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**Rules of procedure of the
Working Group on the
Asian and Pacific Decade of
Persons with Disabilities, 2013-2022
for its second term (2018-2022)***

* Formally edited by the Editorial Team of ESCAP

The original text was drawn up and adopted by the Working Group on the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013–2022, at its first session held in Incheon, Republic of Korea, on 25 and 26 February 2014. The proposed amendments were adopted by the Working Group at its fifth session held in Bangkok on 21 and 22 February 2019.

Rule 1

Sessions

The following principles shall apply as regards the convening of sessions of the Working Group:

- 1.1 Regular sessions of the Working Group shall be held annually.
- 1.2 Sessions shall be convened by the secretariat of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP).
- 1.3 The ESCAP secretariat may also convene ad hoc sessions of the Working Group, if requested by more than half of the members of the Working Group in consultation with the Chairperson.
- 1.4 The ESCAP secretariat shall transmit a written invitation to each regular session of the Working Group, together with a provisional agenda, at least 60 work days in advance of the start of the session, and, whenever practicable, a written invitation to each ad hoc session, together with a provisional agenda, at least 30 work days before the start of each session.
- 1.5 An invitation to a session shall be sent to the senior official designated to represent the member of the Working Group at the correspondence address conveyed to the ESCAP secretariat for official correspondence. Responses to invitations shall be sent via electronic mail to the ESCAP secretariat within the requested time frame, that is, no later than 30 work days before a regular session and 15 work days before an ad hoc session.
- 1.6 All formal correspondence addressed to government members of the Working Group shall be copied to the permanent representatives of member States that are members of the Working Group, in accordance with existing rules and procedures of ESCAP, through official channels of communication. Furthermore, formal correspondence shall be addressed to the functional titles, and not to the personal names, of those designated to serve as standing members of the Working Group.

Rule 2

Venue

- 2.1 Working Group sessions shall ordinarily be held at ESCAP in Bangkok.

2.2 Members of the Working Group may make known at a session their offers to host subsequent sessions at an alternate venue.

2.3 A session may be held away from ESCAP in Bangkok, provided that the Working Group member representing a member State or civil society organization that proposes to host the session covers the additional costs to be incurred as a result of the change in venue, in accordance with a cost estimate prepared by the ESCAP secretariat.

Rule 3 **Secretariat**

The ESCAP secretariat shall serve as the secretariat of the Working Group.

Rule 4 **Participation**

4.1 Members of the Working Group shall participate in its sessions on a self-financing basis.

4.2 For meetings held away from ESCAP, the host Government or host organization may consider defraying the cost of travel, accommodation and subsistence of Working Group members.

4.3 If members of the Working Group are not able to travel to the venue of a session, they may be allowed to participate in the session remotely using available technologies. In this case, the formal request for remote participation shall be submitted to the ESCAP secretariat no later than 30 work days before a regular session and 15 work days before an ad hoc session.

4.4 In the event that a member does not attend two consecutive sessions (regular or ad hoc), that member shall relinquish its seat on the Working Group.

Rule 5 **Reasonable accommodation**

Every effort shall be made to provide reasonable accommodation to representatives of Working Group members.

Rule 6 **Conduct of business**

6.1 The Working Group shall at each session elect a Chairperson, as well as two Vice-Chairpersons, one from a Government and one from a civil society organization, who would serve until the next regular session.

6.2 The Chairperson may, if required, appoint a task force composed of interested Working Group members to undertake in-depth review of specific issues for consideration by the Working Group.

6.3 Before a proposal is agreed upon, the Chairperson shall call on the ESCAP secretariat to provide a statement on the financial implications of the proposal.

6.4 Decisions and recommendations of the Working Group shall, in principle, be made by consensus. In the event that consensus cannot be reached, decisions shall be made by a majority of the Working Group members present at a session and voting.

Rule 7 **Voting**

7.1 Each Working Group member shall have one vote.

7.2 The Working Group shall normally vote by a show of hands. If the Chairperson requests a roll call, it shall be taken in the English language alphabetical order of the names of Working Group members, that is, the names of the member States followed by the names of the civil society organizations.

