

**Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific****Seventy-fifth session**

Bangkok, 27–31 May 2019

Item 4 of the provisional agenda\*

**Review of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific****Summary of progress in the implementation of Commission resolutions****Note by the secretariat***Summary*

The present document contains a summary of the progress made in the implementation of the resolutions of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific on which the secretariat is required to report to the Commission at its seventy-fifth session.

The Commission may wish to review the progress made and provide the secretariat with comments and further guidance for the effective implementation of the resolutions.

**I. Social development****Resolution 71/13****Implementation of the Asian and Pacific Ministerial Declaration on Advancing Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment****1. Requirements of the operative paragraphs**

1. In paragraph 3 of its resolution 71/13, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) requested the Executive Secretary:

(a) To strengthen the role of the Commission in supporting members and associate members in implementing the Beijing Platform for Action and the Asian and Pacific Ministerial Declaration on Advancing Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment;

(b) To provide members and associate members, upon request, with capacity development assistance in support of their efforts to realize their commitments to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment by (i) strengthening institutions; (ii) increasing financing; (iii) enhancing accountability; and (iv) forging stronger partnerships;

\* ESCAP/75/L.1.

(c) To promote knowledge-sharing among members and associate members through such means as an online resource facility for accessing information, data and training materials across the spectrum of issues related to gender equality and women's empowerment;

(d) To continue efforts to ensure the effective mainstreaming of gender into the operations and programme of work of the Commission;

(e) To continue to promote greater synergies among United Nations entities in the region through leadership of the Asia-Pacific Regional Coordination Mechanism to further develop strategies and plans aimed at the realization of gender equality and the empowerment of women;

(f) To conduct, in 2018, a regional review of progress in implementing the Beijing Platform for Action and the Ministerial Declaration, in preparation for the high-level intergovernmental conference mentioned in paragraph 2 of the resolution;

(g) To report to the Commission at its seventy-fifth session on progress in implementing the resolution.

## **2. Progress made**

2. In response to subparagraph 3 (a), the secretariat organized regional seminars, consultations and training activities to share experiences, identify good practices and lessons learned, and develop policy recommendations to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in the region.

3. In response to subparagraph 3 (b), the secretariat implemented initiatives to strengthen member States' capacity in the economic empowerment of women, gender-responsive budgeting and e-governance for women's empowerment. The secretariat started a regional programme in 2018 to advance women's economic empowerment. The programme has a comprehensive, multisectoral approach and focuses on strengthening the capacity of policymakers in developing a gender-responsive entrepreneurial system. The programme builds on regional research and capacity-building initiatives, including on fostering women's entrepreneurship in member countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). The secretariat organized a regional forum in 2017 to enhance the application of gender-responsive budgeting and partnerships around sustainable financing to achieve gender equality. Workshops were held in Cambodia, China and the Lao People's Democratic Republic on integrating gender concerns into national planning and budgetary processes. The secretariat developed the online toolkit E-Government for Women's Empowerment in Asia and the Pacific to help policymakers design and implement gender-responsive e-government systems, and it was launched during the sixty-second session of the Commission on the Status of Women.<sup>1</sup>

4. In response to subparagraph 3 (c), the secretariat developed the Asia-Pacific Portal for Gender Equality<sup>2</sup> as a comprehensive online resource on gender equality and women's empowerment. A section dedicated to gender

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<sup>1</sup> <https://egov4women.unescapsdd.org/toolkit>.

<sup>2</sup> [www.asiapacificgender.org](http://www.asiapacificgender.org).

equality for sustainable development was also established in the ESCAP Sustainable Development Goals Help Desk portal.<sup>3</sup>

5. In response to subparagraph 3 (d), the secretariat developed a gender strategy to guide its programme of work in line with the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. Training activities for secretariat staff on addressing gender concerns in specific sectors, including the environment, information and communications technology (ICT), and macroeconomic policy, was organized. Technical cooperation projects were developed to help member States to design gender-responsive policies. Moreover, a high-level event was organized during the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Summit on the Environment in 2017 to ensure the integration of gender equality into the environmental policy agenda and to launch the report *Gender, the Environment and Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific*, which contained a comprehensive mapping of the intersections between gender and the environment at the level of the household, work and the community and in the sphere of food security, agriculture, energy, water, fisheries and forestry.

6. In response to subparagraph 3 (e), the secretariat co-chaired, with the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the thematic working group on gender equality and empowerment of women of the Asia-Pacific Regional Coordination Mechanism, which organized several joint activities, including on gender statistics and addressing violence against women and girls, and the regional preparatory meetings for the annual session of the Commission on the Status of Women.

7. In response to subparagraph 3 (f), the secretariat initiated, in partnership with UN-Women, the regional review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. As a result, a high-level intergovernmental meeting on gender equality and women's empowerment on the 25-year review in the Asia-Pacific region will be convened in Bangkok in November 2019.

### **3. Issues for consideration by the Commission**

8. Members and associate members are invited to participate in the regional preparatory processes for the 25-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and are invited to share their views on the priority issues concerning gender equality and women's empowerment in the region.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://sdghelpdesk.unescap.org/knowledge-hub/thematic-area/gender-equality-sustainable-development>.

## II. Environment and development

### A. Resolution 73/5

#### **Strengthening Asia-Pacific's support for the United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14**

##### 1. Requirements of the operative paragraphs

9. In paragraph 5 of its resolution 73/5, the Commission requested the Executive Secretary:

(a) To continue to support current partnerships and develop new partnerships, where appropriate, as well as the Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14, in line with its mandates, including those emanating from Commission resolutions 69/17 of 1 May 2013 and 72/9 of 19 May 2016, and through coordination and collaboration with development partners;

(b) To continue to support countries, especially least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States, in sharing experiences and cooperation on the management of natural resources, including oceans and seas, in light of the regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific;<sup>4</sup>

(c) To continue to support current regional partnerships and develop new regional partnerships, where appropriate, for enhancing data and statistical capacities for Goal 14 in line with the document entitled "Advancing official statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: a collective vision and framework for action by the Asia-Pacific statistical community", adopted by the Committee of Statistics at its fifth session.<sup>5</sup>

10. In paragraph 6 of its resolution 73/5, the Commission also requested the Executive Secretary to report to the Commission at its seventy-fifth session on progress made in the implementation of the resolution.

