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Seventy-eighth session

Bangkok and online, 23–27 May 2022

Annotated provisional agenda

The present document contains the provisional agenda for the seventy-eighth 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

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 - (b) Subregional perspectives.
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:
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 - (b) Social development;
 - (c) Environment and development;
 - (d) Disaster risk reduction;
 - (e) Energy;
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 - (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. Management issues:
 - (a) Proposed programme plan for 2023;
 - (b) Overview of partnerships, extrabudgetary contributions and capacity development;
 - (c) Report on the evaluation activities of the Commission during the biennium 2020–2021.
- 6. Review of the conference structure of the Commission pursuant to resolution 73/1.
- 7. Activities of the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission.
- 8. Dates and venue of and theme topic for the seventy-ninth session of the Commission (2023).
- 9. Other matters.
- 10. Adoption of the report of the Commission.

II. Annotations

1. Opening of the session

(a) Election of officers

According to rule 13 of its rules of procedure, the Commission shall, at its first meeting of each year, elect from among its representatives a Chair and two Vice-Chairs, designated as First and Second Vice-Chair, 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.

(b) Adoption of the agenda

Documentation

Provisional agenda (ESCAP/78/L.1/Rev.2)

Annotated provisional agenda (ESCAP/78/L.2/Rev.1)

(c) Opening addresses on the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Commission

The Executive Secretary and high-level dignitaries will deliver opening remarks on the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Commission.

The detailed programme for the opening of the session will be made available once it has been finalized.

2. Theme topic, “A common agenda to advance sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific”

(a) General debate

Documentation

Summary of the theme study on a common agenda to advance sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP/78/1)

Over the past two decades, millions in the region have been lifted out of poverty, and in most countries, citizens have many more opportunities to live longer, healthier, and more productive and secure lives. However, rapid economic growth has carried a heavy price. Higher levels of production and consumption have come at the cost of rising inequality, both within and between countries, and have had devastating environmental consequences. The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has shone a harsh light on these challenges. It has worsened the lot of those who were already worst off in Asia and the Pacific, pushing an estimated 89 million people back into extreme poverty, defined as living on \$1.90 or less per day. Regional coordinated policies will enable members and associate members of the Commission to work together to address complex and cascading risks from large-scale crises.

Document ESCAP/78/1 contains a description of pathways and means to achieve a more inclusive and sustainable recovery and post-pandemic development through regional cooperation to advance the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the Asia-Pacific region, in line with the broad aims set forth by Member States in General Assembly resolution 75/1. It serves to outline an ambitious vision for a common agenda for present and future generations and underline the need for crisis-prepared policy action and new partnerships for a renewed social contract, based on the values of trust and solidarity, that can accelerate the implementation of existing agreements while preserving the global commons and delivering critical public goods.

The Commission may wish to take note of the document and endorse the recommendations therein.

(b) Subregional perspectives

Documentation

Report of the Governing Council of the Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia on its sixteenth session (ESCAP/78/2)

Subregional cooperation to advance sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP/78/3)

Asia-Pacific riskscape at 1.5°C: subregional pathways for adaptation and resilience (ESCAP/78/13)

Report of the Governing Council of the Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia on its sixteenth session (ESCAP/78/2)

The Commission may wish to review the report of the Governing Council of the Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia and

provide the secretariat with guidance on the future work of the Special Programme.

Subregional cooperation to advance sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP/78/3)

The 2030 Agenda and the 2021 report of the Secretary-General entitled “Our Common Agenda” clearly acknowledge the importance of the subregional dimensions of sustainable development. Regional and subregional frameworks can facilitate the effective translation of sustainable development policies into concrete action at the national level. In its resolution 75/3, the Commission further recognized the importance of partnerships within and across subregions for the effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

Document ESCAP/78/3 provides a brief overview of the status of progress on the Sustainable Development Goals in each of the five subregions of ESCAP. It also serves to highlight key recommendations from the subregional forums on sustainable development and identify opportunities for advancing the aims laid out in “Our Common Agenda” in each subregion.

The Commission may wish to take note of the document and provide guidance on the future work of the secretariat.

