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## Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

### Seventy-fifth session

Bangkok, 27–31 May 2019

### Annotated provisional agenda

The present document contains the provisional agenda for the seventy-fifth session of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) (section I) and the annotations to the provisional agenda (section II).

#### I. Provisional agenda

1. Opening of the session:
  - (a) Opening addresses;
  - (b) Election of officers;
  - (c) Adoption of the agenda.
2. “Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality”: general debate on the theme topic.
3. Special Body on Least Developed, Landlocked Developing and Pacific Island Developing Countries.
4. Review of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific:
  - (a) Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development;
  - (b) Social development;
  - (c) Environment and development;
  - (d) Disaster risk reduction;
  - (e) Energy;
  - (f) Transport;
  - (g) Macroeconomic policy, poverty reduction and financing for development;
  - (h) Trade and investment;
  - (i) Information and communications technology, science, technology and innovation;
  - (j) Statistics.

5. Subregional perspectives on the theme topic: “Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality”.
6. Management issues:
  - (a) Proposed programme plan for 2020;
  - (b) Programme changes for the biennium 2018–2019;
  - (c) Overview of partnerships, extrabudgetary contributions and capacity development;
  - (d) Report on the evaluation of the Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology.
7. Midpoint review of the conference structure of the Commission.
8. Activities of the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission.
9. Dates and venue of and theme topic for the seventy-sixth session of the Commission (2020).
10. Other matters.
11. Adoption of the report of the Commission.

## **II. Annotations**

### **1. Opening of the session**

#### **(a) Opening addresses**

The detailed programme for the opening of the session will be made available upon finalization.

#### **(b) Election of officers**

Rule 13 of the rules of procedure of the Commission states: “The Commission shall, at its first meeting of each year, elect from among its representatives a Chairman and two Vice-Chairmen, designated as First and Second Vice-Chairmen, who shall hold office until their successors are elected. They shall be eligible for re-election.” If the plenary so decides, the rule may be applied differently to enable the Commission to elect more than two Vice-Chairs, as has been the practice at previous sessions, in which case the Commission may elect a bureau of officers composed of a Chair and several Vice-Chairs.

The senior officials segment will meet in plenary and in a working group on draft resolutions. The Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the senior officials segment and the working group on draft resolutions will be elected at the same time as the ministerial segment will elect the Chair and Vice-Chairs of the Commission.

**(c) Adoption of the agenda****Documentation**

Provisional agenda (ESCAP/75/L.1)

Annotated provisional agenda (ESCAP/75/L.2)

**2. “Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality”: general debate on the theme topic****Documentation**

Closing the gap: empowerment and inclusion in Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP/75/1)

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is a call to leave no one behind, which places equality, inclusion and empowerment at the centre of national policymaking. For inclusion to be effective and meaningful, marginalized groups need to be empowered and given the tools to take advantage of available opportunities to improve their lives.

For 2019, the high-level political forum on sustainable development has selected the topic of empowerment as the common thread for reviewing progress on several Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Goal 10 on inequality. The document will contribute to the debate with information on whether gaps between disadvantaged groups and their comparators in secondary education attainment, full-time employment and incomes have decreased over the past decade in 27 countries for which comparable data are available.

The Commission is invited to take note of the document and endorse its recommendation.

**3. Special Body on Least Developed, Landlocked Developing and Pacific Island Developing Countries****Documentation**

Executive summary of the Asia-Pacific Countries with Special Needs Development Report 2019: Structural Transformation and its Role in Reducing Poverty (ESCAP/75/2)

Note verbale dated 11 March 2019 from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mongolia addressed to the secretariat of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP/75/33)

**Executive summary of the Asia-Pacific Countries with Special Needs Development Report 2019: Structural Transformation and its Role in Reducing Poverty (ESCAP/75/2)**

In the *Asia-Pacific Countries with Special Needs Development Report 2019*, ESCAP examines the link between poverty reduction and structural transformation. Countries with special needs in Asia and the Pacific have been successful at reducing poverty in recent years, with the number of people living in extreme poverty declining by 100 million between 1999 and 2015. Yet, income poverty remains persistent, especially in the least developed countries and some of the small island developing States. Structural transformation is important for reducing poverty as it can enhance

productivity, sustain output increases, facilitate job creation and raise workers' incomes. While patterns of structural transformation among Asia-Pacific countries with special needs have differed, a significant increase in the share of services in output can be observed. In many countries, this increase has mostly been in informal services with low productivity, bypassing the dynamism of the manufacturing sector. The report includes policy recommendations to increase the impact of structural transformation on reducing poverty.

The Commission is invited to discuss the implementation aspects of suggested policies and to provide guidance to the secretariat on further explorations of the issue, keeping in view the different circumstances and experiences of countries with special needs.

**Note verbale dated 11 March 2019 from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mongolia addressed to the secretariat of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP/75/33)**

The annex to the note verbale contains a summary of the assessment of and recommendations for each of the priority areas of the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014–2024 made during the Euro-Asian Regional Midterm Review of the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014–2024. The Midterm Review was organized by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, and the Economic Commission for Europe and held in Bangkok in February 2019.

The Commission is invited to provide guidance to the secretariat on assisting Asian landlocked developing countries, in cooperation with their development partners and other international entities, to further accelerate the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action and on building their capacity to make appropriate policy responses that address their special development needs and challenges in a more coherent manner.

The Commission is also invited to endorse the outcomes of the Midterm Review to serve as the Asia-Pacific region's input to the comprehensive high-level midterm review of the Vienna Programme of Action, to be convened in November 2019.

