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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

**DRAFT REPORT**

**I. PROCEEDINGS**

**A. Overview of the role of the subregional offices in addressing  
the priority needs of the subregions**

1. The meeting had before it the document entitled “Background and rationale behind the new ESCAP subregional offices” (E/ESCAP/SRO/IGM/1/3).
2. Representatives presented in-depth and relevant views and opinions on the priority needs of the respective subregions. That was followed by rich discussions on priority work areas for the new subregional offices. They then discussed recommendations on possible priority work areas, including further articulation of the programme of work for the biennium 2010-2011 and the draft strategic framework for the biennium 2012-2013 in respect of the subregional offices.
3. The meeting noted that the subregional offices could play a key role in strengthening cooperation among the member States concerned, as “outreach” offices, in close cooperation and consultation with ESCAP headquarters. Those offices, including the subregional office for the Pacific, would form a network to assist in delivering outputs mandated under the strategic framework and programme of work of ESCAP.
4. The meeting noted that the subregional offices, taking into consideration the mandates of ESCAP, should establish close working relations with United Nations country teams within the subregion and promote the coordination of United Nations system activities at the subregional level as well as building partnerships with other relevant actors, including subregional intergovernmental bodies, to promote subregional cooperation within a regional framework.
5. The delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran, while welcoming the establishment of the three new subregional offices in Asia and the Pacific pointed out that its country was located within the territorial purview of three regional commissions of the United Nations, namely the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) and the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), especially through the subregional offices of North and Central Asia and South and South-West

Asia. Therefore, the Islamic Republic of Iran reserved the right to participate in the relevant activities of neighbouring subregional offices on a permanent or thematic basis.

#### **B. Role of the subregional office in addressing the priority needs of East and North-East Asia**

6. The meeting had before it the documents entitled “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) and “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).

7. The meeting noted that the East and North-East Asian subregion was an economic powerhouse in Asia and the Pacific as well as in the world. There was also a growing economic and environmental interdependence within and among the subregions of Asia and the Pacific. Such fast-paced growth patterns were characterized by an impressive share of GDP as well as high energy-consumption levels and corresponding carbon dioxide emissions.

8. The meeting acknowledged that, given the limited human resource availability in the subregional office, its work should focus on three or four priority areas in addition to supporting the work of ESCAP headquarters. Those priority areas would revolve around the role of the office as a driver of South-South cooperation.

9. The meeting discussed the role of the subregional office in relation to the North-East Asian Subregional Programme for Environmental Cooperation (NEASPEC) and agreed that further consultations with the relevant member States were required in order to determine whether the secretariat of NEASPEC could be located within the subregional office.

#### **C. Role of the subregional office in addressing the priority needs of North and Central Asia**

10. The meeting had before it the documents entitled “Role of the Subregional Office for North and Central Asia in addressing the priority needs of the subregion” (E/ESCAP/SRO/IGM/1/5) and “United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA) 2010-2011 work plan” (E/ESCAP/SRO/IGM/1/INF/4).

11. The meeting noted that only a few member States from the subregion were represented at the meeting. It was suggested that further discussion could be held on the priority areas of the subregional office in relevant forums in the future.

#### **D. Role of the subregional office in addressing the priority needs of South and South-West Asia**

12. The meeting had before it the documents entitled “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) and “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).

13. The delegation of Pakistan expressed concern regarding possible difficulties in obtaining visas for participants attending meetings and other activities organized

by the subregional offices. In response, the delegation of India stated that the Government of India would facilitate the issuance of visas to all participants, subject to its rules and regulations, as was the practice for all other meetings hosted by the large number of United Nations agencies based in India.

**E. Short- and medium-term work programmes for the subregional offices:  
programme of work for the biennium 2010-2011**

14. The meeting had before it the programme of work for the new ESCAP subregional offices for the biennium 2010-2011 (E/ESCAP/SRO/IGM/1/7).

15. The meeting noted the programme of work for the biennium 2010-2011, in respect of subregional activities for development in East and North-East Asia, North and Central Asia and South and South-West Asia, which had been endorsed by the Commission at its sixty-fifth session, in April 2009.<sup>1</sup> It further noted that the Commission at its sixty-sixth session, in 2010, would consider the proposed programme changes for the biennium 2010-2011 emanating from the new mandates adopted since the Commission had endorsed the programme of work, including the outcome of the present meeting.

16. Bearing in mind the above, a technical cooperation project on cooperation mechanisms to promote infrastructure development in South and South-West Asia, with a focus on transport, specifically trade and transport facilitation, including connectivity, was proposed.

17. The need for the secretariat to continue its efforts to secure extrabudgetary contributions to fund subregion-specific operational activities in priority areas was discussed.

**F. Short- and medium-term work programmes for the subregional offices:  
draft strategic framework for the biennium 2012-2013**

18. The meeting had before it the draft strategic framework for the new ESCAP subregional offices for the biennium 2012-2013 (E/ESCAP/SRO/IGM/1/8).

