



Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

Seventy-fourth session

Bangkok, 11–16 May 2018

Item 7 of the provisional agenda*

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

**Report of the Advisory Committee of Permanent
Representatives and Other Representatives Designated
by Members of the Commission****

Summary

The present document is submitted to the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific for its endorsement. It covers the activities of the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission during the period of June 2017 to March 2018. The Commission may wish to provide comments on the report.

I. Introduction

1. The present document covers the activities of the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission during the period of June 2017 to March 2018. The Advisory Committee appointed Mr. Kolinio Gata Takali (Fiji) to serve as Rapporteur of the Advisory Committee, with the responsibility of presenting its report to the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) at its seventy-fourth session.

II. Activities of the Advisory Committee

2. During the period under review, the Advisory Committee held six regular sessions and 15 informal sessions.

* ESCAP/74/L.1/Rev.1.

** The present document was submitted late owing to the need to take into account the consideration by the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission of this report at its 375th session, which was held on 2 April 2018.

3. The Advisory Committee held extended discussions in informal sessions on the preparations for intergovernmental meetings, including a paragraph-by-paragraph review of the draft ministerial declaration on environment and development for Asia and the Pacific, 2017, in preparation for the seventh Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific. Furthermore, informal sessions were held to support the consultations on the draft ministerial declaration on enhancing regional economic cooperation and integration to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in Asia and the Pacific, in preparation for the second Ministerial Conference on Regional Economic Cooperation and Integration in Asia and the Pacific, as well as on the draft ministerial declaration for the second Asian and Pacific Energy Forum.

4. The secretariat provided the Advisory Committee with briefings on the work of the Commission and the secretariat, its role and work, and its position in the United Nations development system to help orient representatives of the Advisory Committee.

5. At its regular sessions, the Advisory Committee discussed, inter alia, the following subjects:

(a) Preparations for the seventy-fourth session of the Commission: the Advisory Committee was briefed by the secretariat on the preparations for the seventy-fourth session of the Commission and provided useful guidance;

(b) Outcome of the seventy-third session of the Commission: in its review of the outcome of the seventy-third session of the Commission, the Advisory Committee considered the major achievements of the session, such as the adoption of nine resolutions and 43 decisions by the Commission, including resolution 73/9 on the regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific and resolution 73/8, adopted in response to the theme topic of the session, to guide the work of the Commission in relation to strengthening regional cooperation for sustainable energy development in the region;

(c) Resolutions adopted by the Commission at its seventy-third session: the Advisory Committee extended advice and provided useful guidance on the implementation by the secretariat of resolutions adopted by the Commission;

(d) Proposed calendar of ESCAP meetings and training activities during the period January 2018 to December 2018: the Advisory Committee reviewed the proposed calendar;

(e) Work of the secretariat in the subregions: the Advisory Committee was briefed regularly, by means of videoconferences, on ongoing ESCAP initiatives in the subregions and the work of its subregional offices in supporting the subregions with their unique challenges and opportunities in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, regional economic cooperation and integration, and other initiatives;

(f) Review of the preparations for and the outcomes of the following meetings:

(i) Seventh Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific;

(ii) Asia-Pacific Intergovernmental Meeting on the Third Review and Appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing;

(iii) Fifth session of the Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction;

- (iv) Fifth session of the Committee on Trade and Investment;
- (v) Asia-Pacific Regional Preparatory Meeting for the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration;
- (vi) Second Ministerial Conference on Regional Economic Cooperation and Integration in Asia and the Pacific;
- (vii) High-level Intergovernmental Meeting on the Midpoint Review of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013-2022;
- (viii) First session of the Committee on Macroeconomic Policy, Poverty Reduction and Financing for Development;
- (g) Review of the preparations for the following meetings:
 - (i) Fourth meeting of the Interim Intergovernmental Steering Group on Cross-border Paperless Trade Facilitation;
 - (ii) Fifth Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development;
 - (iii) Second Asian and Pacific Energy Forum;
 - (iv) Asia-Pacific Business Forum 2018;
- (h) Review of the outcomes of the following meetings of the regional institutions:
 - (i) Thirteenth session of the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology;
 - (ii) Thirteenth session of the Governing Council of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific;
 - (iii) Thirteenth session of the Governing Council of the Centre for Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization;
 - (iv) Twelfth session of the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development;
 - (v) Fourteenth session of the Governing Council of the Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Sustainable Agriculture;
 - (vi) Second session of the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management.

6. The secretariat briefed the Advisory Committee on the proposed changes to the programme planning and budgeting processes in the Secretariat of the United Nations.

7. The secretariat also briefed the Advisory Committee on the seismic mitigation retrofit and life-cycle replacements project for the ESCAP premises in Bangkok and on human resource policies and practices at the United Nations.

8. The Executive Secretary regularly informed the Advisory Committee of activities relating to the priority issues of the United Nations and of ESCAP, as well as the outcome of her missions to ESCAP members and associate members and to other countries, her attendance at major meetings, cooperative initiatives between member States and the secretariat, and administrative and programme matters concerning ESCAP. The Advisory Committee expressed

its continued appreciation for the briefings of the Executive Secretary, noting that it found them useful and informative.

9. As part of an ongoing effort to share knowledge and build capacity among member States for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, and to facilitate dialogue among member States and the secretariat, the Advisory Committee was invited to participate in the following events organized by the secretariat as part of its programme of work:

- (a) Sustainable Agro-Food Business Forum;
- (b) ASEAN Economic Integration Forum 2017 under the theme: “50 years and beyond: forging an inclusive ASEAN”;
- (c) Workshop on small and medium-sized enterprises’ access to finance and the role of development banks in Asia and the Pacific and Latin America;
- (d) Multi-stakeholder Forum on Responsible Business Practices for Sustainable Water Management on Resort Islands;
- (e) Asia-Pacific Climate Week 2017.

10. A selection of knowledge products of the secretariat were circulated to the Advisory Committee to provide member States with an analytical framework in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. For example, to meet member States’ increasing demands for producing and using statistics for the Sustainable Development Goals, the 14th issue of the ESCAP Statistics Division *Stats Brief*; and the *Statistical Yearbook for Asia and the Pacific 2016: SDG Baseline Report* were circulated.

11. Following a proposal from the delegation of Indonesia, staff members of the secretariat and representatives from member States participated in an “ACPR-ESCAP Sports Games” organized by the Embassy of Indonesia in Bangkok.

III. Conclusions

12. The members of the Advisory Committee actively contributed to strengthening its deliberative and advisory role during the reporting period. The partnership between member States and the secretariat was further reinforced through continued dialogue and consultations that resulted in the adoption of the regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific, which would guide the Commission’s work in critical areas such as climate change, disaster risk reduction and resilience, natural resource management, connectivity and energy. The Advisory Committee provided advice and guidance on important issues concerning the Commission and the secretariat, including the implementation of resolutions adopted by the Commission and the organization of various intergovernmental meetings and initiatives of the secretariat.

13. In the third year of implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the Advisory Committee remained aware of the importance of improved coordination among all relevant stakeholders. Continued constructive cooperation and mutual support between the Advisory Committee and the secretariat are pertinent in the delivery of the strong mandates entrusted by the member States, and the programme of work of ESCAP in 2018.