**4. Review of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific**

The documents listed below cover the work of the subprogrammes, and the relevant sections of each will be deliberated under each sub-item as appropriate.

**Documentation**

Summary of progress in the implementation of Commission resolutions (ESCAP/75/3)

Summary of the meetings of the subsidiary bodies of the Commission held in the period 2018–2019 (ESCAP/75/4)

Declaration on Navigating Policy with Data to Leave No One Behind (ESCAP/75/4/Add.1)

Annual reports of international and intergovernmental organizations provided to the Commission (ESCAP/75/INF/1)

The agenda item focuses on (1) the work of the nine subprogrammes, including the work of the regional institutions, in the context of recent globally agreed development agendas, including the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals; (2) the reports of subsidiary bodies of the Commission (of which sessions have been held since the most recent Commission session); (3) reports of other intergovernmental bodies; and (4) progress in the implementation of Commission mandates.

The sub-items have been grouped for discussion roughly along the lines of the regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific,<sup>1</sup> that is, thematic areas, starting with the outcomes of the Sixth Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development, and the means of implementation.

Document ESCAP/75/4 contains a summary of all the meetings of the subsidiary bodies of the Commission held since the seventy-fourth session of the Commission and of the matters those bodies have brought to the Commission for its action or its attention. The summary covers the second session of the Committee on Information and Communications Technology, Science, Technology and Innovation; the fifth sessions of the Committee on Environment and Development, the Committee on Transport and the Committee on Social Development; and the sixth sessions of the Committee on Statistics and the Committee on Trade and Investment.

Document ESCAP/75/INF/1 contains a summary of the annual reports of international and intergovernmental organizations provided to the Commission, including those of the Coordinating Committee for Geoscience Programmes in East and South-East Asia, the Mekong River Commission, the Panel on Tropical Cyclones and the Typhoon Committee.

The expected outcomes under this agenda item are (1) identification of emerging development issues, including those emanating from the 2030 Agenda, that merit policy dialogue; (2) identification of progress made and gaps requiring priority attention, with regard to the implementation of Commission mandates; (3) follow-up actions to major global conferences; (4) articulation of Asian and Pacific perspectives on issues that will be addressed in major global forums in 2019; (5) endorsement of the reports of the subsidiary bodies that have held meetings since the seventy-fourth session of the Commission; and (6) identification of key issues to be taken up in meetings of subsidiary bodies in 2019.

Additionally, the Commission is invited to provide the secretariat with guidance on how the work of the subprogrammes, including that of the regional institutions, can further support member States' implementation of the 2030 Agenda by identifying, for example, priorities, gaps in implementation and any required technical assistance at the subregional or regional level.

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<sup>1</sup> E/ESCAP/73/31, annex II.

(a) **Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development**

**Documentation**

Report of the Sixth Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (ESCAP/75/5)

The Sixth Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development will be held from 27 to 29 March 2019 as a preparatory event for the high-level political forum on sustainable development of the Economic and Social Council in July 2019. The Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development agreed that empowerment and inclusion are necessary approaches to reduce inequality in Asia and the Pacific. The Forum reviewed Sustainable Development Goals 4, 8, 10, 13, 16 and 17 and considered policy recommendations to accelerate progress for each. The Forum also discussed the regional follow-up and review processes and mechanisms in place and their contribution to global follow-up and review processes.

The Commission is invited to consider the matters brought to its attention, as contained in the report of the Forum, and to provide the secretariat with further guidance.

(b) **Social development**

**Documentation**

Summary of progress in the implementation of Commission resolutions (ESCAP/75/3, resolution 71/13)

Summary of the meetings of the subsidiary bodies of the Commission held in the period 2018–2019 (ESCAP/75/4, report of the Committee on Social Development on its fifth session)

Report of the Midterm Review of the Asian and Pacific Ministerial Declaration on Population and Development (ESCAP/75/6)

Report on the fifth session of the Working Group on the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013–2022 (ESCAP/75/7)

**Summary of progress in the implementation of Commission resolutions (ESCAP/75/3, resolution 71/13)**

The document contains a summary of the progress made in the implementation of resolution 71/13 on the implementation of the Asian and Pacific Ministerial Declaration on Advancing Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment.

The Commission is invited to review the progress made and provide the secretariat with further guidance for the effective implementation of the resolution.

**Summary of the meetings of the subsidiary bodies of the Commission held in the period 2018–2019 (ESCAP/75/4, report of the Committee on Social Development on its fifth session)**

The Committee on Social Development held its fifth session in Bangkok from 28 to 30 November 2018. In the context of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, it considered strategies for leaving no one behind – particularly women and girls, older persons, persons with disabilities and

migrants – and strategies for strengthening social protection in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The Committee requested the secretariat to continue and to strengthen support to member States through analysis, knowledge-sharing and technical assistance on the social dimension of the 2030 Agenda and the regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda in Asia and the Pacific, in particular in relation to social protection, women's empowerment, population dynamics and disability inclusion; recommended strengthening regional cooperation on social protection; and encouraged the secretariat, in coordination with relevant United Nations agencies, to explore and develop a modality for regional cooperation to support member States in this regard.

The Commission is invited to consider the matters calling for action or brought to its attention, as contained in the report of the Committee, and to provide the secretariat with further guidance.

### **Report of the Midterm Review of the Asian and Pacific Ministerial Declaration on Population and Development (ESCAP/75/6)**

The Midterm Review of the Asian and Pacific Ministerial Declaration on Population and Development was held in Bangkok from 26 to 28 November 2018. The meeting was organized in response to the 2013 Asian and Pacific Ministerial Declaration on Population and Development, in which member States requested ESCAP and the United Nations Population Fund to hold in 2018 a regional intergovernmental review meeting of the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, the key actions for the further implementation of the Programme of Action and the recommendations of the Ministerial Declaration.