##### 2. Progress made

11. In response to subparagraph 5 (a), the secretariat created the project entitled "Accelerating Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14 in Asia and the Pacific". The project helped Governments to prioritize needs and identify ways to address lagging implementation. As part of the project, an expert reference group was created that included experts from the Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the World Conservation Monitoring Centre of UNEP, Partnerships in Environmental Management for the Seas of East Asia, the Office of the Pacific Ocean Commissioner, and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The group provided inputs and served as a peer review group for two knowledge products.

12. As part of the project entitled "Ocean cities: supporting Pacific island developing States to adapt sustainable urban development to island systems", the secretariat established a network of practitioners called the Friends of Ocean Cities, which counts as its members experts in the fields of ocean governance, marine and coastal ecosystem conservation, urban resilience and

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<sup>4</sup> E/ESCAP/73/31, annex II.

<sup>5</sup> E/ESCAP/CST(5)/1/Rev.1.

climate change in Pacific small island developing States. The experts hail from academia, intergovernmental organizations and civil society, including such organizations and institutions as the Commonwealth Local Government Forum, the Pacific Islands Forum secretariat, the International Union for Conservation of Nature, the secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme, the University of Sydney, the University of New South Wales, the University of the South Pacific, the Australian National University, the Victoria University of Wellington, the Association of Pacific Rim Universities, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), Compass Housing Services and World Vision. The network regularly shares their experiences of ocean-focused urban development in islands and provided input to capacity-building products for local and national governments of Pacific small island developing States.

13. The secretariat organized the first Asia-Pacific Day for the Ocean to follow up on the voluntary commitments made in the region with respect to the United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development, to highlight progress and challenges, to foster cooperation with the Communities of Ocean Action, and to accelerate action for healthy oceans. The event was organized in cooperation with custodian agencies of the Communities of Ocean Action and the Secretary-General's Special Envoy for the Ocean.

14. In response to subparagraph 5 (b), the secretariat organized a peer discussion and learning session on accelerating the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14. The Friends of Ocean Cities network participated in a subregional consultation in Suva to share lessons learned and develop nature-based solutions and integrated policy approaches for coastal island cities.

15. The pilot project Closing the Loop supported local and national governments to reduce the amount of plastic waste entering oceans. Consultations were held in the pilot cities of Pune, India, and Bangkok to share lessons learned with regard to the plastic waste value chain and to engage informal waste workers in plastic waste management. The knowledge generated and the lessons learned from the project were shared with the wider region at the Asia-Pacific Day for the Ocean and informed the discussions at the fifth session of the Committee on Environment and Development.

16. In response to subparagraph 5 (c), the secretariat established an Ocean Accounts Partnership to ensure coordinated support for statistical and governance capacity. It also led the development of a statistical framework and guidance manual for ocean accounts in collaboration with UNEP. The development of the manual was endorsed by the United Nations Statistical Commission at its forty-ninth session and supported by the Committee on Statistics at its sixth session. The secretariat engaged more than 80 experts to contribute to the statistical framework and guidance manual and obtained funding from the United Nations Development Account to support further methodological development and national pilots to test and implement ocean accounts.

**B. Resolution 73/9  
Regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda for  
Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific**

**1. Requirements of the operative paragraphs**

17. In paragraph 4 of its resolution 73/9, the Commission requested the Executive Secretary to support member States in their efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda in an integrated manner and in light of the regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda in Asia and the Pacific.

18. In paragraph 5 of its resolution 73/9, the Commission requested the Executive Secretary, as convener of the Asia-Pacific Regional Coordination Mechanism, to strengthen and promote communication, cooperation and collaboration among the relevant organizations of the United Nations system in the Asia-Pacific region and other stakeholders, as appropriate, in support of the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals by member States, in particular least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and Pacific island developing countries.

19. In paragraph 6 of its resolution 73/9, the Commission requested the Executive Secretary to report to the Commission at its seventy-fifth session on progress made in the implementation of the resolution.

**2. Progress made**

20. In response to paragraph 4, the secretariat continued to support improvements in data and statistical capacities in line with the document entitled “Advancing official statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: a collective vision and framework for action by the Asia-Pacific statistical community”. The document provides a framework to improve the alignment of ongoing regional initiatives with the 2030 Agenda, under the guidance of the Committee on Statistics, to strengthen national capacity in economic, population, social, gender, environment and disaster-related statistics, as well as in civil registration and vital statistics, with support from regional and global statistical development partners.

21. The sixth session of the Committee on Statistics was convened in 2018 as a high-level session, and the Committee adopted the Declaration on Navigating Policy with Data to Leave No One Behind. In the Declaration, members and associate members committed to strengthening national statistical systems, called on development partners to support the strengthening of national statistical systems and requested the secretariat to monitor and report on, in 2024, progress in strengthening national statistical systems.

22. To strengthen and promote communication, cooperation and collaboration among relevant organizations of the United Nations system in the region and other stakeholders, the secretariat published *Asia and the Pacific SDG Progress Report 2017* to provide an evidence base for progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals at the regional and subregional levels and highlight areas where further action is required. The report is complemented by an ESCAP statistical data portal and the Asia-Pacific SDG Partnership Data Portal which was created by ESCAP, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to provide freely accessible statistics for member States and development partners.

23. ESCAP linked regional needs to the experiences of international, regional and subregional organizations by acting as a bridge to facilitate cooperation for access to technology and know-how and to promote public, public-private and civil society partnerships to harness science, technology and innovation. The secretariat promoted regional cooperation on ICT connectivity through the implementation of the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway initiative to bridge the digital divide and enhance affordable broadband connectivity for all.

24. The secretariat continued to support regional dialogues on financing for development and facilitated closer regional cooperation in priority areas, including domestic resource mobilization, public finance, infrastructure financing, and capital market development and financial sector issues, with a focus on financial inclusion.