19. The meeting was informed that the draft strategic framework for the biennium 2012-2013, in respect of subregional activities for development in East and North-East Asia, North and Central Asia and South and South-West Asia had been reviewed by the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission (ACPR) at its special session held on 18 February 2010. It noted that the draft strategic framework would be further reviewed by ACPR at its resumed special session, which was scheduled for 22 March 2010, and by the Commission at its sixty-sixth session, which would be held from 13 to 19 May 2010. Subsequently, the ESCAP strategic framework for the biennium 2012-2013 would be reviewed by the Committee for Programme and Coordination at its fiftieth session, which would be held in New York in June 2010, prior to final consideration and approval by the General Assembly in late 2010.

20. Noting the above process, representatives expressed general support for the draft strategic framework for the biennium 2012-2013, as contained in the above-mentioned document. It was noted that ACPR needed to be informed of the outcome of the meeting, in particular the priority programme areas identified for the three

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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), paras. 180-188.

subregional offices under agenda item 4, to facilitate the further review of the draft strategic framework by ACPR prior to consideration by the Commission. In that regard, it was noted that the priority areas identified under that agenda item for each of the three subregions should be aligned with the list of priority areas included in the respective expected accomplishments (a) under components 2, 3 and 4.

21. The meeting noted that some delegations had proposed changes to the draft strategic framework.

#### **G. Other matters**

22. No other matters were raised.

### **II. ORGANIZATION**

#### **A. Opening and duration**

23. The meeting was held in Bangkok from 2 to 4 March 2010. It was opened by the Deputy Executive Secretary of ESCAP.

24. The main objectives of the meeting were the following:

(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.

#### **B. Attendance**

25. Representatives of the following members of the Commission attended the meeting: Bangladesh; Bhutan; Cambodia; China; Democratic People's Republic of Korea; France; India; Iran (Islamic Republic of); Japan; Kazakhstan; Malaysia; Mongolia; Myanmar; Nepal; Pakistan; Philippines; Republic of Korea; Russian Federation; Sri Lanka; Thailand and United States of America.

26. Representatives of the following United Nations bodies also attended the meeting: Economic Commission for Europe; United Nations Development Programme–Regional Centre in Bangkok.

#### **C. Election of officers**

27. The meeting elected the following officers:

Chairperson: Mr. Syed Bakri (Malaysia)

Vice-Chairpersons: Mr. Masatoshi Sato (Japan)

Mr. Nikolay Pomoshchnikov (Russian Federation)

Mr. J.B. Disanayaka (Sri Lanka)

Rapporteur: Mr. Md. Abdullah Al Masud Chowdhury (Bangladesh).

#### **D. Agenda**

28. The meeting adopted the following agenda:
  1. Opening of the meeting.
  2. Election of officers.
  3. Adoption of the agenda.
  4. Role of the subregional offices in addressing the priority needs of the following subregions:
    - (a) East and North-East Asia;
    - (b) North and Central Asia;
    - (c) South and South-West Asia.
  5. Short- and medium-term work programmes for the subregional offices:
    - (a) Programme of work for the biennium 2010-2011;
    - (b) Draft strategic framework for the biennium 2012-2013.
  6. Other matters.
  7. Adoption of the report of the meeting.
  8. Closing of the meeting.

*Annex*

**LIST OF DOCUMENTS**

<i>Symbol</i>	<i>Agenda item</i>	<i>Document title</i>
E/ESCAP/SRO/IGM/1/1	4 (a)	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/1/2	4 (c)	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/1/3	4	Background and rationale behind the new ESCAP subregional offices
E/ESCAP/SRO/IGM/1/4	4 (a)	Role of the Subregional Office for East and North-East Asia in addressing the priority needs of the subregion
E/ESCAP/SRO/IGM/1/5	4 (b)	Role of the Subregional Office for North and Central Asia in addressing the priority needs of the subregion
E/ESCAP/SRO/IGM/1/6	4 (c)	Role of the Subregional Office for South and South-West Asia in addressing the priority needs of the subregion
E/ESCAP/SRO/IGM/1/7	5 (a)	Programme of work of the new ESCAP subregional offices for the biennium 2010-2011
E/ESCAP/SRO/IGM/1/8	5 (b)	Draft strategic framework for the new ESCAP Subregional offices for the biennium 2012-2013
E/ESCAP/SRO/IGM/1/L.1	3	Provisional agenda
E/ESCAP/SRO/IGM/1/L.2	3	Annotated provisional agenda
E/ESCAP/SRO/IGM/1/L.3	7	Draft report
E/ESCAP/SRO/IGM/1/L.3/Add.1	7	Draft recommendations of the meeting
E/ESCAP/SRO/IGM/1/INF/1		Information note for participants
E/ESCAP/SRO/IGM/1/INF/2		Tentative programme
E/ESCAP/SRO/IGM/1/INF/3		List of participants
E/ESCAP/SRO/IGM/1/INF/4	4 (b)	United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA) 2010-2011 Work Plan