Asia-Pacific riskscape at 1.5°C: subregional pathways for adaptation and resilience (ESCAP/78/13)

Risk continues to outpace resilience in the region, especially in the vulnerable areas of each subregion. In recognition of the fact that every fraction of a degree in warming translates into additional risks, document ESCAP/78/13 provides an updated regional riskscape. In line with Commission resolution 77/1 and the outcome of the seventh session of the Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction, which recommended a scale-up of regional and subregional cooperation strategies that address the convergence of crises, five subregional cooperative actions are suggested to narrow the adaptation gaps. Given the specific subregional contexts of increasing exposure to tropical cyclones in the Pacific small island developing States, the Sundarbans delta in the Ganga-Brahmaputra-Meghna basin and the Lower Mekong River Basin, the Aral Sea catastrophe, and sand and dust storm corridors in South-West, North and East Asia, investing in subregional initiatives that promote digital tools and geospatial applications, integrate multi-hazard early warning systems, build resilient critical infrastructure and improve dryland agriculture through nature-based solutions yields substantial economic, social and environmental benefits and can help to accelerate adaptation.

The Commission may wish to consider the findings, possible solutions and policy recommendations contained in the document and provide guidance to the secretariat in that regard.

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

The Commission will consider the development challenges of countries with special needs, including those posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Documentation

Summary of the Asia-Pacific Countries with Special Needs Development Report 2022: Financing a Sustainable Recovery from COVID-19 and Beyond (ESCAP/78/4)

According to the *Asia-Pacific Countries with Special Needs Development Report 2022: Financing a Sustainable Recovery from COVID-19 and Beyond*, least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States face significant financing needs and gaps in their COVID-19 recovery efforts and in the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. The *Report* serves to examine policy options to mobilize financial resources in the countries with special needs for that purpose. Document ESCAP/78/4 contains a summary of the *Report*.

The countries with special needs were not on track to achieve the 17 Sustainable Development Goals even before the COVID-19 outbreak. The prospects to do so have worsened owing to the pandemic's severe adverse economic and social impacts. Moreover, the existing gaps in financing to attain the Sustainable Development Goals have increased significantly since the COVID-19 outbreak owing to a combination of considerable declines in government revenues and substantial fiscal and monetary stimulus measures to cushion the adverse impacts. Securing financing for a COVID-19 recovery that is aligned with the 2030 Agenda has therefore emerged as an urgent task for the countries and their development partners.

The *Report* serves to highlight that domestic tax revenues, domestic and external borrowing and official development assistance will continue to be the main sources of development financing in many of the countries. Strengthened cooperation at the subregional, regional and global levels in support of the countries is essential to complement their domestic efforts in mobilizing financing for development.

The Commission may wish to review document ESCAP/78/4 and provide guidance on the future work of the secretariat with regard to financing a sustainable recovery in the countries with special needs.

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

The agenda item is focused 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 the subsidiary bodies of the Commission that have held sessions since the seventy-seventh session of the Commission; (3) reports of other intergovernmental bodies; and (4) progress in the implementation of Commission mandates.

The sub-items have been grouped for discussion on the basis of the subsidiary structure of the Commission and along the lines of the thematic areas identified in the regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific,¹ starting with the outcomes of the Ninth Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development.

¹ E/ESCAP/73/31, annex II.

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/78/5, resolutions 74/10 and 77/1)

Summary of the meetings of the subsidiary bodies of the Commission held in the period 2021–2022 (ESCAP/78/6)

Annual reports of international and intergovernmental organizations provided to the Commission (ESCAP/78/INF/1)

Summary of progress in the implementation of Commission resolutions (ESCAP/78/5, resolutions 74/10 and 77/1)

The document contains a summary of the progress made in the implementation of Commission resolution 74/10 on the implementation of the Ministerial Declaration on Enhancing Regional Economic Cooperation and Integration to Support the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda in Asia and the Pacific and Commission resolution 77/1 on building back better from crises through regional cooperation in Asia and the Pacific.

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

Summary of the meetings of the subsidiary bodies of the Commission held in the period 2021–2022 (ESCAP/78/6)

Annual reports of international and intergovernmental organizations provided to the Commission (ESCAP/78/INF/1)

Document ESCAP/78/6 contains a summary of all the meetings of the subsidiary bodies of the Commission held since its seventy-seventh session and of the matters those bodies have brought to the Commission for its action or its attention. The summary covers the seventh session of the Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction and the third session of the Committee on Macroeconomic Policy, Poverty Reduction and Financing for Development.

Information document ESCAP/78/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 Commission may wish to endorse the reports of the subsidiary bodies that have held meetings since its seventy-seventh session; identify key issues to be taken up in the meetings of subsidiary bodies in 2022–2023; identify emerging development issues, including those emanating from the 2030 Agenda, that merit policy dialogue; identify progress made and gaps requiring priority attention with regard to the implementation of Commission mandates and the follow-up actions to major global conferences; and articulate Asia-Pacific perspectives on issues that will be addressed in major global forums in 2022.