25. It also developed integrated approaches, models and tools to establish and implement policies for poverty eradication, sustainable development, and the valuation and quantification of the co-benefits of policy action addressing interconnected Sustainable Development Goals and targets.

26. On the thematic issue of leaving no one behind, the secretariat conducted analytical studies and advocacy to address inequalities, reduce poverty and enhance social protection, including for persons with disabilities. In that context, a comprehensive theme study for the seventy-fourth session of the Commission was produced.

27. The secretariat supported member States' efforts to build their capacity on closing gender gaps, addressing ageing issues, fighting youth unemployment and promoting the rights of persons with disabilities and migrants through the comprehensive review of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002, support for the implementation of the Incheon Strategy to "Make the Right Real" for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific, and the outcomes of the 2017 High-level Intergovernmental Meeting on the Midpoint Review of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013–2022, and the Midterm Review of the Asian and Pacific Ministerial Declaration on Population and Development and by providing input to the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration.

28. The secretariat continued its work on strengthening the resilience of countries through analytical work, capacity development and strengthening multi-hazard early warning systems. It also supported building national capacity to ensure coherent implementation and monitoring of disaster risk reduction-related and resilience-related targets in the 2030 Agenda and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030.

29. The secretariat continued to ensure better connectivity in the region through the expansion and integration of the Asian Highway network, the Trans-Asian Railway network and the network of dry ports of international importance. It continued to develop and integrate maritime connectivity and implement regional transport facilitation frameworks and other technical standards for operationalizing transport connectivity. It developed regional standards, the sustainable urban transport index, regional road safety goals, targets and indicators and handbooks on road safety and provided support for the harmonization of technical standards of transport infrastructure. The secretariat also promoted regional cooperation on ICT connectivity through the regional implementation of the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway initiative.

30. The secretariat promoted capacity-building for climate action, the management of natural resources and sustainable energy development through training activities, policy dialogues and information-sharing through existing institutions, forums and platforms and by engaging non-State actors in the region.

31. In response to paragraph 5, the Asia-Pacific Regional Coordination Mechanism, through its thematic working group, supported the Fourth and Fifth Asia-Pacific Forums on Sustainable Development, held in 2017 and 2018, and the regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda in Asia and the Pacific. Round tables dedicated to individual Sustainable Development Goals were held during the Fifth Forum. These included round tables on Goal 1, organized by ESCAP, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and UNDP; Goal 2, by ESCAP and FAO; Goal 3, by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the World Health Organization (WHO) and ESCAP; Goal 5, by ESCAP, UN-Women, UNFPA and FAO; Goal 9 by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, UN-Habitat and ESCAP; and Goal 14 by UNEP, ESCAP, UNESCO and UNDP. A summary of the policy recommendations was included in the Forum's report and transmitted to the high-level political forum on sustainable development.

32. Some of the deliverables of the thematic working groups relevant to the 2030 Agenda included the *Asia-Pacific Migration Report 2017*, the concept paper on migration in the 2030 Agenda, a study on women's transformative leadership in the Asia-Pacific region, the Poverty-Environment Accounting Framework, support for the preparation of the voluntary national review of Viet Nam, the development of a data literacy training programme for United Nations country teams, and knowledge products on El Niño.

33. The Regional Coordination Mechanism also held a joint meeting with the regional United Nations Sustainable Development Group for Asia and the Pacific in May 2018, at which the creation of a joint publication committee was discussed. The meeting provided an opportunity for an update on the call for United Nations country teams to pilot the Sustainable Development Goals integrated solutions platforms at the country level.

34. To strengthen integrated and interdisciplinary support for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda at the country level, the secretariat established a rapid response facility. In close coordination with United Nations country teams, the facility helps to build capacity at the national level by addressing areas such as national follow-up and review, including voluntary national reviews; stakeholder engagement; data and statistics; systems analysis to understand interlinkages among the Sustainable Development Goals; trade facilitation; and graduation of least developed countries.

### **III. Disaster risk reduction**

#### **Resolution 73/7**

#### **Enhancing regional cooperation for the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 in Asia and the Pacific**

##### **1. Requirements of the operative paragraphs**

35. In paragraph 6 of its resolution 73/7, the Commission requested the Executive Secretary:



(a) To accord priority to synchronizing multidisciplinary support to member States in the mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction in their development strategies, in line with the Sendai Framework and with the Sustainable Development Goals and targets relating to disaster risk reduction;

(b) To enhance inter-agency coordination with the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction and other United Nations bodies, as well as other relevant regional and international organizations, including as outlined in the regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific;

(c) To reach out to new potential donors, where appropriate, and explore innovative resource mobilization opportunities to strengthen the Multi-Donor Trust Fund for Tsunami, Disaster and Climate Preparedness in Indian Ocean and Southeast Asian Countries;

(d) To continue to support the work of the Expert Group on Disaster-related Statistics in Asia and the Pacific on strengthening linkages with the work of other international organizations and to ensure that the outcomes of its work are practical and consistent with the requirements of the agreed global frameworks;

(e) To continue to support the work of the Expert Group on Disaster-related Statistics in Asia and the Pacific on a disaster-related statistics framework and its implementation guidelines for the enhancement of the capacity of national statistical systems in the region to produce and use disaster-related statistics, including to improve national baselines with the required disaggregation for the relevant goals and targets of the Sendai Framework and the 2030 Agenda;

(f) To continue to support and facilitate multi-hazard early warning systems, impact-based forecasting and disaster risk assessment to strengthen regional cooperation mechanisms;

(g) To continue to accord priority to the implementation of the plan of action in promoting regional cooperation on space applications for the implementation of the Sendai Framework.

36. In paragraph 7 of its resolution 73/7, the Commission requested the Executive Secretary to report to the Commission at its seventy-fifth session on the implementation of the resolution.

## 2. Progress made

37. In response to subparagraph 6 (a), the secretariat undertook the following research and capacity development activities:

(a) In the *Asia-Pacific Disaster Report 2017*,<sup>6</sup> ESCAP examined the impacts of disasters on poverty and highlighted development strategies that could effectively deliver on leaving no one behind. As part of its Risk to Resilience policy series, the secretariat produced knowledge products on implementing the Sendai Framework and the 2030 Agenda;<sup>7</sup>

(b) The regional learning platform was institutionalized as an annual capacity-building activity on policy coherence, which is an important guiding

<sup>6</sup> *Asia-Pacific Disaster Report 2017: Leave No One Behind – Disaster Resilience for Sustainable Development* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.17.II.F.16).

