



Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
Committee on Environment and Development**Third session**

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Item 5(a) of the provisional agenda*

Outcomes of key regional dialogues on sustainable development: (a) Asian and Pacific Energy Forum**Outcomes of the Asian and Pacific Energy Forum****Note by the secretariat***Summary*

The Asian and Pacific Energy Forum was organized by ESCAP and hosted by the Government of the Russian Federation in Vladivostok from 27 to 30 May 2013. The Forum included a senior officials segment, a ministerial segment and a special session of the Asia-Pacific Business Forum. Some 34 member States were represented by their delegations, of which 20 were represented at the ministerial level. The present document contains a brief summary of the background and preparatory process, the proceedings, the Ministerial Declaration on Regional Cooperation for Enhanced Energy Security and the Sustainable Use of Energy in Asia and the Pacific: Shaping the Future of Sustainable Energy in Asia and the Pacific, and the Plan of Action on Regional Cooperation for Enhanced Energy Security and the Sustainable Use of Energy in Asia and the Pacific, 2014-2018. It also contains suggestions on the role the Committee might play in the review and assessment mechanism envisaged in the outcome documents.

I. Introduction

1. In accordance with Commission resolution 67/2 on promoting regional cooperation for enhanced energy security and the sustainable use of energy in Asia and the Pacific, the Asian and Pacific Energy Forum was convened in order to discuss — at the ministerial level — the progress achieved in the region in addressing energy security challenges at the regional, national and household levels, and to facilitate continuous dialogue among member States with a view to enhancing energy security and working towards sustainable development. It was held in Vladivostok, Russian Federation, from 27 to 30 May 2013.

2. So as to fully consider the various views of member States on energy security within Asia and the Pacific, and to support consensus-building towards a regional energy strategy, the secretariat organized an extensive preparatory process with the generous support of the Government of the

* E/ESCAP/CED(3)/L.1.

Russian Federation. From October 2012 to March 2013, five subregional consultation meetings,¹ an expert group meeting and a regional preparatory meeting were held; they involved senior government officials, experts, representatives from regional and international organizations, United Nations partners and civil society organizations.

3. The secretariat promoted the concept of “enhanced energy security” in its organization of meetings and provision of materials to support the negotiation process. Moving beyond conventional short-term calculations of supply and demand, enhanced energy security takes a more holistic view of energy security based on a long-term view. In particular, the secretariat highlighted seven focus areas in realizing enhanced energy security: energy access; energy efficiency; renewable energy; energy and environment; energy economics; energy trade and investment; and energy connectivity. The Forum marked an important occasion for member States to renew their commitment to developing energy policies within the context of sustainable development and, therefore, to formulating cross-sectoral energy guidelines for ecological and inclusive growth.

II. Overview of the Asian and Pacific Energy Forum

4. The Asian and Pacific Energy Forum was held in Vladivostok, Russian Federation, from 27 to 30 May 2013. The Forum was attended by 34 countries, of which 20 were represented at ministerial level. Representatives included the Prime Minister of Tonga and the Deputy Prime Minister of Tuvalu.

5. Building on the conclusions of the meetings held during the preparatory process (the subregional consultation meetings, the expert group meeting and the regional preparatory meeting), the senior officials negotiated the draft outcome documents on 27 and 28 May. During break-out sessions, each subregion met to finalize the draft text to be included in the plan of action under the heading “Areas of action for subregions”.

6. The ministerial segment commenced during the afternoon of 29 May with opening messages by the President of the Russian Federation, the Executive Secretary of ESCAP and the Governor of Primorsky Krai, followed by policy statements from 29 delegations and the subsequent adoption of the outcome documents, namely: (a) the Ministerial Declaration on Regional Cooperation for Enhanced Energy Security and the Sustainable Use of Energy in Asia and the Pacific: Shaping the Future of Sustainable Energy in Asia; the Pacific; and (b) the Plan of Action on Regional Cooperation for Enhanced Energy Security and the Sustainable Use of Energy in Asia and the Pacific, 2014-2018.

7. In between the senior officials segment and the ministerial segment, the Asia-Pacific Business Forum took place on 29 May. The session included discussions on two thematic topics, which were later fed into a high-level round table. The Business Forum was attended by experts and business representatives from the Russian Federation and other countries of the region. The Business Forum was chaired by the Chair of the Task Force on Inclusive Trade and Investment of the ESCAP Business Advisory Council, who communicated the outcome of the Business Forum to the ministers on 30 May.

¹ East and North-East Asia, North and Central Asia, the Pacific, South and South-West Asia, and South-East Asia.

III. Outcome documents

A. Ministerial Declaration on Regional Cooperation for Enhanced Energy Security and the Sustainable Use of Energy in Asia and the Pacific: Shaping the Future of Sustainable Energy in Asia and the Pacific

8. The Ministerial Declaration begins by reaffirming the principles of sustainable development as outlined in the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development,² Agenda 21³ and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation.⁴ It recalls several resolutions of the General Assembly and of ESCAP, such as General Assembly resolution 67/215, in which the Assembly decided to declare the decade 2014-2024 as the United Nations Decade of Sustainable Energy for All. It also refers to paragraphs 125 to 129 of the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, entitled “The future we want”.⁵

9. The operative paragraphs contain an acknowledgement that energy security is a key development issue, which poses serious challenges to all countries in the Asia-Pacific region, in terms of economic growth, the eradication of poverty, energy access, energy affordability, rapid population growth, the rise in energy demand and achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Ministers resolved to work on several different topics, for example improving transparency, predictability and stability of energy markets, and enhancing and balancing the energy mix with clean fossil fuels, such as natural gas, and new and renewable energy sources, including hydropower, solar, wind, geothermal, biofuels and ocean waves. Ministers also pledged to cooperate proactively on energy security challenges, especially with regard to strengthening regional and international cooperation on enhanced energy security and the sustainable use of energy.