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

(a) Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development

Documentation

Report of the Ninth Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (ESCAP/78/7)

The Ninth Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development was held in Bangkok and online from 28 to 31 March 2022 as a preparatory event for the high-level political forum on sustainable development of the Economic and Social Council.

Members and associate members agreed that the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development played a unique role in gathering solutions and peer learning on how to build back better from COVID-19 while advancing the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

The Forum conducted an in-depth review of Sustainable Development Goals 4, 5, 14, 15 and 17, without prejudice to the integrated, indivisible and interlinked nature of the Goals. 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 may wish to endorse the report of the Forum and provide the secretariat with further guidance on the implementation, follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda.

(b) Social development

Documentation

Summary of progress in the implementation of Commission resolutions (ESCAP/78/5, resolutions 68/7 and 74/7)

Key social development issues for consideration in 2022 (ESCAP/78/8)

Report on the seventh session of the Working Group on the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013–2022 (ESCAP/78/9)

Summary of progress in the implementation of Commission resolutions (ESCAP/78/5, resolutions 68/7 and 74/7)

The document contains a summary of the progress made in the implementation of Commission resolution 68/7 on the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013–2022, and Commission resolution 74/7, entitled “Towards disability-inclusive sustainable development: implementation of the Beijing Declaration, including the Action Plan to Accelerate the Implementation of the Incheon Strategy”.

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

Key social development issues for consideration in 2022 (ESCAP/78/8)

The document serves to highlight the key social development issues for consideration in the context of the fourth review of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002, the end of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013–2022, the review of the implementation of the Incheon Strategy to “Make the Right Real” for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific and the seventh session of the Committee on Social Development.

The Commission may wish to take note of the document and provide the secretariat with guidance on the issues raised therein.

Report on the seventh session of the Working Group on the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013–2022 (ESCAP/78/9)

The report on the seventh session of the Working Group on the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013–2022, held on 8 and 9 December 2021, is submitted for the information of the Commission. It contains a summary of discussions under the various agenda items and the recommendations made by the Working Group to advance the implementation of the Incheon Strategy.

The Commission may wish to review the report and provide guidance on the future work of the secretariat.

(c) Environment and development

Documentation

Summary of progress in the implementation of Commission resolutions (ESCAP/78/5, resolution 76/1)

Report of the Governing Council of the Centre for Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization on its seventeenth session (ESCAP/78/10)

Opportunities for reaching carbon neutrality in the Asia-Pacific region (ESCAP/78/11)

Annual reports of international and intergovernmental organizations provided to the Commission (ESCAP/78/INF/1, reports of the Coordinating Committee for Geoscience Programmes in East and South-East Asia and of the Mekong River Commission)

Summary of progress in the implementation of Commission resolutions (ESCAP/78/5, resolution 76/1)

The document contains a summary of the progress made in the implementation of Commission resolution 76/1 on strengthening cooperation to promote the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific.

The Commission may wish to review the progress made and provide the secretariat with further guidance on the effective implementation of the resolution.

Report of the Governing Council of the Centre for Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization on its seventeenth session (ESCAP/78/10)

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

Opportunities for reaching carbon neutrality in the Asia-Pacific region (ESCAP/78/11)

Document ESCAP/78/11 serves to elaborate on the importance of conducting a critical review of regional 2030 targets for cutting greenhouse gas emissions, starting from 2022, to reduce global emissions by 45 per cent by 2030 compared to 2010 levels in accordance with the recommendations of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and one of the key agreed outcomes of the twenty-sixth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Furthermore, the document serves to identify opportunities for climate action across key sectors in the Asia-Pacific region that can drive long-term development while keeping greenhouse gas emissions low in synergy with a green post-COVID-19 recovery. Entry points for advancing on the other key recommendations of the twenty-sixth session of the Conference of the Parties are examined, including accelerating the phasing down of unabated coal and inefficient fossil fuel subsidies; doubling investments by 2025 for adaptation to climate change in developing countries, including for nature-based solutions; supporting a regional dialogue on approaches to address loss and damage that climate change inflicts on developing countries; and moving forward with innovative climate finance instruments, including carbon pricing and carbon offset markets. The document concludes with a call for strengthening regional cooperation for more ambitious climate action in Asia and the Pacific.

The Commission may wish to take note of the document and provide guidance on the future work of the secretariat.