<sup>7</sup> The publications produced as part of this series are available at [www.unescap.org/our-work/ict-disaster-risk-reduction/building-resilience-disasters/resources](http://www.unescap.org/our-work/ict-disaster-risk-reduction/building-resilience-disasters/resources).

principle of the Sendai Framework and the Asia Regional Plan for Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. The 2018 activity highlighted innovation and evidence-based approaches to policy coherence. A toolkit developed by the secretariat was the main input to the discussions.

38. In response to subparagraph 6 (b), the secretariat strengthened coordination by the thematic working group on disaster risk reduction of the Regional Coordination Mechanism through regular meetings and by introducing a dedicated agenda item for the fifth session of the Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction, resulting in improved collaboration in areas such as policy coherence, Sendai Framework monitoring and resilient infrastructure. The thematic working group also continued to work on the Association of Southeast Asian Nations-United Nations Joint Strategic Plan of Action on Disaster Management for 2016–2020.

39. In response to subparagraph 6 (c), the secretariat held a side event during the seventy-second session of the General Assembly to present the achievements of the ESCAP Multi-Donor Trust Fund for Tsunami, Disaster and Climate Preparedness in Indian Ocean and Southeast Asian Countries. At the event, the Government of Thailand announced an additional contribution of \$30,000 to the Trust Fund. Major donors also adopted the new Strategic Note 2017–2020 of the Trust Fund to guide its resource mobilization work.

40. In response to subparagraph 6 (d), the secretariat, through the activities of the Expert Group on Disaster-related Statistics in Asia and the Pacific, continued to strengthen links between international agencies to improve disaster-related statistics. In May 2018, the Disaster-related Statistics Framework was finalized with contributions from several international groups and agencies. Expert group members ensured alignment of the Framework with globally-agreed frameworks. At the request of the Statistical Commission, a report for its fiftieth session was prepared by the founding members of the Global Partnership on Disaster-related Statistics, including ESCAP.

41. In response to subparagraph 6 (e), the Expert Group on Disaster-related Statistics in Asia and the Pacific held its fifth meeting in Incheon, Republic of Korea, in September 2017, to finalize the Disaster-related Statistics Framework. The Commission, in its resolution 74/6, requested the Committee on Statistics and the Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction, at their sixth sessions, to review the Expert Group's recommendations. In October 2018, the Committee on Statistics endorsed the Framework and supported the recommendations of the Expert Group with regards to applying the Framework and developing training materials and technical assistance programmes to support its implementation. It also supported the recommendation to transform the Expert Group into a technical working group to support implementation of the Framework by national agencies. These recommendations will be further reviewed by the Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction in 2019.

42. In response to subparagraph 6 (f), the secretariat studied the feasibility of establishing regional cooperation mechanisms for transboundary river basin floods, flash floods and landslides with funding support from the German Development Agency. Through scoping studies and expert group meetings, the secretariat elicited a set of recommendations on the form and function of a potential regional cooperative mechanism for flood forecasting and early warning in the Ganga-Brahmaputra-Meghna and Indus River basins under the Asia-Pacific Disaster Resilience Network. Support was provided to strengthen the operational coordination between the ESCAP/World Meteorological Organization (WMO) Typhoon Committee and the WMO/ESCAP Panel on

Tropical Cyclones and to increase uptake of innovations in risk assessment to provide finer risk information to better guide disaster planning and preparedness in South-East Asia. The secretariat and the ASEAN secretariat are finalizing a study on drought.

43. In response to subparagraph 6 (g), the secretariat, in collaboration with its partners and members of the Regional Space Applications Programme for Sustainable Development, provided more than 360 high-quality satellite images and tailored products, with an equivalent value of approximately \$1 million annually, free of charge, for disaster damage assessment. Through the Regional Cooperative Mechanism for Drought Monitoring and Early Warning, the DroughtWatch system is now operating in Mongolia, and the Government of Myanmar has started preparing 10-day drought monitoring updates.

44. The secretariat helped Governments to build their capacities to use space technology and geospatial data to strengthen multi-hazard early warning systems in the Pacific. The Governments of Solomon Islands and Tonga put in place a common alerting protocol and improved the resolution of their weather predictions with technical support from the Asian Institute of Technology and the Indonesian Agency for Meteorology, Climatology, and Geophysics.

45. The Ministerial Conference on Space Applications for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific in October 2018 adopted the Ministerial Declaration on Space Applications for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific and the Asia-Pacific Plan of Action on Space Applications for Sustainable Development (2018–2030).

### **3. Issues for consideration by the Commission**

46. As member States enter the fourth year of implementing the Sendai Framework and the 2030 Agenda, the Commission may wish to identify specific gaps and unmet needs at the national level which can be more effectively addressed through regional cooperation.

47. The Commission may wish to provide guidance on how to mobilize resources to sustain support in areas where ESCAP can add value to complement national efforts.

## **IV. Energy**

### **Resolution 73/8**

#### **Strengthening regional cooperation for sustainable energy development in Asia and the Pacific**

### **1. Requirements of the operative paragraphs**

48. In paragraph 14 of its resolution 73/8, the Commission requested the Executive Secretary:

(a) To continue to assist members and associate members in building their capacity, including through policy dialogue and by taking advantage of the Commission's conference structure to identify paths towards energy transition and sustainable development;

(b) To continue to conduct analytical studies and compile and disseminate relevant energy information and data, utilizing a combination of existing funds and extrabudgetary contributions, with a view to identifying key

trends and emerging issues in the Asian and Pacific region, and taking advantage of ongoing work of other relevant international organizations and bearing in mind the need to minimize duplication of work;

(c) To contribute to develop an inclusive and comprehensive set of recommendations for the agenda of the second Asian and Pacific Energy Forum;

(d) To support the work of the expert working groups established in paragraph 9 of the resolution;

(e) To convene a preparatory meeting for the second Asian and Pacific Energy Forum;

(f) To report to the Commission at its seventy-fifth session on progress made in the implementation of the resolution.

