



# Economic and Social Council

Distr.: Limited  
21 May 2011

Original: English

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## Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

### Sixty-seventh session

Bangkok, 19-25 May 2011

Item 3 (a) of the provisional agenda

**Review of issues pertinent to the subsidiary structure of the Commission, including the work of the ESCAP regional institutions: Macroeconomic policy, poverty reduction and inclusive development**

### Draft report

#### **Macroeconomic policy, poverty reduction and inclusive development (including the Centre for the Alleviation of Poverty through Sustainable Agriculture)**

1. In addition to the common documents being considered under agenda item 3, the Commission had before it the report of the Centre for the Alleviation of Poverty through Sustainable Agriculture (E/ESCAP/67/4).
2. Representatives of the following countries made statements: Afghanistan; Bangladesh; China; India; Malaysia; Nepal; Pakistan; Russian Federation; and Thailand.
3. The Commission expressed appreciation for the work being carried out under the subprogramme and high-quality documents, as well as the *Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific 2011*. The Commission requested the continuation of in-depth research and advocacy work in the area of macroeconomic policy, poverty reduction and inclusive development.
4. The Commission was informed of the experiences of several countries in terms of growth, poverty reduction and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and how various policies and strategies were being pursued to accelerate progress in those areas and to tackle emerging challenges.
5. The Commission noted the analyses of the secretariat which highlighted the new challenges facing the region, including high food and fuel prices and imbalances due to the measures that many major global economies had adopted to deal with the crises, such as easy money policies. The Commission expressed concern about the impact of those challenges on the efforts of countries in the region to reduce poverty and achieve the Millennium Development Goals.
6. The Commission acknowledged the efforts of the secretariat to promote greater regional economic integration through recommendations in publications such as the *Survey* and noted a request to the secretariat to conduct

more detailed analysis of the barriers that are preventing countries in the region from exploiting opportunities for greater regional economic integration.

7. Reaffirming its role as the most representative intergovernmental forum in the region, the Commission welcomed the efforts of the secretariat to promote a coordinated regional voice through the organization of the High-level Consultation on the G20 Seoul Summit, which had helped facilitate consultations among G20 and non-G20 countries in the Asia-Pacific region. The view was expressed that the Commission was the most effective forum for transfer of knowledge between countries of the region and for promoting an Asia-Pacific innovative model of development.

8. The Commission underlined the impact of high food and fuel prices and the slow pace of global economic recovery on the development, especially, of the least developed and landlocked developing countries. It noted with appreciation the efforts of the secretariat in ensuring that the Dhaka Outcome Document (E/ESCAP/66/6) was effectively integrated as a regional input to the global review conducted at the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, which had been held in Istanbul, Turkey, from 9 to 13 May 2011.

9. The Commission commended the work of the Centre for the Alleviation of Poverty through Sustainable Agriculture (CAPSA) and expressed appreciation for the support provided by the secretariat in the implementation of resolution 65/4 with a view to revitalizing and strengthening the Centre. The change of the Centre's name was considered appropriate in view of the challenges faced in the region in relation to food security, poverty alleviation and sustainable agricultural development. It was suggested that CAPSA continue its policy-oriented work and that it revive its focus on cross-country studies while broadening the coverage of studies to include as many member countries as possible.

10. The Commission noted a request that the secretariat promote sustained investment in agriculture and work towards the transfer of the best technologies in order to increase agricultural production. The Commission acknowledged that food price increases would continue to have an impact on the poor and noted requests to include in the work programme of CAPSA analytical work on the effects of food price rises on the poor in collaboration with the secretariat, and to analyse the effects of trade liberalization on food security, as well as the effects of natural disasters on agriculture, to protect the poorest and most vulnerable.

11. Several member countries expressed their commitment to supporting the Centre by providing financial and in kind assistance, and to effect coordination among themselves in order to maximize the use of the Centre. Taking into account the views expressed, the Commission generally endorsed the Strategic Plan 2011-2020 prepared by CAPSA and the recommendations contained in the report of the Centre (E/ESCAP/67/4).