Annual reports of international and intergovernmental organizations provided to the Commission (ESCAP/78/INF/1, reports of the Coordinating Committee for Geoscience Programmes in East and South-East Asia and of the Mekong River Commission)

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

(d) Disaster risk reduction

Documentation

Summary of the meetings of the subsidiary bodies of the Commission held in the period 2021–2022 (ESCAP/78/6, report of the Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction on its seventh session)

Report of the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management on its sixth session (ESCAP/78/12)

Regional plan of action on sand and dust storms in Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP/78/12/Add.1)

Asia-Pacific riskscape at 1.5°C: subregional pathways for adaptation and resilience (ESCAP/78/13)

Annual reports of international and intergovernmental organizations provided to the Commission (ESCAP/78/INF/1, reports of the Typhoon Committee and of the Panel on Tropical Cyclones)

Summary of the meetings of the subsidiary bodies of the Commission held in the period 2021–2022 (ESCAP/78/6, report of the Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction on its seventh session)

The Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction held its seventh session in Bangkok and online from 25 to 27 August 2021. The session was attended by representatives of 36 members and associate members of the Commission.

In recognition of the risks stemming from the disaster-health-climate nexus, the Committee recommended scaling up regional and subregional cooperation strategies that integrate disasters, including climate-related disasters, and associated health perspectives, to complement national efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda. Taking note of the efforts of the Asia-Pacific Disaster Resilience Network, the Committee recommended further capacity-building activities to manage and mitigate cascading risks using innovative technology tools.

The Committee also underlined the importance of the findings presented in the *Asia-Pacific Disaster Report 2021: Resilience in a Riskier World – Managing Systemic Risks from Biological and Other Natural Hazards* and requested the secretariat to further deepen its analytical research in that regard.

The Committee further highlighted the need to continue conducting policy analysis and research to support regional cooperation with a focus on building back better to manage the cascading risks.

The Commission may wish to consider and endorse the matters calling for action or brought to its attention, as contained in the report of the Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction, and provide the secretariat with guidance in that regard.

Report of the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management on its sixth session (ESCAP/78/12)

The Commission may wish to review the report of the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management, endorse the recommendations contained therein and provide the secretariat with guidance on the future work of the Centre.

Regional plan of action on sand and dust storms in Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP/78/12/Add.1)

At its fifth session, the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management was informed that in the area of regional cooperation on transboundary hazards, the Centre had conducted the sand and dust storms risk assessment in Asia and the Pacific to provide a long-term horizon of the risk and potential socioeconomic losses and impact associated with sand and dust storms. Building on the findings of the assessment, and in line with General Assembly

resolution 75/222 and Commission resolution 72/7, the Centre conducted an in-depth subregional and thematic consultation with the most affected countries with a view to developing a regional plan of action on sand and dust storms.

At its sixth session, held on 8 February 2022, the Governing Council endorsed the draft proposal for a regional plan of action on sand and dust storms and recommended further consultations with member States with a view to submitting the draft regional plan of action to the Commission at its seventy-eighth session for consideration and possible endorsement.

Document ESCAP/78/12/Add.1 contains the regional plan of action on sand and dust storms in Asia and the Pacific for the Commission's consideration. The Commission may wish to endorse the draft regional plan of action.

Asia-Pacific riskscape at 1.5°C: subregional pathways for adaptation and resilience (ESCAP/78/13)

Risk continues to outpace resilience in the region, especially in the vulnerable areas of each subregion. In recognition of the fact that every fraction of a degree in warming translates into additional risks, document ESCAP/78/13 provides an updated regional riskscape. In line with Commission resolution 77/1 and the outcome of the seventh session of the Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction, which recommended a scale-up of regional and subregional cooperation strategies that address the convergence of crises, five subregional cooperative actions are suggested to narrow the adaptation gaps. Given the specific subregional contexts of increasing exposure to tropical cyclones in the Pacific small island developing States, the Sundarbans delta in the Ganga-Brahmaputra-Meghna basin and the Lower Mekong River Basin, the Aral Sea catastrophe, and sand and dust storm corridors in South-West, North and East Asia, investing in subregional initiatives that promote digital tools and geospatial applications, integrate multi-hazard early warning systems, build resilient critical infrastructure and improve dryland agriculture through nature-based solutions yields substantial economic, social and environmental benefits and can help to accelerate adaptation.

The Commission may wish to consider the findings, possible solutions and policy recommendations contained in the document and provide guidance to the secretariat in that regard.