The Midterm Review reviewed the achievements in implementing the Ministerial Declaration and its remaining challenges. The Midterm Review decided to submit its report, including the Chair's summary, which is not a negotiated outcome, (ESCAP/75/6) as well as the regional overview report<sup>2</sup> and the synthesis report,<sup>3</sup> to the Commission at its seventy-fifth session. The report of the meeting outlines its organization, recommendations and decision. The Chair's summary provides an overview of the deliberations on progress in implementing the Ministerial Declaration in the following priority areas: (1) poverty eradication and employment; (2) health; (3) sexual and reproductive health, services and rights; (4) education; (5) gender equality and women's empowerment; (6) adolescents and young people; (7) ageing; (8) international migration; (9) urbanization and internal migration; (10) population and sustainable development; and (11) data and statistics.

The regional overview report provides an overview of progress made in implementing the Ministerial Declaration in the context of the 2030 Agenda. The synthesis report summarizes findings from national reviews prepared by member States for the Midterm Review.

The Commission is invited to endorse the report of the meeting and to take note of the Chair's summary.

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<sup>2</sup> ESCAP/APPC/2018/1.

<sup>3</sup> ESCAP/APPC/2018/CRP.1.

**Report on the fifth session of the Working Group on the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013–2022 (ESCAP/75/7)**

The Working Group on the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013–2022, held its fifth session in Bangkok on 21 and 22 February 2019. It reviewed recent progress in the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013–2022, with a focus on several goals of the Incheon Strategy to “Make the Right Real” for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific, including goal 8 on data, goal 3 on accessibility and goal 4 on social protection. The Working Group also considered its 2019–2022 workplan and reviewed its rules of procedure for its second term (2018–2022).

The Commission is invited to take note of the decisions and recommendations made by the Working Group and to provide further guidance on matters contained in the report.

**(c) Environment and development**

**Documentation**

Summary of progress in the implementation of Commission resolutions (ESCAP/75/3, resolutions 73/5 and 73/9)

Summary of the meetings of the subsidiary bodies of the Commission held in the period 2018–2019 (ESCAP/75/4, report of the Committee on Environment and Development on its fifth session)

Report of the Governing Council of the Centre for Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization on its fourteenth session (ESCAP/75/8)

Taking action to combat climate change and its impacts: how empowerment leads to sustainable outcomes (ESCAP/75/9)

Annual reports of international and intergovernmental organizations provided to the Commission (ESCAP/75/INF/1, reports of the Coordinating Committee for Geoscience Programmes in East and South-East Asia and the Mekong River Commission)

**Summary of progress in the implementation of Commission resolutions (ESCAP/75/3, resolutions 73/5 and 73/9)**

The document contains summaries of the progress made in the implementation of the following resolutions:

- (1) 73/5 on strengthening Asia-Pacific’s support for the United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14;
- (2) 73/9 on the regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda in Asia and the Pacific.

The Commission is invited to review the progress made and provide the secretariat with further guidance for the effective implementation of the resolutions.



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**Summary of the meetings of the subsidiary bodies of the Commission held in the period 2018–2019 (ESCAP/75/4, report of the Committee on Environment and Development on its fifth session)**

The Committee on Environment and Development held its fifth session in Bangkok from 21 to 23 November 2018.

The Commission is invited to consider the matters calling for action or brought to its attention, as contained in the report of the Committee, and to provide the secretariat with further guidance.

**Report of the Governing Council of the Centre for Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization on its fourteenth session (ESCAP/75/8)**

The Commission is invited to review the report of the Governing Council of the Centre for Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization and to provide the secretariat with guidance for the future work of the Centre.

**Taking action to combat climate change and its impacts: how empowerment leads to sustainable outcomes (ESCAP/75/9)**

This document provides information on the role empowerment plays in responding to climate change and achieving sustainable development. It contains an overview of approaches for integrating action on climate change and sustainable development through participation and empowerment. In the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement, participation and empowerment are recognized as vital components of climate action and are embedded in the frameworks. However, measures to enhance public participation, public awareness, education and empowerment remain weak in associated nationally determined contributions. The five-year review process of nationally determined contributions and voluntary national reviews is an opportunity to strengthen empowerment and inclusion and promote increased alignment between nationally determined contributions and the 2030 Agenda. Integrated approaches can be used to identify, track and promote empowerment and inclusion; these approaches include human rights benchmarking, climate justice and transformation readiness assessment. Further alignment of nationally determined contributions and the Sustainable Development Goals, which proactively challenge and combat inequality and promote empowerment and inclusion in an all-of-society approach, can increase the coherence and effectiveness of climate action to ensure no one is left behind.

The Commission is invited to review the findings and recommendations and provide the secretariat with further guidance.

**Annual reports of international and intergovernmental organizations provided to the Commission (ESCAP/75/INF/1, reports of the Coordinating Committee for Geoscience Programmes in East and South-East Asia and the Mekong River Commission)**

The Commission is invited to take note of the reports of the Coordinating Committee for Geoscience Programmes in East and South-East Asia and the Mekong River Commission.