10. The Ministerial Declaration ends with specific requests to the Executive Secretary to, among other things, facilitate the dissemination of information and best practices, work closely with UN-Energy and other regional commissions and relevant international and multilateral organizations, periodically review, in close consultation with members and associate members, and report to the Commission on the progress made in implementing the Ministerial Declaration and Plan of Action, and convene a second Asian and Pacific Energy Forum at the ministerial level no later than in 2018.

B. Plan of Action on Regional Cooperation for Enhanced Energy Security and the Sustainable Use of Energy in Asia and the Pacific, 2014-2018

11. In the Plan of Action, member States set out their vision for an Asia-Pacific region in which sustainable energy for all is a reality, enhanced

² *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992*, vol. I, *Resolutions Adopted by the Conference* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution 1, annex I.

³ *Ibid.*, annex II.

⁴ *Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 2, annex.

⁵ General Assembly resolution 66/288, annex.

energy security is present from regional to household levels, an energy future of equity, diversification and access to all is secured and the share of cleaner energies in the overall energy mix is increased. To this end, the Plan of Action contains 15 areas for action: (a) establishing a platform for facilitating continuous dialogue and cooperation among ESCAP member States on enhanced energy security and the sustainable use of energy; (b) working towards universal access to modern energy services; (c) advancing the development and use of new and renewable sources of energy; (d) improving energy efficiency and conservation and observing sustainability in the supply, distribution and consumption of energy; (e) diversifying the energy mix and enhancing energy security; (f) improving energy trade and investment opportunities; (g) improving fiscal policy and financial mechanisms; (h) improving energy statistics and facilitating data and information sharing; (i) minimizing the environmental impact of the energy sector; (j) promoting more efficient and cleaner use of oil; (k) promoting the efficient and clean use of coal; (l) promoting expanded production, trade and use of natural gas; (m) promoting the development of advanced energy technologies; (n) developing common infrastructure and harmonized energy policies; and (o) promoting capacity-building, education and knowledge-sharing in the field of energy. The Plan of Action includes areas of action for each of the five ESCAP subregions and ends with a paragraph on a review and assessment mechanism.⁶

IV. Matters calling for the attention of the Committee

12. In order to implement the Ministerial Declaration and the Plan of Action effectively, a comprehensive implementation plan needs to be established. Such a plan could serve as the central guiding document for member States in developing and monitoring activities in the action areas, and for ESCAP in coordinating activities to support member States in their implementation of the outcome documents. It could also provide support in facilitating regional and subregional cooperation on enhanced energy security and the sustainable use of energy. Consultations with member States to review the draft implementation plan will be organized and the final draft could be submitted to the next session of the Commission.

13. The Ministerial Declaration and Plan of Action emphasize reviewing and assessing their implementation. In the Declaration, member States request the Executive Secretary to advance and periodically review, in close consultation with members and associate members, the progress made in the implementation of the Declaration and the Plan of Action and to report thereon to the Commission on a regular basis. In addition, the Plan of Action states that a review process should be undertaken periodically and be based on information provided by members and associate members on a voluntary basis, as well as by collaborating international organizations. The review report will be submitted to the second Asian and Pacific Energy Forum, to be held no later than in 2018.

14. In order to carry out the mandate to advance and review the progress made in the implementation of the Ministerial Declaration and the Plan of Action, an evaluation and review framework needs to be developed as part of the overall implementation plan. The objectives of this framework would be to facilitate partnerships among stakeholders, and to identify ways for the secretariat to better support member States in their efforts to implement the Declaration and Plan of Action. In close consultation with member States, the

⁶ For the report of the Forum, see E/ESCAP/APEF/3.

evaluation framework would review assessment methods and available inputs, and identify quantitative and qualitative indicators that could drive the review and assessment mechanism, which would, in turn, strengthen the implementation plan itself.

15. In addition to the report to be submitted to the second Asian and Pacific Energy Forum, a mid-term report for review could be submitted to member States at either a session of the Commission or the Committee, or at the seventh Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific.

16. The Committee may wish to discuss and provide guidance on these matters regarding the drafting of a comprehensive implementation plan, including a review and assessment mechanism for the outcomes and progress of the Forum.

17. The Committee may wish to recommend to the Commission that it endorse the Ministerial Declaration on Regional Cooperation for Enhanced Energy Security and the Sustainable Use of Energy in Asia and the Pacific: Shaping the Future of Sustainable Energy in Asia and the Pacific and the Plan of Action on Regional Cooperation for Enhanced Energy Security and the Sustainable Use of Energy in Asia and the Pacific, 2014-2018.