Annual reports of international and intergovernmental organizations provided to the Commission (ESCAP/78/INF/1, reports of the Typhoon Committee and of the Panel on Tropical Cyclones)

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

(e) Energy

Documentation

Implementing the global road map for accelerated action on Sustainable Development Goal 7 in the Asia-Pacific region (ESCAP/78/14)

In November 2021, the Secretary-General issued a global road map for accelerated action on Sustainable Development Goal 7 in support of the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement to achieve a radical transformation of energy access and energy transition by 2030, while also contributing to net zero emissions by 2050. As the largest energy consuming region in the world, Asia and the Pacific will play a pivotal role in the realization of the global road map. The principal challenges related to achieving the Goal 7 targets by 2030 and setting the region on a path to net zero emissions by 2050 are presented in document ESCAP/78/14.

The document serves to identify a series of decisive actions that would be required of member States to implement the global road map in the region, in partnership with other stakeholders, and to monitor progress towards achieving milestones. It is proposed that the third Asian and Pacific Energy Forum, scheduled for 2023, should review the progress in the regional implementation of the global road map, assess the principal challenges and opportunities and discuss policy options. The document also contains a description of the proposed arrangements for the preparatory process for the Forum.

The Commission may wish to review the document and provide guidance on the future work of the secretariat.

(f) Transport

Documentation

Report of the Fourth Ministerial Conference on Transport (ESCAP/78/15)

Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP/78/15/Add.1)

Regional Action Programme for Sustainable Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific (2022–2026) (ESCAP/78/15/Add.2)

An efficient and resilient transport and logistics network in support of supply chain connectivity (ESCAP/78/16)

Report of the Fourth Ministerial Conference on Transport (ESCAP/78/15)

Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP/78/15/Add.1)

Regional Action Programme for Sustainable Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific (2022–2026) (ESCAP/78/15/Add.2)

The Fourth Ministerial Conference on Transport was held in Bangkok and online from 14 to 17 December 2021 and was attended by representatives of 41 members and associate members of the Commission. The Conference adopted the Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP/78/15/Add.1) and the Regional Action Programme for Sustainable Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific (2022–2026) (ESCAP/78/15/Add.2).

The Ministerial Declaration serves to highlight themes of common interest for member States in promoting sustainable transport development. In it, the Ministers adopted the Regional Action Programme (2022–2026) and endorsed the Transport Research and Education Network. The Declaration also

serves to recognize priority areas of common work for member States to foster regional cooperation.

The Regional Action Programme comprises seven thematic areas, namely: (1) regional land transport connectivity and logistics, (2) maritime and interregional transport connectivity, (3) digitalization of transport, (4) low carbon mobility and logistics, (5) urban transport, (6) road safety, and (7) inclusive transport and mobility. The seven thematic areas of work are clustered under three overarching objectives, namely: (1) efficient and resilient transport and logistics networks and mobility for economic growth; (2) environmentally sustainable transport systems and services; and (3) safe and inclusive transport and mobility.

The Commission may wish to consider and endorse the Ministerial Declaration and the Regional Action Programme and provide guidance on their implementation.

An efficient and resilient transport and logistics network in support of supply chain connectivity (ESCAP/78/16)

The major features of the region's transport and logistics network and the state of regional transport connectivity are presented in the document, which also contains a description of the outlook for freight transport in selected parts of the region and a discussion of possible future gains in sustainability, especially in terms of decarbonizing freight transport. The document serves to highlight how the Regional Action Programme for Sustainable Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific (2022–2026) will contribute to more resilient and sustainable supply chain connectivity.

The Commission may wish to take note of the document and provide the secretariat with guidance on the issues raised therein.

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

Documentation

Summary of the meetings of the subsidiary bodies of the Commission held in the period 2021–2022 (ESCAP/78/6, report of the Committee on Macroeconomic Policy, Poverty Reduction and Financing for Development on its third session)

Economic policies for inclusive recovery and development in Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP/78/17)

Summary of the meetings of the subsidiary bodies of the Commission held in the period 2021–2022 (ESCAP/78/6, report of the Committee on Macroeconomic Policy, Poverty Reduction and Financing for Development on its third session)

The Committee on Macroeconomic Policy, Poverty Reduction and Financing for Development held its third session in Bangkok and online from 20 to 22 October 2021.

The Committee reviewed the macroeconomic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and discussed a transformative recovery agenda, along with various innovative and digital financing strategies, to restore economic momentum and put the region back on track to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

The Committee requested the secretariat to strengthen its research and technical assistance to member States; continue to conduct analysis and facilitate the sharing of best practices and lessons learned with a view to broadening fiscal space and leveraging innovative, green and digital financing solutions in support of the Sustainable Development Goals; and continue its support for multilateral and development cooperation, partnerships and the sharing of experiences. The Committee also decided to establish the Consultative Group on Financing Strategies for the Sustainable Development Goals to facilitate a more regular and substantive communication between the Committee, the secretariat and relevant government ministries.

