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ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Meeting on the New ESCAP Subregional Offices  
for East and North-East Asia, North and Central Asia,  
and South and South-West Asia

2-4 March 2010  
Bangkok

**ANNOTATED PROVISIONAL AGENDA**

**1. Opening of the meeting**

The detailed programme for the opening of the meeting will be announced in due course.

**2. Election of officers**

The meeting will elect a chairperson, three vice-chairpersons (to chair the separate plenary sessions focused on each subregion) and a rapporteur.

**3. Adoption of the agenda**

*Documentation*

Provisional agenda  
(E/ESCAP/SRO/IGM/1/L.1)

Annotated provisional agenda  
(E/ESCAP/SRO/IGM/1/L.2)

The meeting may wish to consider and adopt the provisional agenda.

**4. Role of the subregional offices in addressing the priority needs of the following subregions**

*Documentation*

Background and rationale behind the new ESCAP subregional offices  
(E/ESCAP/SRO/IGM/1/3)

Three new subregional offices, one each in East and North-East Asia, North and Central Asia, and South and South-West Asia, are being established in 2010 to improve the ability of ESCAP to better respond to the diverse needs of the member States. An inclusive consultative process has been undertaken in setting up these new subregional offices. In preparation for the present meeting, which is an integral part of the process, two expert group meetings were held in October 2009 to discuss priority work areas for the subregional offices for East and North-East Asia and South

and South-West Asia. The experts identified priority areas of work that could be undertaken by the subregional offices in the respective subregions. The reports of the two expert group meetings will be submitted under items 4 (a) and 4 (c) of the provisional agenda as background documents.

Building on the findings of these two expert group meetings and guided by the priority work areas of the United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia, the objectives of the present meeting are:

(a) To reach a common understanding and shared vision on the priority needs of the respective subregions;

(b) To articulate short- and medium-term work programmes for the subregional offices with a view to addressing the priority issues identified.

Asia and the Pacific, with its diversity and wide-ranging development gaps, needs more concerted and targeted efforts to address emerging threats to sustainable socio-economic growth. The achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, including gender equality, is perceived as vital for improving the quality of life, promoting innovation, creating employment and encouraging sustainable growth in all three subregions. Aligned with these overarching priorities are subregional commonalities and needs which could also be addressed by the new ESCAP subregional offices.

Overall, the subregional offices would serve as the secretariat's operational arms at the subregional level by, inter alia:

- Adding more focus and greater depth to the normative and analytical work of ESCAP
- Developing, mobilizing resources for and implementing subregional programmes and projects
- Contributing subregional perspectives to regional programmes and projects to achieve greater synergy and to leverage funds accordingly
- Aiding in the pursuit of overarching priority areas, such as mainstreaming gender equality and achieving the Millennium Development Goals
- Forging partnerships with government agencies, institutions, the private sector and civil society
- Developing and disseminating virtual products
- Sharing good practices and replicating successful programmes and projects

During the plenary sessions focused on each subregion, the secretariat will present a vision of the possible priority areas which could constitute the programme of work of the responsible subregional office, and the role of each office in addressing priority needs, taking into consideration the relationships among ESCAP headquarters, the subregional offices and other regional and subregional institutions.

**(a) East and North-East Asia**

*Documentation*

Role of the Subregional Office for East and North-East Asia in addressing the priority needs of the subregion  
(E/ESCAP/SRO/IGM/1/4)

Report of the Expert Group Meeting to Identify Work Priorities of the New  
ESCAP Subregional Office for East and North-East Asia  
(E/ESCAP/SRO/IGM/1/1)

The East and North-East Asian subregion, characterized by socio-economic and environmental diversity among the countries, encompasses economic complementarities which encourage a wide range of subregional economic relations. The labour-intensive and production-driven development of China, the rapid export-related growth of the Republic of Korea, and the capital- and technology-intensive economy of Japan, coupled with the rich natural resource endowments and energy supplies of Mongolia and the Russian Federation, make this subregion a very powerful system of interlocked and dynamic trade and investment flows. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea, on the other hand, remains isolated and does not appropriately benefit from its strategic location within the subregion. Hence, improved subregional cooperation, environmental sustainability (including energy-related issues), trade, and disaster risk reduction are all considered priority areas needing attention.

