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**PROPOSALS REGARDING THE PROGRAMME OF WORK AND PRIORITIES
FOR THE BIENNIUM 2004-2005 IN THE FIELD OF ENERGY***

Introduction

1. The overall orientation of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) revised medium-term plan for the period 2002-2005 focuses on assisting member countries in the creation of the kind of environment that promotes continuing regional development and its three interdependent and mutually reinforcing economic, social and environmental components. In line with that orientation, the objective of subprogramme 1, entitled "Integrated policies for the management of regional resources for sustainable development", which is to be implemented by the Sustainable Development and Productivity Division (SDPD), is to "have a positive impact on regional integration and cooperation among ESCWA member countries, based on a concerted approach to integrated sustainable management of water and energy and the productive sectors".

2. In view of the fact that the revised programme of work and priorities for the biennium 2002-2003 includes activities that aim to achieve some of the objectives of the aforementioned medium-term plan, it is intended to achieve those aims through the programme of work and priorities for the biennium 2004-2005. As the ESCWA secretariat identifies the overall orientations and priorities of its programme of work for the biennium 2004-2005, this paper presents the general frameworks and orientations in order to define programme priorities in the field of energy.

General frameworks for defining programme priorities

3. In the light of the foregoing, SDPD is currently formulating the broad orientations of the programme of work and priorities for the biennium 2004-2005 in the field of energy, with a view to accomplishing the objectives outlined in the medium-term plan. The Division is guided by the following:

(a) The frameworks and plans of action issued at the World Summit on Sustainable Development, held in Johannesburg in August 2002 and, in particular, those relating to the field of energy;

(b) The objectives outlined in the United Nations Millennium Declaration;

(c) The recommendations of the Fourth World Trade Organization (WTO) Ministerial Conference, held in Doha in November 2001, with regard to the inclusion of energy services within the new round of

* See ESCWA. *Revised Medium-term Plan for the Period 2002-2005*, "Subprogramme 1. Integrated policies for the management of regional resources for sustainable development" (E/ESCWA/S-4/L.3/Rev.1), pp. 2-4, adopted during the Fourth special session of ESCWA held in Beirut, March 2002.

negotiations on trade and the environment, and the determination of WTO to include the energy sector in the General Agreement on Trade in Services;

(d) The needs identified by member countries in this field and, in particular, those related to support for regional cooperation and full integration of member country activities aimed at enhancing the efficiency of the energy sector and making it sustainable.

4. Because ESCWA wishes to formulate a work programme in the field of energy that meets the needs of member countries and is consistent with the objectives and recommendations referred to above, it will present the provisional work programme for the period 2004-2005, which is currently being prepared, to the Committee on Energy at its fourth session. It is hoped that the representatives of member countries will agree to the proposals of the Commission in this field in order to facilitate their discussions during the session and make it possible to issue an overall work programme for SDPD in the field of energy for the biennium 2004-2005 that is consistent with the fundamental aim of the work programme for energy, namely, to increase the part played by the energy sector in achieving sustainable development for the countries of the region.