## 2. Progress made

49. In response to subparagraph 14 (a), the secretariat co-organized the Global SDG 7 Conference with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat and the Government of Thailand to prepare inputs to the high-level political forum on sustainable development. The Second Asian and Pacific Energy Forum was held in April 2018, which included a government-business dialogue on energy for sustainable development.

50. In response to subparagraph 14 (b), the secretariat developed knowledge products on the region's progress towards Sustainable Development Goal 7, including *Energy Transition Pathways for the 2030 Agenda in Asia and the Pacific*, *Integrating South Asia's Power Grid for a Sustainable and Low Carbon Future* and *Sustainable Energy in Asia and the Pacific: A Statistical Overview of Energy and Development*. The secretariat also published "Energy and development in Central Asia" and *Energy Interconnection in ASEAN for Sustainable and Resilient Societies: Accelerating Energy Transition*. The secretariat continues to host and further develop the Asia Pacific Energy Portal, a web-based data and policy information platform designed to increase the accessibility and use of regional energy information to support research, analysis and decision-making.

51. In response to subparagraph 14 (c), the secretariat organized the Second Asian and Pacific Energy Forum in April 2018, which provided a platform for the region's energy ministers to deliberate on the challenges related to achieving Sustainable Development Goal 7 and to outline a regional vision to address them. The Forum adopted the Ministerial Declaration on Regional Cooperation for Energy Transition towards Sustainable and Resilient Societies in Asia and the Pacific.

52. In response to subparagraph 14 (d), the secretariat organized the first meetings of the Expert Working Groups on Energy Connectivity and on Universal Access to Modern Energy Services, Renewable Energy, Energy Efficiency and Cleaner Use of Fossil Fuels, which were held in December 2017. The outcomes were reported to the Regional Preparatory Meeting for the Second Asian and Pacific Energy Forum.

53. The Expert Working Group on Energy Connectivity met for the second time in December 2018 in Beijing to discuss the development of a regional road map on energy connectivity based on good practices in the region. The draft regional road map will be reviewed by the Expert Working Group in June 2019 and submitted to the Committee on Energy at its second session, in October 2019, for its consideration.

54. In response to subparagraph 14 (e), the secretariat organized the Regional Preparatory Meeting for the Second Asian and Pacific Energy Forum in December 2017, where the drafting of the Ministerial Declaration on Regional Cooperation for Energy Transition towards Sustainable and Resilient Societies in Asia and the Pacific was initiated. The Declaration was subsequently adopted by the Second Asian and Pacific Energy Forum.

## **V. Transport**

### **A. Resolution 70/7**

#### **Implementation of the Suva Declaration on Improving Maritime Transport and Related Services in the Pacific**

##### **1. Requirements of the operative paragraphs**

55. In paragraph 2 of its resolution 70/7, the Commission requested the Executive Secretary:

(a) To accord priority to the implementation of the Suva Declaration on Improving Maritime Transport and Related Services in the Pacific;

(b) To report to the Commission at its seventy-third and seventy-fifth sessions on the implementation of the resolution.

##### **2. Progress made**

56. In response to subparagraph 2 (a), the secretariat co-organized a workshop on the Trade and Transport Facilitation Monitoring Mechanism in Suva in July 2016 to build the capacity of national stakeholders on regional integration and sustainable development through the simplification of trade procedures, the reduction of trade costs and the facilitation of transport and logistics in selected Pacific countries. This national workshop was held in conjunction with a regional workshop on trade, transport facilitation and port efficiency in Nadi, Fiji, in July 2016 to assess and improve trade facilitation and transport logistics in the Pacific and discuss measures to enhance maritime connectivity. The regional workshop, co-hosted by the Pacific Community, the International Maritime Organization and ADB, agreed on measures to facilitate maritime transport.

57. In 2016, the secretariat, in collaboration with the Korea Maritime Institute, organized two meetings to address maritime safety at the regional level. The secretariat also organized a meeting on port infrastructure and considered a new approach to port interfaces between ships and land transport modes to provide access to new markets for archipelagic and Pacific Island countries.

58. The secretariat delivered a presentation related to maritime transport at the third Pacific Regional Energy and Transport Ministers' Meeting, in Tonga in 2017. The Meeting discussed the challenges faced by Pacific Island countries and territories and agreed on, in relation to the transport sector, the following priorities: continued coordination and partnerships; gender equality in the maritime sector; improving safety at sea for all; reducing greenhouse gas emissions from Pacific maritime transport; and eliminating dumping at sea.

59. In the context of the Regional Action Programme for Sustainable Transport Connectivity in Asia and the Pacific, phase I (2017–2021), the secretariat is assisting member States in planning and implementing efficient

port development for integrated intermodal transport connectivity as well as improving maritime transport and related services in the Pacific.

**B. Resolution 73/4  
Implementation of the Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable  
Transport Connectivity in Asia and the Pacific**

**1. Requirements of the operative paragraphs**

60. In paragraph 3 of its resolution 73/4, the Commission requested the Executive Secretary:

(a) To accord priority to the implementation of the Regional Action Programme for Sustainable Transport Connectivity in Asia and the Pacific, phase I (2017–2021);

(b) To carry out in 2021 an evaluation of the implementation of phase I of the Regional Action Programme and submit a report with recommendations to the Ministerial Conference on Transport at its fourth session;

(c) To seek cooperation from the Economic Commission for Europe and other international organizations, and to accelerate the ongoing work towards the establishment and full functioning of the interregional coordination committee on transport between Asia and Europe;

(d) To continue to support the implementation of the Intergovernmental Agreement on International Road Transport along the Asian Highway Network signed by China, Mongolia and the Russian Federation during the third session of the Ministerial Conference on Transport;

(e) To report to the Commission at its seventy-fifth and seventy-seventh sessions on the implementation of the resolution.

**2. Progress made**

61. In response to subparagraph 3 (a), the secretariat organized various activities to support the implementation of the Regional Action Programme for Sustainable Transport Connectivity in Asia and the Pacific, phase I (2017–2021).