(d) **Disaster risk reduction**

**Documentation**

Summary of progress in the implementation of Commission resolutions (ESCAP/75/3, resolution 73/7)

Report of the Ministerial Conference on Space Applications for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific on its third session (ESCAP/75/10)

Ministerial Declaration on Space Applications for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP/75/10/Add.1)

Asia-Pacific Plan of Action on Space Applications for Sustainable Development (2018–2030) (ESCAP/75/10/Add.2)

Report of the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management on its third session (ESCAP/75/11)

Addressing disaster resilience through digital and geospatial innovations (ESCAP/75/12)

Note verbale dated 23 April 2019 from the Embassy of Mongolia addressed to the secretariat of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP/75/34)

Annual reports of international and intergovernmental organizations provided to the Commission (ESCAP/75/INF/1, reports of the Typhoon Committee and the Panel on Tropical Cyclones)

**Summary of progress in the implementation of Commission resolutions (ESCAP/75/3, resolution 73/7)**

The document contains a summary of the progress made in the implementation of resolution 73/7 on enhancing regional cooperation for the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 in Asia and the Pacific.

The Commission is invited to review the progress made and to provide the secretariat with further guidance for the effective implementation of the resolution.

**Report of the Ministerial Conference on Space Applications for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific on its third session (ESCAP/75/10)**

**Ministerial Declaration on Space Applications for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP/75/10/Add.1)**

**Asia-Pacific Plan of Action on Space Applications for Sustainable Development (2018–2030) (ESCAP/75/10/Add.2)**

The Third Ministerial Conference on Space Applications for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific, co-organized by ESCAP and the Government of Thailand, was held in Bangkok on 10 October 2018.

The Conference provided guidance for concrete action under the priority thematic areas of the regional road map for implementing the 2030

Agenda in Asia and the Pacific through the adoption of the Ministerial Declaration on Space Applications for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP/75/10/Add.1) and the Asia-Pacific Plan of Action on Space Applications for Sustainable Development (2018–2030) (ESCAP/75/10/Add.2). The Plan of Action is a regionally coordinated blueprint to help countries in Asia and the Pacific, particularly those with special needs, to harness space applications and digital innovations to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. In the Ministerial Declaration the ministers pledged to work together assiduously on the implementation of the Plan.

The Commission is invited to review the report of the Ministerial Conference, to endorse the Ministerial Declaration and the Plan of Action, and to provide guidance on its implementation.

**Report of the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management on its third session (ESCAP/75/11)**

The Commission is invited to review the report of the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management and provide the secretariat with guidance for the future work of the Centre.

**Addressing disaster resilience through digital and geospatial innovations (ESCAP/75/12)**

In Asia and the Pacific, the gap between risk and resilience-building is growing in those countries which have the least capacity to prepare for disasters. This is the same group of countries that finds itself at one extreme of the widening digital divide. The convergence of these divides is a key concern because the science innovations and digitally driven emerging technologies related to satellite imagery and geospatial and big data analytics that are highly effective in operationalizing disaster alerts depend on the existence of robust, reliable, resilient and affordable broadband infrastructure. The development of broadband networks has thus become an urgent development priority.

To enhance the impact of these technological innovations, ESCAP provides a regional platform that promotes the use of space applications and geospatial information for disaster risk reduction and resilience-building across the region. Furthermore, the aim of the secretariat's Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway initiative is to improve access to affordable broadband connectivity and to improve e-resilience to natural disasters.

This document contains an overview of key policy challenges as well as opportunities arising from science, geospatial and digital innovations. It also provides information on the Commission's regional cooperation responses, highlighting in particular progress on the Asia-Pacific Plan of Action on Space Applications for Sustainable Development (2018–2030), the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway initiative and the Asia-Pacific Disaster Resilience Network.

The Commission is invited to take note of the report and provide the secretariat with further guidance.

**Note verbale dated 23 April 2019 from the Embassy of Mongolia addressed to the secretariat of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP/75/34)**

The 2018 Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction was held in Ulaanbaatar from 3 to 6 July 2018 with the theme “Preventing disaster risk: protecting sustainable development”. The annex to the note verbale contains the Outcome of the Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, the Action Plan 2018–2020 of the Asia Regional Plan for Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 and the Ulaanbaatar Declaration adopted by the Ministerial Conference.

The Commission may wish to consider the recommendations contained in the documents annexed to the note verbale and provide guidance on how to strengthen regional cooperation on disaster risk reduction in Asia and the Pacific.

**Annual reports of international and intergovernmental organizations provided to the Commission (ESCAP/75/INF/1, reports of the Typhoon Committee and the Panel on Tropical Cyclones)**

The Commission is invited to take note of the reports of the Typhoon Committee and the Panel on Tropical Cyclones.

**(e) Energy**

**Documentation**

Summary of progress in the implementation of Commission resolutions (ESCAP/75/3, resolution 73/8)

Universal access to energy in Asia and the Pacific: evidence-based strategies to achieve empowerment, inclusiveness and equality through Sustainable Development Goal 7 (ESCAP/75/13)

**Summary of progress in the implementation of Commission resolutions (ESCAP/75/3, resolution 73/8)**

The document contains a summary of the progress made in the implementation of resolution 73/8 on strengthening regional cooperation for sustainable energy development in Asia and the Pacific.

The Commission is invited to review the progress made and to provide the secretariat with further guidance for the effective implementation of the resolution.

**Universal access to energy in Asia and the Pacific: evidence-based strategies to achieve empowerment, inclusiveness and equality through Sustainable Development Goal 7 (ESCAP/75/13)**

The document provides a look at how achieving access to modern energy can help to minimize inequality in Asia and the Pacific through empowerment and inclusion, particularly among those populations that are most at risk of being left behind. ESCAP examined trends, evaluations and case studies in electricity access and clean cooking to identify strategies to attain universal energy access that bolsters economic and social development while combating rising inequality. The document provides a basis for member States to reflect on key policies and programming to enable universal access to energy and unlock associated benefits.