**(b) North and Central Asia**

*Documentation*

Role of the Subregional Office for North and Central Asia in addressing the  
priority needs of the subregion  
(E/ESCAP/SRO/IGM/1/5)

United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia  
(SPECA) 2010-2011 Work Plan  
(E/ESCAP/SRO/IGM/1/INF/4)

Given the interdependence of countries in North and Central Asia, a knowledge-based development approach encompassing sustainable development and the efficient use of water and energy resources is favoured in the subregion. The approach should also address specific problems of transit transport infrastructure, including the improvement of priority transport corridors, and statistical and trade-related capacity-building, trade facilitation, regional cooperation on accession to the World Trade Organization and regional trade agreements, such as the Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement.

**(c) South and South-West Asia**

*Documentation*

Role of the Subregional Office for South and South-West Asia in addressing  
the priority needs of the subregion  
(E/ESCAP/SRO/IGM/1/6)

Report of the Expert Group Meeting to Identify Work Priorities of the New  
ESCAP Subregional Office for South and South-West Asia  
(E/ESCAP/SRO/IGM/1/2)

While the agricultural sector plays a major role in most countries in South and South-West Asia, 5 of the 10 countries located in the subregion (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal and Maldives) are classified as least developed countries. In particular, poverty reduction continues to be seriously hampered, predominantly in

rural areas, where more than two thirds of the total population of the subregion resides. Trade, infrastructure development and connectivity, environmental sustainability—including the utilization of alternative energy sources—and disaster risk reduction figure prominently in the current economic development needs of the subregion and should be given due consideration when planning sustainable socio-economic development activities focused on the subregion.

## **5. Short- and medium-term work programmes for the subregional offices**

### **(a) Programme of work for the biennium 2010-2011**

#### *Documentation*

Programme of work of the new ESCAP subregional offices for the biennium 2010-2011

(E/ESCAP/SRO/IGM/1/7)

The Commission at its sixty-fifth session, in April 2009, endorsed the draft programme of work of ESCAP for the biennium 2010-2011,<sup>1</sup> including the section relating to the three subregions. The approved programme of work for each subregion includes an ad hoc intergovernmental meeting and related parliamentary reports, knowledge sharing on economic and social development policies and good practices, and field projects to address subregional development needs. In the case of East and North-East Asia and North and Central Asia, the programme of work also includes substantive support to the relevant subregional programmes, namely the North East Asian Subregional Programme for Environmental Cooperation and the United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia.<sup>2</sup>

The meeting may wish to provide the secretariat with guidance, drawing on the outcome of deliberations under item 4 of the provisional agenda, to further refine the programme of work for 2010-2011, with a view to reflecting a shared vision of the priority needs of the respective subregions.

### **(b) Draft strategic framework for the biennium 2012-2013**

#### *Documentation*

Draft strategic framework for the new ESCAP subregional offices for the biennium 2012-2013

(E/ESCAP/SRO/IGM/1/8)

The Commission at its sixty-sixth session, in May 2010, will consider the draft strategic framework for the biennium 2012-2013, which presents the overall orientation of the programme of ESCAP and the results frameworks for its eight subprogrammes, including subprogramme 8, Subregional activities for development. The strategic framework for the biennium 2012-2013, once approved by the General Assembly, will serve as the basis for developing the programme of work for the same period.

The meeting may wish to review the results frameworks and strategies for each of the three subregions, in the light of the outcome of the deliberations under item 4 of the agenda, and provide the secretariat with guidance.

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<sup>1</sup> See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2009, Supplement No. 19* (E/2009/39-E/ESCAP/65/32), para. 180.

<sup>2</sup> See A/64/6 (Sect. 18), paras. 18.91, 18.95 and 18.99.

**6. Other matters**

The meeting may raise any matter not covered under the items above.

**7. Adoption of the report of the meeting**

The report of the meeting will be considered and adopted.

**8. Closing of the meeting**

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