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**Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)**

Committee on Water Resources  
Ninth session  
Beirut, 23-25 March 2011

Item 3 of the provisional agenda

**INFORMATION NOTE***1. Background*

The Committee on Water Resources was established pursuant to Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) resolution 205 (XVIII) of 25 May 1995, which was endorsed by Economic and Social Council resolution 1995/26 of 24 July 1995. The decision to establish the Committee on Water Resources took into account the importance of the participation of ESCWA member countries in the planning, development and monitoring of ESCWA programmes of work in the field of water resources. The Committee held its first session in Amman in 1997, the second, third, fourth, fifth and sixth sessions in Beirut in 1998, 1999, 2001 and 2004 respectively, the seventh session in Muscat in 2007, and the eighth session in Beirut in 2008. The Committee will hold its ninth session in Beirut from 23 to 25 March 2011.

*2. Objectives*

The ninth session of the Committee on Water Resources aims at providing a formal forum for discussion of the challenges and obstacles confronting the region in the field of water resources. Topics of discussion include: the progress achieved in assessing the vulnerability of the water resources sector in the Arab region to the impact of climate change; and the progress achieved in the preparation of a regional initiative for the development of a mechanism to follow up the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) related to water and sanitation in the Arab region, whereby a review of standards related to additional indicators will be presented as well as explanations, terms and definitions used in the context of the Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP) of the United Nations Children's Fund and the World Health Organization. The current session also aims at discussing with member country representatives the preparation of a regional legal framework for shared water resources in the Arab region, the method used in that process and issues related to delegation of authority and institutional development at the regional level.

*3. Agenda*

The provisional agenda for the current session includes items related to the above-mentioned issues, and other recurrent items related to the progress achieved in implementing the recommendations made by the Committee at its eighth session and the water resources-related activities under ESCWA programme of work, in addition to the proposed programme of work of ESCWA for the Biennium 2012-2013 in the field of water resources. The provisional agenda and annotations will be distributed to participants in the session in document E/ESCWA/SDPD/2011/IG.1/L.1.

#### *4. Participants*

Representatives of ESCWA member countries will participate in the meetings of the session. Relevant international and regional organizations and institutions and civil society organizations are also invited to attend the session as observers. Participating Governments shall be responsible for the travel and accommodation expenses of their representatives, in accordance with United Nations practice, which also applies to participating organizations.

#### *5. Date and venue*

The ninth session of the Committee on Water Resources will be held at the United Nations House in Beirut from 23 to 25 March 2011. Registration will commence at 9 a.m. on Wednesday 23 March 2011 and the opening session will convene at 10 a.m. on the same day. Session meetings will conclude at 3 p.m. on Friday 25 March 2011.

#### *6. Language of the session*

Session proceedings will be in Arabic. English may, if necessary, be used to present some papers. Simultaneous interpretation from and into Arabic and English will be provided.

#### *7. Accommodation and transportation*

Following coordination with ESCWA, the Golden Tulip hotel in Beirut has decided to offer preferential rates to participants. Participants should contact ESCWA secretariat to give details of their travel including airline, flight number, and date and time of arrival and departure, in order to enable the secretariat to make the necessary arrangements for room reservation and airport pick-up with the hotel management.

#### *8. Entry visas*

ESCWA may assist in obtaining entry visas to the Lebanese Republic by coordinating with relevant authorities in order to facilitate the process. Participants who need assistance in that matter should send a copy of their passport containing all the required information.

#### *9. Correspondence*

All session-related correspondence should be sent to the following ESCWA officials:

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