The Commission is invited to review the report and to provide guidance for the future work of the secretariat.

**(f) Transport**

**Documentation**

Summary of progress in the implementation of Commission resolutions (ESCAP/75/3, resolutions 70/7 and 73/4)

Summary of the meetings of the subsidiary bodies of the Commission held in the period 2018–2019 (ESCAP/75/4, report of the Committee on Transport on its fifth session)

Sustainable transport as an engine for greater empowerment, inclusiveness and equality in Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP/75/14)

**Summary of progress in the implementation of Commission resolutions (ESCAP/75/3, resolutions 70/7 and 73/4)**

The document contains summaries of the progress made in the implementation of the following resolutions:

(1) 70/7 on the implementation of the Suva Declaration on Improving Maritime Transport and Related Services in the Pacific;

(2) 73/4 on the implementation of the Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Transport Connectivity in Asia and the Pacific.

The Commission is invited to review the progress made and to provide the secretariat with further guidance for the effective implementation of the resolutions.

**Summary of the meetings of the subsidiary bodies of the Commission held in the period 2018–2019 (ESCAP/75/4, report of the Committee on Transport on its fifth session)**

The Committee on Transport held its fifth session in Bangkok from 19 to 21 November 2018. The Committee reviewed progress achieved in the implementation of the Regional Action Programme for Sustainable Transport Connectivity in Asia and the Pacific, phase I (2017–2021), in the effort to foster greater regional consistency in addressing issues such as international intermodal corridors, modern logistics, Asia-Europe connectivity, rural transport, sustainable urban transport systems and road safety. It also deliberated on the major transport development challenges faced by the Asia-Pacific region in light of the 2030 Agenda and emphasized the significant contribution that sustainable transport connectivity can make to the realization of the 2030 Agenda.

The Commission is invited to consider the matters calling for action or brought to its attention, as contained in the report of the Committee, and to provide the secretariat with further guidance.

**Sustainable transport as an engine for greater empowerment, inclusiveness and equality in Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP/75/14)**

The document contains an overview of the traditional and emerging policy considerations linked to transport connectivity as a driver of economic development, as a key sector for environmental performance and as an engine for social development. This overview was then used to review how ESCAP

interventions and policy dialogue can enhance the links between transport connectivity and the goals of greater empowerment, inclusiveness and equality in Asia and the Pacific.

The Commission is invited to review the document and to provide the secretariat with further guidance on implementing sustainable transport reforms in support of social development in the region.

**(g) Macroeconomic policy, poverty reduction and financing for development**

**Documentation**

Summary of progress in the implementation of Commission resolutions (ESCAP/75/3, resolution 73/2)

Thinking beyond economic growth to empower people, take care of the planet and pursue the Sustainable Development Goals (ESCAP/75/15)

**Summary of progress in the implementation of Commission resolutions (ESCAP/75/3, resolution 73/2)**

The document contains a summary of the progress made in the implementation of resolution 73/2 on strengthening the regional mechanism for the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014–2024.

The Commission is invited to review the progress made and provide the secretariat with further guidance for the effective implementation of the resolution.

**Thinking beyond economic growth to empower people, take care of the planet and pursue the Sustainable Development Goals (ESCAP/75/15)**

Most Asia-Pacific countries have made great strides in reducing extreme poverty thanks to high economic growth on the back of vibrant trade and investments. However, rapid economic growth has come at the cost of rising inequalities and considerable environmental degradation. Worryingly, present trends indicate that the region is unlikely to reach most Sustainable Development Goals by the 2030 target date if the region continues with business as usual. At the same time, like the rest of the world, the Asia-Pacific region is facing challenges arising from the changing dynamics of globalization, rapid advancements in technology and climate change. The region urgently needs to shift mindset and policy direction. This means looking beyond economic growth to pursue human well-being holistically. Given the current overall steady economic performance and fiscal space available in the region, the time for action and a decisive push to accelerate progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals is now. The document sheds light on the major investment areas for achieving the Goals, highlights cost estimates of these investments, and contains a discussion of policies that can help accelerate progress towards the 2030 Agenda.

The Commission is invited to discuss the framework for investments for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, to assess the relative merits of the different financing options and policies presented, and to provide further guidance to the secretariat to analyse these aspects further.

**(h) Trade and investment****Documentation**

Summary of progress in the implementation of Commission resolutions (ESCAP/75/3, resolution 73/3)

Summary of the meetings of the subsidiary bodies of the Commission held in the period 2018–2019 (ESCAP/75/4, report of the Committee on Trade and Investment on its sixth session)

Report of the 5th meeting of the Interim Intergovernmental Steering Group on Cross-border Paperless Trade Facilitation (ESCAP/75/16)

Growing challenges for trade and investment (ESCAP/75/17)

**Summary of progress in the implementation of Commission resolutions (ESCAP/75/3, resolution 73/3)**

The document contains a summary of the progress made in the implementation of resolution 73/3 on advancing integrated and seamless connectivity for sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific.

The Commission is invited to review the progress made and to provide the secretariat with further guidance for the effective implementation of the resolution.

**Summary of the meetings of the subsidiary bodies of the Commission held in the period 2018–2019 (ESCAP/75/4, report of the Committee on Trade and Investment on its sixth session)**

The Committee on Trade and Investment held its sixth session in Bangkok from 13 to 15 March 2019. It reviewed recent trends and developments and discussed the implications of rising protectionism, including trade wars, on regional trade and investment. The Committee also discussed navigating nontariff measures towards sustainable development; promoting cross-border paperless trade in Asia and the Pacific; leveraging e-commerce for graduation of countries from the category of least developed countries; promoting sustainable investment and business; engaging the business sector in promoting sustainable development; and recent activities of the secretariat and associated results pertaining to trade and investment under the subprogramme on trade, investment and innovation. The Committee considered the future focus of the subprogramme in trade and investment and the strategic direction of the Committee.