The Commission may wish to consider and endorse the matters calling for action or brought to its attention, as contained in the report of the Committee on Macroeconomic Policy, Poverty Reduction and Financing for Development, and provide the secretariat with guidance in that regard.

Economic policies for inclusive recovery and development in Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP/78/17)

The Asia-Pacific region has been leading global economic growth over the past few decades. However, slowing economic growth since the global financial and economic crisis of 2008, the socioeconomic crisis of 2020–2021 induced by the COVID-19 pandemic, and high and rising inequalities have brought the issue of inclusiveness to the forefront of economic policy. It is now broadly recognized that high and rising inequalities and lack of inclusiveness are constraining the region's future economic prospects and broader development prospects. The Secretary-General's call for a new social contract in "Our Common Agenda" has intensified the spotlight on the issue of inclusion. Therefore, it is an opportune time for a fresh and comprehensive policy reflection on how to create more equal economies and societies.

With a focus on the role of economic policies in supporting inclusive recovery and development, document ESCAP/78/17 serves to analyse the importance of effective government actions and the role of fiscal, monetary/financial and structural policies in enhancing inclusiveness. Given that fiscal space is shrinking in many developing Asia-Pacific economies, the document also contains a discussion on the ways to increase this space by improving the efficiency of spending and by finding new financing mechanisms to support inclusive development. With regard to monetary/financial policies, a balance should be struck between digital finance and consumer protection, expanding the use of financial instruments that have direct social benefits and improving financial well-being among the poor and vulnerable groups. With regard to structural policies, member States at various development stages can proactively leverage sectoral, labour market and pro-people policies to mitigate disruptions from structural changes and make the changes people-centric.

The Commission may wish to consider the policy recommendations contained in the document and provide guidance on the future work of the secretariat.

(h) Trade and investment

Documentation

Report of the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology on its seventeenth session (ESCAP/78/18)

Report of the 7th meeting of the Interim Intergovernmental Steering Group on Cross-border Paperless Trade Facilitation (ESCAP/78/19)

Report of the Paperless Trade Council of the Framework Agreement on Facilitation of Cross-border Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific on its first session (ESCAP/78/20)

Leveraging trade and investment to address climate action in Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP/78/21)

Policies to enable business innovation for inclusive and sustainable development (ESCAP/78/22)

Report of the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology on its seventeenth session (ESCAP/78/18)

The Commission may wish to review the report of the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology and provide the secretariat with guidance on the future work of the Centre.

Report of the 7th meeting of the Interim Intergovernmental Steering Group on Cross-border Paperless Trade Facilitation (ESCAP/78/19)

The 7th meeting of the Interim Intergovernmental Steering Group on Cross-border Paperless Trade Facilitation was held in Bangkok and online on 25 and 26 April 2022. The Steering Group discussed the state of play and way forward in digital trade facilitation and implementation of the Framework Agreement on Facilitation of Cross-border Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific.

The Commission may wish to take note of the decisions taken by the Steering Group, as contained in the report, and provide the secretariat with guidance in that regard.

Report of the Paperless Trade Council of the Framework Agreement on Facilitation of Cross-border Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific on its first session (ESCAP/78/20)

The first session of the Paperless Trade Council of the Framework Agreement on Facilitation of Cross-border Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific was held in Bangkok and online from 27 to 29 April 2022.

The Commission may wish to take note of the decisions taken by the Council, as contained in the report, and provide the secretariat with guidance in that regard.

Leveraging trade and investment to address climate action in Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP/78/21)

The links between trade, investment and climate change are complex. The key is to ensure that the positive effects of trade and investment are maximized, such as by promoting trade and investment in renewable energy and low carbon technologies, while minimizing the adverse effects, such as by digitalizing trade and transport systems. The Asia-Pacific region has become the largest emitter of greenhouse gases in absolute terms and there is much room for all economies in the region to transition to a more climate-smart form of trade and investment. The document serves to highlight recommendations from the *Asia-Pacific Trade and Investment Report 2021: Accelerating Climate-smart Trade and Investment*, jointly prepared by the secretariat, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and the United Nations Environment Programme.

The Commission may wish to consider the policy recommendations contained in the document and provide guidance on the future work of the secretariat.

