integrated policymaking that takes into account economic, social and environmental dimensions,

Emphasizing that gender equality and women's empowerment and women's full and equal participation and leadership in the economy are vital to achieve sustainable development and significantly enhance economic growth and productivity,

Recognizing that unbalanced and inadequate development remains a challenge in the region,

Noting with concern that on average, income inequality within countries in the region is on the rise,

Recognizing that strong political commitment, multi-stakeholder participation and multisectoral coordinated actions at the national, regional and global level are essential in emphasizing the progress of reducing inequality in all its forms,

Acknowledging that the external economic environment, among others, has an important bearing on inequalities among countries,

Acknowledging also the transformative impact of technological progress, and recognizing the opportunities and challenges arising from evolving and transformative science and technology and the fourth industrial revolution,

Stressing the importance of regional and global partnership and cooperation to combating inequality,

Taking note of the theme study for the seventy-fourth session of the Commission,² in which the secretariat, through its analysis and recommendations, offers insights into the policy alternatives for reducing inequality in all its forms in Asia and the Pacific,

1. *Calls upon* all members and associate members:

(a) To recognize and accord higher priority to reducing all forms of inequality, at the forefront of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;³

(b) To intensify poverty alleviation efforts and to continue to take targeted measures to reduce and alleviate poverty, to invest in social protection systems that promote access to essential services, resources and decent jobs, especially for lower income groups and groups with the highest vulnerability, such as youth, elderly persons, persons with disabilities and migrant workers, and to promote gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment at all levels to ensure women's equal rights, access to and opportunities for participation and leadership in the economy;

(c) To make efforts to reduce the exposure of the most vulnerable groups to environmental degradation, pollution and disasters, thereby reducing the inequality of impact;

² ESCAP/74/42.

³ General Assembly resolution 70/1.

(d) To promote innovation-driven development strategies in response to the global trends in science and technology and industrial transformation, and to maximize the positives of science, technology and innovation and to minimize the possible negatives;

(e) To strengthen regional economic cooperation and integration and to enhance regional connectivity, including through the regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific,¹ in support of efforts to eradicate poverty and reduce inequality;

(f) To take further actions to promote rural vitalization, integrating urban-rural development and coordinating regional development, with a view to achieving coordinated, inclusive and interconnected development for everyone;

2. *Requests* the Executive Secretary, in cooperation with other concerned United Nations bodies and relevant stakeholders, as appropriate:

(a) To continue to conduct deeper interdisciplinary research and data analysis in order to map the groups of people who are at risk of being left behind;

(b) To continue to comprehensively analyse inequality trends;

(c) To continue to provide to members and associate members, upon request and subject to the availability of funds, technical assistance and capacity-building activities on policies and programmes that address inequality in all its forms, including on social protection and poverty and/or inequality impact assessment;

(d) To support regional cooperation on policy coordination, sharing of best practices and development experiences to address the issue of inequality in Asia and the Pacific;

(e) To continue to cooperate with members and associate members to deepen regional cooperation and support relevant initiatives to reduce extreme poverty and tackle inequality;

3. *Also requests* the Executive Secretary to report to the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific at its seventy-sixth session on progress made in the implementation of the present resolution.