The Commission is invited to consider the matters calling for action or brought to its attention, as contained in the report of the Committee, and to provide the secretariat with further guidance.

**Report of the 5th meeting of the Interim Intergovernmental Steering Group on Cross-border Paperless Trade Facilitation (ESCAP/75/16)**

The 5th meeting of the Interim Intergovernmental Steering Group on Cross-border Paperless Trade Facilitation will be held in Bangkok on 12 and 13 March 2019.

The Commission is invited to take note of the decisions made by the Steering Group and to provide the secretariat with further guidance on any other matters contained in the report.

### **Growing challenges for trade and investment (ESCAP/75/17)**

The document provides a summary of the growing challenges in the area of trade and investment as an important means of implementation of the 2030 Agenda. It also provides policy recommendations on how economies in the region may address these challenges. Individual and concerted actions to defend the principles of the multilateral trading system, the acceleration of negotiations and implementation of regional trade agreements, the rationalization of the use of non-tariff measures, and the simplification and digitalization of trade are needed to meet those challenges. The most recent developments and challenges with regard to foreign direct investment are reviewed, and priority actions for Governments to mobilize foreign direct investment for sustainable development and to rationalize the international landscape of international investment agreements are outlined.

The Commission is invited to review the document and to provide guidance for the future work of the secretariat.

#### **(i) Information and communications technology, science, technology and innovation**

##### **Documentation**

Summary of progress in the implementation of Commission resolutions (ESCAP/75/3, resolution 73/6)

Summary of the meetings of the subsidiary bodies of the Commission held in the period 2018–2019 (ESCAP/75/4, report of the Committee on Information and Communications Technology, Science, Technology and Innovation on its second session)

Report of the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development on its thirteenth session (ESCAP/75/18)

Report of the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology on its fourteenth session (ESCAP/75/19)

Digital connectivity and the digital economy (ESCAP/75/20)

Master Plan for the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway, 2019–2022 (ESCAP/75/INF/5)

Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway Regional Cooperation Framework Document, 2019–2022 (ESCAP/75/INF/6)

##### **Summary of progress in the implementation of Commission resolutions (ESCAP/75/3, resolution 73/6)**

The document contains a summary of the progress made in the implementation of resolution 73/6 on the implementation of the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway initiative through regional cooperation.



The Commission is invited to review the progress made and to provide the secretariat with further guidance for the effective implementation of the resolution.

**Summary of the meetings of the subsidiary bodies of the Commission held in the period 2018–2019 (ESCAP/75/4, report of the Committee on Information and Communications Technology, Science, Technology and Innovation on its second session)**

The Committee on Information and Communications Technology, Science, Technology and Innovation held its second session in Bangkok from 29 to 31 August 2018.

The Commission is invited to consider the matters calling for action or brought to its attention, as contained in the report of the Committee, and to provide the secretariat with further guidance.

**Report of the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development on its thirteenth session (ESCAP/75/18)**

The Commission is invited to review the report of the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development and to provide the secretariat with guidance for the future work of the Centre.

**Report of the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology on its fourteenth session (ESCAP/75/19)**

The Commission is invited to review the report of the Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology and to provide the secretariat with guidance for the future work of the Centre.

**Digital connectivity and the digital economy (ESCAP/75/20)**

Part I of the document contains key findings of the secretariat's analytical and research work on emerging regional policy challenges as well as opportunities from enhanced digital technologies and connectivity for all. Evidence is provided on cross-sectoral benefits emerging from the accelerated development of regional broadband connectivity in support of the regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda in Asia and the Pacific through the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway initiative. Some of the benefits of encouraging infrastructure sharing and co-deployment, as well as expanding public Wi-Fi, as cost-efficient, scalable digital technologies are highlighted. The growing digital divide is an urgent regional policy priority as its risks amplify development gaps across the region.

Part II contains a review of how digital connectivity, together with other factors such as technology and innovation, is shaping the evolution of the digital economies of countries in the region. Emphasis is placed on e-commerce as a key component of the digital economy. E-commerce can be leveraged by the countries in the region to pursue inclusive and sustainable development. However, many developing countries – including the least developed countries in the region – are still at the nascent stage of e-commerce development. The opportunities, challenges and solutions for developing e-commerce in the region are reviewed.

The Commission is invited to review the findings and policy recommendations and to provide the secretariat with further guidance on enhancing digital connectivity and promoting the digital economy.

**Master Plan for the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway, 2019–2022 (ESCAP/75/INF/5)**

The document contains the updated Master Plan for the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway initiative for 2019–2022, which was endorsed by the Committee on Information and Communications Technology, Science, Technology and Innovation at its second session, which was held in Bangkok from 29 to 31 August 2018.

The Commission is invited to take note of the document.

**Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway Regional Cooperation Framework Document, 2019–2022 (ESCAP/75/INF/6)**

The document contains an updated Regional Cooperation Framework Document for the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway initiative for 2019–2022, which was endorsed by the Committee on Information and Communications Technology, Science, Technology and Innovation at its second session, which was held in Bangkok from 29 to 31 August 2018.

The Commission is invited to take note of the document.

