Annotated provisional agenda

The present document contains the provisional agenda for the Third Ministerial Conference on Regional Economic Cooperation and Integration in Asia and the Pacific (section I) and the annotations thereto (section II).

I. Provisional agenda

1. Opening of the Ministerial Conference:
   (a) Opening statements;
   (b) Election of officers;
   (c) Adoption of the agenda.

2. Building resilience to crises through regional economic cooperation and integration:
   (a) Strengthening resilience through trade and investment for sustainable development in times of crisis;
   (b) Strengthening resilience through seamless and sustainable connectivity;
   (c) Towards an inclusive digital future.

3. Other matters.

4. Adoption of the report on the Third Ministerial Conference on Regional Economic Cooperation and Integration in Asia and the Pacific.

II. Annotations

1. Opening of the Ministerial Conference

   (a) Opening statements

      The programme for the Ministerial Conference will be available online at www.unescap.org/events/reci-2022.
(b) Election of officers

A chair and two vice-chairs will be elected.

The list of participants will be available online at www.unescap.org/events/reci-2022.

(c) Adoption of the agenda

Documentation

Provisional agenda (ESCAP/MCREI/2022/L.1)

Annotated provisional agenda (ESCAP/MCREI/2022/L.2)

Annotation

The provisional agenda will be considered and adopted by the participants in the Ministerial Conference, subject to such changes as may be necessary.

2. Building resilience to crises through regional economic cooperation and integration

Documentation

Emerging from recent crises: understanding the macroeconomic context (ESCAP/MCREI/2022/1)

Annotation

Document ESCAP/MCREI/2022/1 contains information on the latest macroeconomic developments in Asia and the Pacific, the major unfolding macroeconomic challenges and the policy priorities for achieving a robust and resilient economic recovery. In it, the deep and lasting scars of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic on the economies of the region and the nascent and uneven economic recovery to date are highlighted and two unfolding macroeconomic challenges and associated uncertainties – the rising inflation and global monetary tightening, and the implications of the ongoing war in Ukraine – are analysed. The document also contains a review of the fiscal challenges confronting the economies of the Asia-Pacific region as they strive to sustain their post-pandemic recovery efforts and policy insights on supporting robust and resilient economic recovery by promoting inclusive development, building forward better and enhancing public spending efficiency.

(a) Strengthening resilience through trade and investment for sustainable development in times of crisis

Documentation

Enabling trade and investment for sustainable development in times of crisis (ESCAP/MCREI/2022/2)
Annotation

In document ESCAP/MCREI/2022/2, it is argued that enhancing regional and global economic cooperation and integration on trade and investment is important for promoting sustainable development and helping countries to navigate crises. In an open and coordinated environment, trade and investment can help countries to access the goods, services, capital and technologies that are desperately needed to confront crises. Open trade, combined with government support, has enabled countries to meet the surge in demand for medical supplies, food and climate-friendly technologies. Recent crises have exposed the downsides of market integration through trade and investment and existing gaps in international cooperation. The excessive concentration of sites for the production of selected goods in certain areas, restrictive trade and investment policies, supply chain disruptions, inadequate trade facilitation measures and regulatory divergences have limited the opportunities to fully realize the potential of trade and investment for navigating crises and promoting sustainable development. Given these challenges, priority areas for regional cooperation and integration through trade and investment are highlighted and several issues are presented for consideration by the members and associate members of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP).

(b) Strengthening resilience through seamless and sustainable connectivity

Documentation

Enabling resilience through sustainable and seamless connectivity (ESCAP/MCREI/2022/3)

Annotation

The Bangkok Declaration on Regional Economic Cooperation and Integration in Asia and the Pacific, which was adopted in December 2013, the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway initiative, the regional transport network composed of Asian highways, trans-Asian railways and dry ports and the Regional Road Map on Power System Connectivity: Promoting Cross-border Electricity Connectivity for Sustainable Development have gained traction as major vectors of regional connectivity and integration. These achievements, but also the persisting connectivity challenges in the areas of transport, energy and information and communications technology, have been highlighted during the recent crises. Energy, digital and transport connectivity can play a role in responding to the multiple crises facing Asia and the Pacific, and key developments in each sector are presented for consideration by ESCAP members and associate members.

(c) Towards an inclusive digital future

Documentation

Towards an inclusive digital future (ESCAP/MCREI/2022/4)

Annotation

Document ESCAP/MCREI/2022/4 contains an overview of emerging policy options for steering the Asia-Pacific region towards an inclusive digital future, drawing on policies implemented by ESCAP member States on the five core foundations of digital economies and societies, namely Internet connectivity, digital skills, digital identity, digital finance and e-commerce. In
addition, the document contains information on government approaches to channelling investments into the digital economy and on how open data – the fuel for digital development – can promote digital inclusion. Furthermore, the document contains recommendations to promote inclusive digital economies and societies at the national level and facilitate digital cooperation at the regional level for consideration by ESCAP members and associate members.

3. Other matters

The participants in the Ministerial Conference may wish to consider other matters not covered under the items mentioned above.

4. Adoption of the report on the Third Ministerial Conference on Regional Economic Cooperation and Integration in Asia and the Pacific

Documentation

Draft report (ESCAP/MCREI/2022/L.3)

Annotation

The participants in the Ministerial Conference will consider and adopt the report, which will be submitted to ESCAP at its seventy-ninth session.