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Draft report

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Addendum

Programme questions: proposed programme budget for 2026

(Item 3 (a))

Programme 16

Economic and social development in Asia and the Pacific

1. At its 9th meeting, on 16 May 2025, the Committee considered programme 16, Economic and social development in Asia and the Pacific, of the proposed programme plan for 2026 and programme performance in 2024 ([A/80/6 \(Sect. 19\)](#)).

Discussion

2. Delegations expressed appreciation and support for the work of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and for the presentation of the proposed programme plan for 2026 and programme performance information for 2024.

3. A delegation highlighted that the role of ESCAP as the principal intergovernmental platform for the United Nations in the Asia and the Pacific region was pivotal and of utmost relevance for the region in order to assist member States in pursuing solutions for sustainable development and help with research and analysis, the facilitation of intergovernmental consensus-building, technical cooperation and capacity development. The delegation stressed the importance for the Commission's work to adequately reflect the priorities of developing countries in the programme's nine subprogrammes and noted that, according to paragraph 19.3 of [A/80/6 \(Sect. 19\)](#), the support delivered by the Commission to member States was also provided through the regular programme of technical cooperation and Development Account projects. It was noted by the delegation that the proposed programme covered various aspects of important issues, including the environment, transportation, trade, disaster risk



management and statistics and social development in the Asia and Pacific region. The delegation commended the leading role of ESCAP and its various centres in development activities in Asia and the Pacific and expressed its commitment that, as a member of the Commission and the host of its Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management team, its country would continue its support and active participation in the work of ESCAP, including through joint collaboration in the areas of road safety, cross-border paperless trade, the Jakarta Declaration on the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2023–2032, the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway Initiative, the Asian Highway Network, dry ports and the Trans-Asian Railway Network.

4. A delegation reiterated its interest in ensuring that regional commissions exchanged knowledge and experiences among one another, while identifying best practices and lessons learned. The delegation encouraged ESCAP to focus primarily on regional economic cooperation, trade and data-driven policy analysis and noted that the expansion of mandates into areas not grounded in their comparative advantage would risk diluting their effectiveness and duplicating efforts undertaken elsewhere in the United Nations system.

5. It was noted by a delegation that, at the time of the meeting, the Asia-Pacific region remained a global economic growth engine and that the position of ESCAP had become more prominent as the integrated economic and social development organization of the United Nations in the region, with crucial responsibilities. The delegation said that, as an important member of the region, its country highly valued the role of ESCAP and was an active participant in its activities, and appreciated the Commission's provision of support to member States in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, especially in helping the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States to reach their goals. The delegation affirmed its country's readiness to work with ESCAP to firmly uphold multilateralism, jointly promote the implementation of the Global Development Initiative, build a high-quality Belt and Road Initiative and make greater contribution to building a community with a shared future for Asia and the Pacific.

6. A delegation expressed its pride at being one of the largest contributors to ESCAP since 2007 and placed a high value on its long-standing and multifaceted cooperation with the Commission. The delegation commended the critical role of ESCAP in supporting countries in the Asia-Pacific region in implementing the 2030 Agenda through regional cooperation and integrated cross-sectoral approaches.

7. With regard to subprogramme 1, Macroeconomic policy, poverty reduction and financing for development, a delegation noted that 86 per cent of policymakers acknowledged a strengthening policy awareness on macroeconomic and financing for development issues and enquired about the metrics that were utilized to measure the progress and the reason why ESCAP was planning to reach a lower number of policymakers in 2026.

8. With regard to subprogramme 4, Environment and development, a delegation welcomed the strong focus of the subprogramme on enhancing human well-being in both urban and rural contexts through capacity-building support and noted that its country had consistently contributed to knowledge-sharing in that area, notably through the Seoul Initiative on Environmentally Sustainable Economic Growth (Green Growth) since 2005 and, more recently, the fourth edition of the CityNet-ESCAP SDG City Awards, with the City of Seoul, which had helped to recognize outstanding local efforts in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals across the region. In relation to paragraph 19.76 of [A/80/6 \(Sect. 19\)](#), the delegation commended the development of the Asia-Pacific SDG Localization Platform and requested further insights into how digitalization was concretely enhancing the capacity of local

governments and stakeholders and how the Commission planned to assist countries with limited digital access in ensuring that no one would be left behind in the localization of the Goals.

9. With regard to subprogramme 5, Information and communications technology and disaster risk reduction and management, a delegation expressed its strong support for the Commission's work in promoting regional cooperation on information and communications technology, space technology and disaster risk reduction. As the host of the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development, the delegation affirmed its country's commitment to helping to bridge the digital divide and accelerate inclusive digital transformation. The delegation also expressed its belief that, as digital technologies evolved rapidly, it was becoming increasingly critical to ensure their responsible and ethical use, and requested the perspective of ESCAP on how it incorporated that consideration when supporting information and communications technology development and transfer.

Conclusions and recommendations

10. **The Committee recommended that the plenary or the relevant Main Committee or Main Committees of the General Assembly, in line with Assembly resolution [79/247](#), consider the programme plan for programme 16, Economic and social development in Asia and the Pacific, of the proposed programme budget for 2026 under the agenda item entitled "Programme planning" at the eightieth session of the Assembly.**
