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

### **Report of the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission\*\***

#### *Summary*

The present document is submitted to the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific for its endorsement. It covers the activities of the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission during the period June 2016 to March 2017. The Commission may wish to provide comments on the report.

## **I. Introduction**

1. The present document covers the activities of the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission during the period June 2016 to March 2017. The Advisory Committee appointed Mr. Sohail Khan (Pakistan) to serve as Rapporteur of the Advisory Committee, with the responsibility of presenting its report to the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) at its seventy-third session.

## **II. Activities of the Advisory Committee**

2. During the period under review, the Advisory Committee held 6 regular and special sessions and 10 informal sessions.

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\* E/ESCAP/73/L.1.

\*\* The present document was submitted late owing to the need to take into account the consideration by the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission of this report at its 369th session, which was held on 21 March 2017.

3. Some of the topics at the informal sessions included the preparations for the first session of the Committee on Information and Communications Technology, Science, Technology and Innovation, the preparations for the second meeting of the Working Group on the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway, the review of the draft programme of work for the biennium 2018-2019, and the preparations for the seventy-third session of the Commission, including discussions on planning a commemorative event for the seventieth anniversary of ESCAP.

4. The Advisory Committee held extended discussions in informal sessions on the preparations for intergovernmental meetings, including a paragraph-by-paragraph review of the draft ministerial declaration on sustainable transport connectivity in Asia and the Pacific and the draft regional action programme for sustainable transport connectivity in Asia and the Pacific, phase I (2017-2021), in preparation for the third Ministerial Conference on Transport. Furthermore, informal sessions were held to support the process to define a regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific, pursuant to Commission resolution 72/6.

5. At its regular sessions, the Advisory Committee discussed, inter alia, the following subjects:

(a) Preparations for the seventy-third session of the Commission: the Advisory Committee was briefed by the secretariat on the preparations for the seventy-third session of the Commission and provided useful guidance;

(b) Outcome of the seventy-second session of the Commission: in its review of the outcome of the seventy-second session of the Commission, the Advisory Committee considered the major achievements of the session, such as the adoption of 12 resolutions and 33 decisions by the Commission, including resolution 72/6 on committing to the effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda in Asia and the Pacific and resolution 72/12, adopted in response to the theme topic of the session, to guide the work of the Commission in relation to science, technology and innovation;

(c) Resolutions adopted by the Commission at its seventy-second session: the Advisory Committee extended advice and provided useful guidance on the implementation by the secretariat of resolutions adopted by the Commission;

(d) Proposed calendar of ESCAP meetings and training activities during the period January to December 2017: the Advisory Committee reviewed the proposed calendar;

(e) Work of the secretariat in the subregions: the Advisory Committee was briefed regularly, through videoconferencing, on ongoing ESCAP initiatives in the subregions and the work of its subregional offices in supporting the subregions with their unique challenges and opportunities in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, regional economic cooperation and integration, and other initiatives;

(f) Review of the preparations for and the outcomes of the following meetings:

(i) First session of the Committee on Information and Communications Technology, Science, Technology and Innovation;

(ii) United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia Economic Forum on Enhanced Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals through Cooperation, in 2016, and

the eleventh session of the Governing Council of the Special Programme;

(iii) Third session of the Ministerial Conference on Transport;

(iv) Fifth session of the Committee on Statistics;

(v) First session of the Committee on Energy;

(g) Review of the preparations for the following meetings:

(i) Fourth Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development;

(ii) Third meeting of the Interim Intergovernmental Steering Group on Cross-border Paperless Trade Facilitation;

(iii) Fourth High-level Dialogue on Financing for Development in Asia and the Pacific;

(iv) Seventh Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific;

(v) Third regional review of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing;

(vi) High-level intergovernmental meeting on the midpoint review of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013-2022;

(vii) Asia-Pacific regional consultation on a global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration;

(viii) High-level Dialogue on Regional Economic Cooperation and Integration for Enhancing Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific;

(h) Review of the outcomes of the following meetings of the regional institutions:

(i) Eleventh session of the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development;

(ii) First session of the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management;

(iii) Twelfth session of the Governing Council of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific;

(iv) Twelfth session of the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology;

(v) Thirteenth session of the Governing Council of the Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Sustainable Agriculture.

6. The Advisory Committee was briefed by the secretariat on the preparations for the proposed programme of work of the Commission for the biennium 2018-2019. The Advisory Committee reviewed the draft document and provided guidance prior to it being submitted to the Programme Planning and Budget Division of the United Nations and to the Commission at its seventy-third session.

7. The Advisory Committee was also regularly briefed by the secretariat on the seismic mitigation retrofit and life-cycle replacements project for the ESCAP premises in Bangkok.

8. The Executive Secretary regularly informed the Advisory Committee of activities relating to the priority issues of the United Nations and of ESCAP, as well as the outcome of her missions to ESCAP members and associate members and to other countries, her attendance at major meetings, cooperative initiatives between member States and the secretariat, and administrative and programme matters concerning ESCAP. The Advisory Committee expressed its continued appreciation for the briefings of the Executive Secretary, noting that it found them useful and informative.

9. As part of an ongoing effort to share knowledge and build capacity among member States for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, and to facilitate dialogue among member States and the secretariat, the Advisory Committee was invited to participate in the following events organized by the secretariat as part of its programme of work:

(a) Asia-Pacific Conference on Transforming Official Statistics for Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

(b) A lecture on sustainability by the Mayor of the city of Seoul;

(c) Informal round table on addressing water scarcity through cost-effective and innovative responsible business practices in the resort industry in ESCAP countries;

(d) ESCAP SDG Week;

(e) Workshop on using technology in support of trade for micro, small and medium-sized enterprises;

(f) Launch of the *Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific 2016: Year-end Update*;

(g) Launch of the *Asia-Pacific Trade and Investment Report 2016*.

10. The Advisory Committee also participated in the following observances:

(a) Nelson Mandela International Day;

(b) International Day of Non-Violence;

(c) United Nations Day.

11. The Advisory Committee expressed its deepest condolences to the Government and people of Thailand for the demise of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej and observed a moment of silence at its 366th and 367th sessions.

### **III. Conclusions**

12. The members of the Advisory Committee actively contributed to strengthening its deliberative and advisory role during the reporting period. The partnership between member States and the secretariat was further reinforced in the first year of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The Advisory Committee provided advice and guidance on important issues concerning the Commission and the secretariat, including the implementation of resolutions adopted by the Commission and the organization of various intergovernmental meetings and initiatives of the secretariat, most notably the work of the inaugural sessions of the Committee on Information and Communications Technology, Science, Technology and Innovation and the Committee on Energy.

13. In the second year of implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the Advisory Committee remained aware of the importance of improved coordination among all relevant stakeholders. Continued constructive cooperation and mutual support between the Advisory Committee and the secretariat are pertinent in the delivery of the programme of work of ESCAP in 2017. In the coming year, ESCAP will continue to break new ground to deliver its mandates, including organizing a joint event with the United Nations Environment Programme for the seventh session of the Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific and covering the inaugural session of the Committee on Macroeconomic Policy, Poverty Reduction and Financing for Development. Continued consultation with the Advisory Committee will ensure that ESCAP conveys a regional voice in global processes, including the review of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing.

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