Policies to enable business innovation for inclusive and sustainable development (ESCAP/78/22)

The Sustainable Development Goals have increasingly transformed how the private sector operates. Corporations are beginning to realign their priorities with the Goals. Innovative business models are emerging, such as social enterprises and inclusive businesses which purposefully aim to address social and environmental challenges through market-based approaches and to provide livelihood opportunities, products and services to those at the base of the economic pyramid. In addition, a new wave of investors is shifting the paradigm from investing for profit to investing for impact.

Governments in the Asia-Pacific region have spearheaded policies to enable such business innovations. The document provides an overview of emerging policy options to promote business innovation for inclusive and sustainable development, drawing from policies implemented by member States.

The Commission may wish to consider the policy recommendations, as contained in the document, and provide guidance on the future work of the secretariat in that regard.

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

Report of the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development on its sixteenth session (ESCAP/78/23)

Digital cooperation for an inclusive digital society (ESCAP/78/24)

Policies to enable business innovation for inclusive and sustainable development (ESCAP/78/22)

Report of the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development on its sixteenth session (ESCAP/78/23)

The Commission may wish to review the report of the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development and provide the secretariat with guidance on the future work of the Centre.

Digital cooperation for an inclusive digital society (ESCAP/78/24)

The pandemic has clearly demonstrated the critical role of digital connectivity in mitigating the challenges that have arisen as a result of COVID-19. However, as the pandemic enters its third year, the digital divide has deepened socioeconomic inequalities. The need to strengthen investments in digital infrastructure and ensure that the dividends from digital and emerging technologies, notably those related to geospatial applications, benefit everyone, have become key prerequisites for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

To that end, and pursuant to resolution 77/1, in which the Commission recognized the importance of digital cooperation at the regional level, members and associate members have drafted an action plan for the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway for the period 2022–2026. It sets forth a blueprint of regional cooperative actions to strengthen digital cooperation. They include strengthening digital capacities, including through the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development. The draft action plan is expected to be considered and endorsed by the Committee on Information and Communications Technology, Science, Technology and Innovation at its fourth session.

Consequently, document ESCAP/78/24 contains a brief assessment of the key trends in digital and emerging technologies and highlighted developments in regional cooperation on digital and emerging technologies since the seventy-seventh session of the Commission. It also contains proposed policy recommendations to address the digital divide and accelerate digital transformation for an inclusive digital society.

The Commission may wish to consider the issues highlighted in the document and provide guidance to the secretariat in that regard.

Policies to enable business innovation for inclusive and sustainable development (ESCAP/78/22)

The Commission may wish to consider the policy recommendations, as contained in the document, and provide guidance on the future work of the secretariat in that regard.

(j) Statistics

Documentation

Report of the Governing Council of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific on its seventeenth session (ESCAP/78/25)

Report of the Second Ministerial Conference on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP/78/26)

Ministerial Declaration on Building a More Resilient Future with Inclusive Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (ESCAP/78/26/Add.1)

From gross domestic product to well-being and sustainability: means and measures (ESCAP/78/27)

Report of the Governing Council of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific on its seventeenth session (ESCAP/78/25)

The Governing Council of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific held its seventeenth session online on 2 and 3 December 2021. The Council requested more quality e-learning development methodologies, including the utilization of hands-on sessions in web-based training, which could be actively shared among member States. It further requested that the possibility of allocating resources to translate e-learning courses into some other United Nations official languages be explored and that training-of-trainers programmes be organized to build the capacity of national statistical office staff to enable them to conduct national trainings, and for such programmes to include training on facilitation skills.

The Commission may wish to review the report of the Council of the Institute and provide the secretariat with guidance on the future work of the Institute.

Report of the Second Ministerial Conference on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP/78/26)

Ministerial Declaration on Building a More Resilient Future with Inclusive Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (ESCAP/78/26/Add.1)

The Second Ministerial Conference on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific was held in Bangkok and online from 16 to 19 November 2021.

The Ministerial Declaration on Building a More Resilient Future with Inclusive Civil Registration and Vital Statistics, adopted at the Conference, takes into account progress made since the beginning of the Asia and Pacific Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Decade (2015–2024) and recent developments in the area of civil registration and vital statistics to lay out clear actions to accelerate progress towards the shared regional vision that, by 2024, all people in Asia and the Pacific benefit from universal and responsive civil registration and vital statistics systems.

The Commission may wish to consider and endorse the Ministerial Declaration and provide guidance on its implementation.