**(j) Statistics**

**Documentation**

Summary of the meetings of the subsidiary bodies of the Commission held in the period 2018–2019 (ESCAP/75/4, report of the Committee on Statistics on its sixth session)

Declaration on Navigating Policy with Data to Leave No One Behind (ESCAP/75/4/Add.1)

Report of the Governing Council of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific on its fourteenth session (ESCAP/75/21)

Report on the work of the Regional Steering Group for Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP/75/22)

Statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: challenges and emerging solutions in Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP/75/23)

**Summary of the meetings of the subsidiary bodies of the Commission held in the period 2018–2019 (ESCAP/75/4, report of the Committee on Statistics on its sixth session)**

The Committee on Statistics held its sixth session in Bangkok from 16 to 19 October 2018. Its main objective was to support the achievement of the shared vision that, by 2030, national statistical systems, including national statistical offices, are enabled and empowered to lead the development of and to deliver innovative, trusted and timely statistical products and services for the urgently needed and evolving statistical requirements of the 2030 Agenda.

To that end, the Committee adopted the Declaration on Navigating Policy with Data to Leave No One Behind (ESCAP/75/4/Add.1). It endorsed

the statistical contents of the Disaster-related Statistics Framework and supported its application to produce harmonized statistics related to disasters in support of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the 2030 Agenda. It decided on a number of actions to strengthen alignment of its work with the 2030 Agenda to ensure effective demand for, and investment in, the development of official statistics in Asia and the Pacific. It took stock of progress in the implementation of ongoing regional initiatives on civil registration and vital statistics and on economic, population, social, gender, agricultural and rural statistics as well as statistics related to disasters.

The Commission is invited to consider Committee recommendations 1–3 and to take note of decisions 1–4.

**Declaration on Navigating Policy with Data to Leave No One Behind (ESCAP/75/4/Add.1)**

In the Declaration, the need for transformative shifts in the production and use of official statistics for successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda is emphasized. The need to overcome considerable constraints to administrative structures, human resources and financing of national statistical offices and the statistical units of government agencies is noted. The Declaration includes nine commitments by member States, three by development partners and five requests to the Executive Secretary of ESCAP.

In line with Committee recommendation 1, the Commission is invited to endorse the Declaration.

**Report of the Governing Council of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific on its fourteenth session (ESCAP/75/21)**

The Commission is invited to review the report of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific and provide the secretariat with guidance for the future work of the Institute.

**Report on the work of the Regional Steering Group for Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP/75/22)**

The Regional Steering Group for Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific held its 4th meeting from 13 to 15 November 2018 to initiate preparations for the Ministerial Conference on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific, which will be held in 2020 to celebrate the midpoint of the Asian and Pacific Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Decade (2015–2024). The meeting generated several recommendations, directed at member States, development partners and the secretariat, for a successful Conference.

The current composition of the Regional Steering Group is valid until the end of 2019. The Regional Steering Group recommended additional criteria to guide the selection process of its members for the second half of the Decade in addition to those already included in its terms of reference. Following a call for nominations in February 2019, the secretariat prepared a proposal for the future membership of the Regional Steering Group, considering both the original and new selection criteria. The list of proposed members is included in document ESCAP/75/22.

The Commission is invited to take note of the recommendations of the Regional Steering Group at its 4th meeting and to review and approve the membership of the Regional Steering Group.

**Statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: challenges and emerging solutions in Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP/75/23)**

The document provides information on initiatives and innovative approaches by the statistical community to strengthen statistics in Asia and the Pacific in pursuit of the collective vision and framework for action to advance official statistics for the 2030 Agenda,<sup>4</sup> which was developed and endorsed by the Committee on Statistics.

The Commission is invited to express its continued support to statistics development and to point to ways in which the use of statistics could be further expanded for transparent and evidence-based policy formulation and the implementation and monitoring of the 2030 Agenda in Asia and the Pacific.

**5. Subregional perspectives on the theme topic: “Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality”**

**Documentation**

Report of the Governing Council of the Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia on its thirteenth session (ESCAP/75/24)

Subregional perspectives on empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality in Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP/75/25)

**Report of the Governing Council of the Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia on its thirteenth session (ESCAP/75/24)**

The Commission is invited to review the report of the Governing Council of the Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia and to provide the secretariat with guidance on the future work of the Special Programme.

**Subregional perspectives on empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality in Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP/75/25)**

The document contains a review of persistent and emerging issues and challenges to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in the five subregions of ESCAP. It contains examples of actions taken by members, associate members, the secretariat and development partners to address these challenges through subregional economic cooperation and integration, guided by the regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda in Asia and the Pacific. The document also contains a review of subregional perspectives on the theme topic of the seventy-fifth session of the Commission, “Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality”.

The Commission is invited to consider the document and provide guidance for the future work of the secretariat.

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<sup>4</sup> E/ESCAP/CST(5)/1/Rev.1.

## 6. Management issues

Under this agenda item, the secretariat is submitting, for the consideration of the Commission, documents on a range of management issues relevant to the continued effectiveness of the work of ESCAP.

### (a) Proposed programme plan for 2020

#### Documentation

Proposed programme plan for 2020 (ESCAP/75/26)

Supplementary information on the programme plan and performance information (ESCAP/75/INF/2)

#### Proposed programme plan for 2020 (ESCAP/75/26)

The proposed programme plan of ESCAP for 2020 is the first annual programme plan developed by the secretariat, following the decision of the General Assembly, in its resolution 72/266, to endorse the conclusions and recommendations contained in the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the proposed management reform.