62. For regional transport infrastructure connectivity, the Intergovernmental Agreements on the Asian Highway Network, on the Trans-Asian Railway Network and on Dry Ports provide a set of institutional frameworks for enhancing transport connectivity in Asia and the Pacific. To date, there are 30 parties to the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Asian Highway Network, 19 parties to the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Trans-Asian Railway Network and 13 parties to the Intergovernmental Agreement on Dry Ports.

63. In the area of regional transport operational connectivity, a significant advance was the finalization of a framework for enhancing the efficiency of railway border crossings along the Trans-Asian Railway network. It was developed jointly with the Organisation for Co-operation between Railways, and identifies challenges with regard to railway border crossings and provides targets and processes to further enhance the efficiency of railway border crossings along the Trans-Asian Railway network.

64. In the area of transport connectivity for countries with special needs, the secretariat conducted the midterm review of the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014–2024 and collected information on the progress on and challenges to its implementation under priorities 1 and 2 of the Vienna Programme of Action on international transit and transport infrastructure development.

65. For sustainable urban transport, the secretariat developed the sustainable urban transport index and provided training to support its application in 10 cities in Bangladesh, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Viet Nam. A study entitled “Policy framework for the use and development of intelligent transport systems in Asia and the Pacific” and the *Transport and Communications Bulletin for Asia and the Pacific*, No. 88, “Intelligent Transport Systems” were published.

66. For rural transport, the secretariat organized, in collaboration with the United Nations Centre for Regional Development, an expert group meeting in Vientiane in 2017 in conjunction with the tenth Regional Environmentally Sustainable Transport Forum in Asia. The secretariat is also conducting a study on rural transport.

67. In the area of road safety, to assist member countries to meet their commitments under the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011–2020 and Sustainable Development Goals 3 and 11, the secretariat carried out capacity-building activities, including national workshops on road safety audits and a South-East Asia subregional workshop. The secretariat completed a three-year programme to harmonize road safety infrastructure facilities along the Asian Highway network. Annex II bis, entitled “Asian Highway Design Standards for Road Safety”, to the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Asian Highway Network was adopted by the Working Group on the Asian Highway at its seventh meeting, in 2017. In 2018, the secretariat launched a two-year project to tackle the main causes of road traffic crashes, fatalities and injuries with a focus on drink-driving and speeding, through the development of regional guidelines. The United Nations Road Safety Trust Fund was launched in 2018. The secretariat participated in the activities supporting the establishment and operation of the Trust Fund.

68. In response to subparagraph 3 (c), the secretariat developed draft terms of reference for the interregional coordination committee on transport between Asia and Europe and participated in a series of consultations with the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) secretariat. In 2018, the secretariat conducted a study on transport connectivity between Asia and Europe to identify priority issues for consideration by the proposed interregional committee. The findings of the study, including proposals made by ECE, were discussed at the Interregional Expert Group Meeting on Transport Connectivity between Asia and Europe in January 2019. Further consultations are to be held in 2019.

69. The secretariat conducted a study on comprehensive planning of Eurasian transport corridors to strengthen intraregional and interregional transport connectivity and organized expert group meetings in 2017 to evaluate infrastructure gaps and challenges, assess existing operational status, and propose measures to improve the efficiency, effectiveness and seamlessness of transport and logistics along the main transport corridors connecting Asia and Europe.

70. In response to subparagraph 3 (d), the secretariat held two workshops on practical measures to ensure the smooth launch of road transport operations under the Intergovernmental Agreement on International Road Transport along the Asian Highway Network.

## **VI. Macroeconomic policy, poverty reduction and financing for development**

### **Resolution 73/2**

#### **Strengthening the regional mechanism for the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014–2024**

##### **1. Requirements of the operative paragraphs**

71. In paragraph 11 of its resolution 73/2, the Commission requested the Executive Secretary:

(a) To continue to support the development efforts of landlocked developing countries, especially in areas related to regional connectivity, competitiveness and integration frameworks;

(b) To continue to provide all possible assistance to Asia-Pacific landlocked developing countries in the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action;

(c) To continue to ensure the coordinated follow-up to and monitoring of the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action and submit annual analytical reports, as called for in paragraph 75 of the Vienna Programme of Action, to the Special Body on Least Developed, Landlocked Developing and Pacific Island Developing Countries.

72. In paragraph 12 of its resolution 73/2, the Commission requested the Executive Secretary to report to the Commission at its seventy-fifth session on progress made in the implementation of the resolution.

##### **2. Progress made**

73. In response to subparagraph 11 (a), the secretariat prepared reports on sustainable development and sustaining peace and on structural economic transformation and poverty eradication in countries with special needs.

74. The secretariat also supported the establishment of the International Think Tank for Landlocked Developing Countries, which held its inaugural intergovernmental meeting in Ulaanbaatar in June 2018.

75. To support regional integration, the secretariat, in coordination with ECE, organized the 2017 Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia Economic Forum in Dushanbe, which recognized that science, technology and innovation are vital to realize the Sustainable Development Goals. The 2018 Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia Economic Forum, held in Almaty, Kazakhstan, considered how developments in transport, trade, water and energy, as well as the environment, statistics, ICT, innovation and gender could transform geographical developmental constraints into advantages, while other integration initiatives could facilitate the economic development of participating countries.



76. In 2017, the secretariat convened the Second Ministerial Conference on Regional Economic Cooperation and Integration in Asia and the Pacific and produced the report *Enhancing Regional Economic Cooperation and Integration in Asia and the Pacific*.