From gross domestic product to well-being and sustainability: means and measures (ESCAP/78/27)

In response to the call issued by the Secretary-General, in his report entitled “Our Common Agenda”, to measure and value what matters to people and the planet, document ESCAP/78/27 provides an overview of global and regional initiatives to support the measurement of sustainable development beyond economic growth, including those pertaining to environmental-economic accounting, ocean accounting and disaster-related statistics. The document contains a review of current initiatives in the Asia-Pacific region and of the benefits and challenges with regard to expanding sustainable development measures. It also serves to outline approaches to

furthering the development and uptake of growth measurements beyond gross domestic product in Asia and the Pacific.

The Commission may wish to consider the policy recommendations contained in the document and provide guidance on the future work of the secretariat.

5. 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 2023

Documentation

Proposed programme plan for 2023 (ESCAP/78/28)

The document comprises a foreword by the Executive Secretary, the proposed programme plan for 2023 and information on programme performance for 2021. The programme plan contains an overall orientation of the programme of ESCAP, legislative mandates, and a programme plan for each of the subprogrammes. Each subprogramme plan comprises seven sections: objective of the subprogramme; strategy; programme performance on a selected topic in 2021; result 1 – programme performance in 2021 and programme plan in 2023 for the planned result, as reflected in the 2021 programme plan;² result 2 – programme performance in 2021 and programme plan in 2023 for the planned result, as reflected in the 2022 programme plan;³ result 3 – programme plan on a selected topic for 2023; and deliverables for the period 2021 to 2023.

As subsidiary bodies of the Commission, the Committees provided the secretariat with guidance on the future focus of the subprogrammes under their purview as appropriate. 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 Commission may wish to review and endorse the programme plan.

(b) Overview of partnerships, extrabudgetary contributions and capacity development

Documentation

Overview of partnerships, extrabudgetary contributions and capacity development (ESCAP/78/29)

The document contains an overview of the secretariat's partnerships in 2021, including with regional and subregional intergovernmental organizations, which facilitated the efforts of the United Nations to work together as one at the regional level in delivering capacity development support to member States.

² A/75/6 (Sect.19).

³ A/76/6 (Sect.19).

The document also contains an overview of the extrabudgetary resources mobilized to implement the Commission's programme of work.

Individual members and associate members may wish to announce their intended contributions for 2022.

The Commission may wish to take note of the document and provide the secretariat with further guidance on the development of partnerships and the mobilization of additional resources.

(c) Report on the evaluation activities of the Commission during the biennium 2020–2021

Documentation

Report on the evaluation activities of the Commission during the biennium 2020–2021 (ESCAP/78/30)

The purpose of the biennial reporting on the evaluation activities of the Commission is to strengthen the accountability of ESCAP to member States and facilitate organizational improvement by providing evidence-based information on the Commission's performance and results. The report includes a summary of the main findings and recommendations contained in evaluations conducted during the biennium 2020–2021 and the steps taken by the secretariat to address those recommendations. It also contains an outline of the efforts made by the secretariat to further strengthen the evaluation function.

The Commission may wish to review the report and recommend actions to further enhance the performance and results of its work and strengthen its evaluation function.

6. Review of the conference structure of the Commission pursuant to resolution 73/1

Documentation

Review of the conference structure of the Commission pursuant to resolution 73/1 (ESCAP/78/31)

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, which would serve as a basis for the review.

Document ESCAP/78/31 contains recommendations on the conference structure of the Commission pertaining to the subsidiary bodies of the Commission, in particular the terms of reference of the Committees, the areas to be mainstreamed into their work and the list of the primary issues to be addressed by each of them.

The Commission may wish to consider the recommendations contained in the document and provide guidance on any changes to the conference structure that may be required.

7. 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/78/32)

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-seventh session of the Commission, including support provided by the Advisory Committee to the Executive Secretary on matters related to programme planning, implementation and monitoring.

The Commission may wish to comment on the role of the Advisory Committee and provide further guidance on its work.

8. Dates and venue of and theme topic for the seventy-ninth session of the Commission (2023)

Documentation

Dates and venue of and theme topic for the seventy-ninth session of the Commission (2023) (ESCAP/78/33)

The Commission may wish to decide on the dates and venue of and theme topic for its seventy-ninth session.

9. Other matters

Under this agenda item, the result of the elections for the Governing Councils of the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management, the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific, the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development and the Centre for Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization will be announced.

The Commission may also wish to consider other matters brought to its attention.

10. Adoption of the report of the Commission

The Commission will consider and adopt the report on its seventy-eighth 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 its decisions and resolutions. 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.