The proposed programme plan for 2020 comprises (1) a foreword by the Executive Secretary; (2) an overall orientation of the programme of ESCAP; and (3) a programme plan for 2020 and performance information for 2018 for each of the nine subprogrammes. Each programme plan consists of six sections: (1) objective of the subprogramme; (2) alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals; (3) highlighted result in 2018 with performance information for 2018; (4) highlighted planned result for 2020; (5) deliverables for the period 2018–2020; and (6) most significant relative variances of deliverables.

Each Committee, as a subsidiary body of the Commission, provided the secretariat with guidance on the future focus of the subprogrammes under its purview. In addition, the proposed programme plan was reviewed by the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission.

The document is submitted for the Commission's review and endorsement.

#### Supplementary information on the programme plan and performance information (ESCAP/75/INF/2)

The document contains the supplementary information on the proposed programme plan of ESCAP for 2020. It contains a list of the legislative mandates that provide the direction for the programme of ESCAP and deliverables for each of the subprogrammes.

The Commission is invited to view this document in conjunction with document ESCAP/75/26 when considering the proposed programme plan of ESCAP for 2020.

**(b) Programme changes for the biennium 2018–2019**

**Documentation**

Programme changes for the biennium 2018–2019 (ESCAP/75/27)

Programme changes for the biennium 2018–2019 may be required following the identification of emerging global priorities by the Economic and Social Council, the General Assembly and global conferences since the endorsement of the draft programme of work by the Commission at its seventy-third session.

The Commission is invited to consider the proposed changes with a view to endorsing them for incorporation into the programme of work for 2018–2019.

**(c) Overview of partnerships, extrabudgetary contributions and capacity development**

**Documentation**

Overview of partnerships, extrabudgetary contributions and capacity development (ESCAP/75/28)

The document contains an overview of the secretariat's partnerships in 2018, including with regional and subregional intergovernmental organizations, which facilitate the efforts of the United Nations to work together as one at the regional level in support of its capacity development work. It also provides an overview of the extrabudgetary resources mobilized to implement the programme of work. The delivery of the Commission's capacity development work in 2018 is discussed.

Individual members and associate members are invited to announce their intended contributions for 2019.

The Commission is invited to take note of the document and provide the secretariat with further guidance on the development of partnerships and mobilizing additional resources.

**(d) Report on the evaluation of the Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology**

**Documentation**

Report on the evaluation of the Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology (ESCAP/75/29)

Evaluation of the Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology (ESCAP/75/INF/3)

**Report on the evaluation of the Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology (ESCAP/75/29)**

The document provides an overview of the independent evaluation of the Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology and its conclusions and recommendations. The secretariat commissioned the evaluation in response to paragraph 5 of resolution 71/1 to facilitate a review of the continued substantive relevance and financial viability of the Centre. The

document concludes with information on a set of actions taken by the secretariat to address the evaluation recommendations and proposed actions.

The Commission is invited to consider the proposed actions and provide further guidance to the secretariat.

### **Evaluation of the Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology (ESCAP/75/INF/3)**

The Commission is invited to take note of the evaluation of the Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology.

## **7. Midpoint review of the conference structure of the Commission**

### **Documentation**

Midpoint review of the conference structure of the Commission in implementation of resolution 73/1 (ESCAP/75/30)

Midpoint review of the conference structure of the Commission: Chair's summary of discussions (ESCAP/75/INF/4)

### **Midpoint review of the conference structure of the Commission in implementation of resolution 73/1 (ESCAP/75/30)**

In its resolution 73/1, the Commission decided to review its conference structure at its seventy-eighth session, in 2022, with a midpoint review at its seventy-fifth session, in 2019, and requested the Executive Secretary to submit a report in both cases, with a focus on the programme areas of the Commission, to serve as a basis for the review.

The document contains recommendations concerning the conference structure of the Commission pertaining to aspects such as (1) the content of the Commission session, (2) the organization of the Commission session and (3) the subsidiary bodies of the Commission.

The Commission is invited to consider the recommendations contained in the document and provide guidance on any changes to the conference structure that are required.

### **Midpoint review of the conference structure of the Commission: Chair's summary of discussions (ESCAP/75/INF/4)**

In the lead up to the seventy-fifth session of the Commission, the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission held informal consultations on the midpoint review of the conference structure of the Commission. The document contains a summary of the discussions.

The Commission may wish to take note of the document and to provide guidance on any changes to the conference structure that are required.

## **8. Activities of the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission**

### **Documentation**

Report of the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission (ESCAP/75/31)

The report includes a summary of the main activities of the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission since the seventy-fourth session of the Commission, including its support to the Executive Secretary on matters related to programme planning, implementation and monitoring.

The Commission is invited to comment on the role of the Advisory Committee and provide further guidance regarding its work.

**9. Dates and venue of and theme topic for the seventy-sixth session of the Commission (2020)**

**Documentation**

Dates and venue of and theme topic for the seventy-sixth session of the Commission (2020) (ESCAP/75/32)

Unless the Commission decides otherwise, the seventy-sixth session of the Commission will be held in Bangkok in April or May 2020.

The Commission is invited to decide the theme topic for the seventy-sixth session.

**10. Other matters**

The result of elections for the Governing Councils of the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management and the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific will be announced.

The Commission is also invited to consider other matters brought to its attention.

**11. Adoption of the report of the Commission**

The Commission will consider and adopt the report of its seventy-fifth session. Pursuant to paragraph 7 of annex II, entitled “Conference structure of the Commission”, to the annual report of ESCAP, 20 May 2016–19 May 2017 (E/2017/39–E/ESCAP/73/40), the report of the Commission will be composed of the decisions and resolutions of the Commission. The draft record of proceedings of the Commission session, prepared by the secretariat, will be circulated among members and associate members for comments within 15 days after the conclusion of the session.