77. In response to subparagraph 11 (b), the secretariat assisted with the implementation of the priorities of the Vienna Programme of Action with the following actions:

(a) Preparing *Review of Developments in Transport in Asia and the Pacific 2017* and supporting the implementation of the Regional Action Programme for Sustainable Transport Connectivity in Asia and the Pacific, phase I (2017–2021), to integrate different modes of transport, connect industry clusters, synchronize supply chains and improve the lives of communities along the corridors;

(b) Supporting multilateral agreements, such as the Lapis Lazuli Transit, Trade and Transport Route Agreement among Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Turkey and Turkmenistan;

(c) Supporting the implementation of trade facilitation measures, including conducting a survey in 2017 on the region's implementation of trade facilitation and paperless trade measures and contributing to the Ministerial Meeting of Landlocked Developing Countries on Trade and Transport in 2018, presenting on international trade and trade facilitation in landlocked developing countries;

(d) Organizing an expert group meeting in 2018 to address the linkages between structural transformation and poverty eradication in countries with special needs;

(e) Contributing to the training activity on structural economic transformation in landlocked developing countries organized by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development entitled “Fostering productive capacities and structural economic transformation in the Lao People's Democratic Republic: implications for graduation from the least developed country category” in Vientiane in August 2018 and the training activity on fostering structural transformation and export diversification in selected Asian landlocked developing countries in Ulaanbaatar in October 2018. The secretariat also organized a capacity-building workshop to help Asia-Pacific landlocked developing countries in the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action, in Almaty, Kazakhstan, in September 2018.

78. In response to subparagraph 11 (c), the secretariat organized, in coordination with ECE and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, an expert meeting in Almaty, Kazakhstan, in September 2018 to identify challenges to the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action. The outcome and policy recommendations were discussed during a training activity for landlocked developing countries in Ulaanbaatar in October 2018. The secretariat, in coordination with the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, organized a regional midterm review of the Vienna Programme of Action for the Asia-Pacific region in Bangkok on 11 and 12 February 2019. The outcome will serve as the regional contribution to the global review of the Vienna Programme of Action.

79. In 2018 and 2019, the secretariat provided inputs to the reports of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action.

## VII. Trade and investment

### Resolution 73/3

#### Advancing integrated and seamless connectivity for sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific

##### 1. Requirements of the operative paragraphs

80. In paragraph 4 of its resolution 73/3, the Commission requested the Executive Secretary:

(a) To continue to explore ways to comprehensively integrate sustainable development into regional connectivity and the regional integration process;

(b) To continue to provide the necessary support, in accordance with the existing mandate of the Commission, to promote integrated and seamless connectivity for sustainable development in the areas of transport, trade, energy and information and communications technology in the region;

(c) To continue efforts to facilitate discussions, provide capacity-building and policy advice, and exchange of best practices among members and associate members on applying new innovative technologies to connectivity, so as to increase their cost-effectiveness and sustainability for the furtherance of regional connectivity and integration;

(d) To continue to cooperate with members and associate members to support their effective implementation of infrastructure projects associated with national, subregional and regional initiatives, including the Silk Road Economic Belt and Twenty-first Century Maritime Silk Road, the Global Infrastructure Initiative, the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation Programme, the Eurasia Initiative, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Connectivity Blueprint for 2015–2025 and the Master Plan on the Association of Southeast Asian Nations Connectivity 2025, in accordance with relevant internationally accepted rules, obligations and best practices;

(e) To prepare a report on integrated and seamless connectivity for sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific in 2018, to be updated every three years until 2030 and submitted to the Commission at its related sessions, to provide information on the progress made, challenges remaining and the way forward for regional connectivity;

(f) To continue to build and strengthen partnerships between the Commission and other relevant regional and subregional organizations, programmes and international financial institutions in order to promote integrated and seamless connectivity and sustainable development.

81. In paragraph 5 of its resolution 73/3, the Commission requested the Executive Secretary to report to the Commission at its seventy-fifth session on progress in the implementation of the resolution.

##### 2. Progress made

82. In response to subparagraph 4 (a), the secretariat supported member States in developing action plans and road maps to improve trade, ICT, transport and energy connectivity. In March 2018, at its fourth meeting, the Interim Intergovernmental Steering Group on Cross-border Paperless Trade Facilitation developed a draft road map for the implementation of the substantive provisions of the Framework Agreement on Facilitation of Cross-border Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific. The Committee on

Information and Communications Technology, Science, Technology and Innovation, at its second session, in August 2018, endorsed the updated Master Plan for the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway, 2019–2022, which will guide member States and other stakeholders on key ICT priority areas. The secretariat prepared a publication with the ASEAN Centre for Energy and the Global Energy Interconnection Development and Cooperation Organization on pathways for energy connectivity, challenges and opportunities for energy transition, and the quantification of connectivity benefits. The secretariat supported member States in developing regional policy frameworks on international railway and road transport and dry ports of international importance. The implementation of these frameworks will help to integrate regional landlocked developing countries with regional and global markets.

83. In response to subparagraph 4 (b), the secretariat prepared reports on the impact of digital trade facilitation in the region, as well as on the costs and benefits of fibre-optic co-deployment with the Asian Highway network in South-East Asia, India and Bangladesh, highlighting the significant cost-savings of co-deployment. Furthermore, the Expert Working Group on Energy Connectivity, which was established pursuant to Commission resolution 73/8, is working on developing a regional road map on energy connectivity.

84. In response to subparagraph 4 (c), the secretariat held a regional workshop on the implications of emerging technologies for cross-border paperless trade facilitation and a workshop to strengthen development of inclusive policies for transboundary infrastructure development between the transport, energy and ICT sectors of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Mongolia. The secretariat also supported member States in the pilot application of the ESCAP Secure Cross-border Transport Model along selected transit transport corridors. As a result, the Government of India started using electronic seals on Nepal-bound containers transiting its territory by rail, resulting in streamlined and simplified transit procedures. The United Nations Network of Experts for Paperless Trade and Transport in Asia and the Pacific that pilots an exchange of trade data and documents between China, Mongolia, the Republic of Korea and the Russian Federation was established with the support of the secretariat.

85. In response to subparagraph 4 (d), legal and technical readiness assessments for cross-border paperless trade in countries along the Belt and Road Initiative corridors have been initiated. The secretariat hosted Asia-Pacific information superhighway subregional steering group meetings in North and Central Asia in October 2018, and in the Pacific in November 2018, which facilitated the implementation of subregional plans for improving access to affordable broadband in those subregions. The secretariat also worked closely with subregional energy organizations, including the ASEAN Centre for Energy and the Energy Centre of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, in the process of developing the regional road map on energy connectivity.

86. In response to subparagraph 4 (e), the secretariat prepared the note entitled “Integrated and seamless connectivity for sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific: progress and the way forward” for submission to the Commission at its seventy-fourth session.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> ESCAP/74/34.

87. In response to subparagraph 4 (f), the secretariat built new partnerships and strengthened existing ones, including with ADB, the Islamic Development Bank, the Organisation for Co-operation between Railways and the Economic Cooperation Organization.

## **VIII. Information and communications technology, science, technology and innovation**

### **Resolution 73/6**

#### **Implementation of the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway initiative through regional cooperation**

##### **1. Requirements of the operative paragraphs**

88. In paragraph 3 of its resolution 73/6, the Commission requested the Executive Secretary:

(a) To accord priority to the implementation of the Master Plan for the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway<sup>9</sup> and the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway Regional Cooperation Framework Document,<sup>10</sup> including the support to members and associate members for their implementation;

(b) To encourage the participation of various stakeholders, such as United Nations bodies and specialized agencies, regional and subregional organizations, international financial institutions and partners, as well as the private sector, civil society, research institutes and think tanks, as appropriate, in the implementation of activities of the Master Plan;

(c) To continue to conduct research and analysis and capacity development to identify challenges and opportunities associated with the four pillars of the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway initiative and the implementation of the strategic initiatives included in the Master Plan, including support for formulating regional, subregional and national action plans, based on paragraph 39 of the Master Plan, for the achievement of sustainable development;

(d) To maximize opportunities created by the subregional offices and regional institutions of the Commission in order to advance the implementation of activities, consultations and cooperation for the Asia-Pacific information superhighway, while deepening cross-sectoral synergies;

(e) To report to the Committee on Information and Communications Technology, Science, Technology and Innovation at its second session on the progress made in the implementation of the strategic initiatives articulated in the Master Plan;

(f) To report to the Commission at its seventy-fifth session on progress made in the implementation of the resolution.

##### **2. Progress made**

89. In response to subparagraph 3 (a), the second session of the Committee on Information and Communications Technology, Science, Technology and Innovation was held in Bangkok from 29 to 31 August 2018. The Committee reviewed and endorsed the updated Master Plan for the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway, 2019–2022, and the Asia-Pacific Information

<sup>9</sup> ESCAP/CICTSTI/2018/INF/1.

<sup>10</sup> ESCAP/CICTSTI/2018/INF/2.

Superhighway Regional Cooperation Framework Document, 2019–2022. The secretariat also co-organized the Asia-Pacific information superhighway subregional steering group meetings for North and Central Asia in October 2018 and the Pacific in November 2018, at which participants identified priority areas for the respective subregional implementation plans. The meeting for Central Asia highlighted the importance of supporting existing cross-border infrastructure projects such as the Trans-Eurasian Information Super Highway project. The meeting for the Pacific identified four priorities, namely, capacity-building; connectivity and access to isolated communities; infrastructure-sharing policy; and cybersecurity and associated policies.

90. In response to subparagraph 3 (b), the second session of the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway Steering Committee was held in August 2018. In addition, the secretariat, in collaboration with the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and the Asia-Pacific Telecommunity, hosted the twenty-second Meeting of the Regional Inter-agency Working Group on Information and Communications Technology in 2018, which resulted in improved coordination and planning of joint activities among participating agencies. Another result was a joint publication by agencies to highlight their respective activities in the area of ICT in the region.

91. In response to subparagraph 3 (c), the secretariat conducted technical studies on artificial intelligence and the broadband divide,<sup>11</sup> drivers of broadband connectivity,<sup>12</sup> e-resilience,<sup>13</sup> and cyber-security.<sup>14</sup> The secretariat also contributed a chapter on e-resilience to the publication *United Nations E-Government Survey 2018: Gearing E-Government to Support Transformation towards Sustainable and Resilient Societies*.<sup>15</sup> As a result of these technical studies, member States were provided with greater information on the key challenges with regard to each of the four pillars of the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway initiative. Member States are now developing subregional and national plans in these areas, taking into account the findings of the studies.

92. In response to subparagraph 3 (d), the secretariat organized a regional economic cooperation and integration meeting and the Asia-Pacific information superhighway subregional steering group meeting for North and Central Asia in Almaty, Kazakhstan, in 2018. In collaboration with ITU and the Pacific Islands Telecommunications Association, the secretariat co-hosted the Asia-Pacific information superhighway subregional steering group meeting for the Pacific from 19 to 23 November 2018.

<sup>11</sup> ESCAP, *Artificial Intelligence and Broadband Divide: State of ICT Connectivity in Asia and the Pacific 2017* (Bangkok, 2017).

<sup>12</sup> ESCAP, “Broadband connectivity in Pacific island countries”, Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway (AP-IS) Working Paper Series (Bangkok, 2018).

<sup>13</sup> ESCAP, “E-Resilience: a review of national broadband policies, regulations, strategies and initiatives of China, Japan and the Republic of Korea”, Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway (AP-IS) Working Paper Series (Bangkok, 2018).

<sup>14</sup> ESCAP, “Enhancing cybersecurity for industry 4.0 in Asia and the Pacific”, Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway (AP-IS) Working Paper Series (Bangkok, 2018).

<sup>15</sup> For more information on the secretariat’s contribution with regard to the Asia-Pacific region, see [www.unescap.org/events/building-inclusive-resilient-and-sustainable-societies-through-digital-government-launch-2018](http://www.unescap.org/events/building-inclusive-resilient-and-sustainable-societies-through-digital-government-launch-2018).

93. The secretariat reported to the Committee on Information and Communications Technology, Science, Technology and Innovation at its second session on the progress made in the implementation of the strategic initiatives articulated in the Master Plan for the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway and the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway Regional Cooperation Framework Document.

**3. Issues for consideration by the Commission**

94. The Commission is invited to endorse the updated Master Plan and the Regional Cooperation Framework Document, which guide the secretariat, regional and international partners and member States in enhancing regional broadband connectivity.

95. The Commission may wish to actively participate in the development and implementation of the subregional implementation plans for the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway initiative.

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