Rule 8 **Agenda**

8.1 The provisional agenda for each regular session of the Working Group shall be drawn up by the ESCAP secretariat. Working Group members may suggest amendments to the agenda in writing in advance of the session or orally and in writing at the start of the session itself.

8.2 In each regular session, the Working Group shall include the following items in the provisional agenda:

- (a) Adoption of the agenda;
- (b) Election of the Chairperson and two Vice-Chairpersons;
- (c) Review of the implementation of decisions emanating from the previous session of the Working Group;
- (d) Review of recent progress in the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013–2022;¹
- (e) Review of resource mobilization for progress on the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013–2022;
- (f) Date and venue of the next regular session.

¹ Paragraph 2 of the terms of reference of the Working Group on the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013–2022.

8.3 In addition, the Working Group shall discuss the progress of the implementation of select Incheon Strategy goals, and of relevant actions in the Beijing Declaration, including the Action Plan to Accelerate the Implementation of the Incheon Strategy, and consider other emerging issues in the context of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

8.4 The provisional agenda for ad hoc sessions of the Working Group shall be drawn up by the ESCAP secretariat, as required.

Rule 9 **Language**

The sessions of the Working Group shall be conducted in English and documentation shall be issued in English.

Rule 10 **Report on the sessions of the Working Group**

10.1 The draft report on each session of the Working Group shall be prepared by the ESCAP secretariat and transmitted to Working Group members within 15 work days of the end of a session. Working Group members shall transmit any comments on the draft report to the ESCAP secretariat in 10 to 15 work days of receiving the draft report. The ESCAP secretariat shall transmit the final report to Working Group members and observers as soon as possible, and in no event later than 35 work days after the session.

10.2 The report on each session of the Working Group shall, among others, include its decisions and/or recommendations. These decisions and/or recommendations shall be discussed and agreed upon during the respective session of the Working Group.

10.3 Unless otherwise mandated, the reports of the Working Group on each of its sessions held until the end of the Decade shall be submitted to the Commission for its consideration.

10.4 The outcomes of the sessions of the Working Group shall be incorporated in the reports to the Commission at its seventy-sixth, seventy-eighth and seventy ninth sessions on progress in the implementation of Commission resolution 69/13 entitled "Implementation of the Ministerial Declaration on the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013–2022, and the Incheon Strategy to 'Make the Right Real' for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific", and of 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".

10.5 Official documents for the sessions of the Working Group shall be made available in accessible formats, as required. A digital version of the official documents for the sessions of the Working Group shall be made available in universally accessible formats, such as EPUB3 or Digital Accessible Information System (DAISY) Consortium.

Rule 11 **Representation and tenure**

11.1 The tenure of Working Group members, namely member States and civil society organizations, shall be five years spanning the period 2018–2022, bearing in mind rule 4.4.

11.2 Each member State and civil society organization represented on the Working Group² shall inform the ESCAP secretariat in writing of the name of its senior representative, and confirm the address, including email address, to which official correspondence concerning the Working Group should be sent.

11.3 In the event that the designated representative of a Working Group member, whether a member State or a civil society organization, is unable to continue her/his duty on the Working Group, that member State or civil society organization shall designate another senior official to represent it in the Working Group.

11.4 Any member or associate member of ESCAP interested in attending a session in an observer capacity and on a self-financing basis shall express such interest in writing to the ESCAP secretariat well in advance of the convening of a session.

11.5 A civil society organization of an ESCAP member or associate member that is interested in attending a session of the Working Group, in an observer capacity and on a self-financing basis, must meet the eligibility criteria specified in paragraph 7 of the terms of reference of the Working Group. Such a civil society organization shall express its interest in writing to the ESCAP secretariat well in advance of the convening of a session.

11.6 Subregional intergovernmental agencies, United Nations agencies, development cooperation agencies and development banks may be invited to attend Working Group sessions in an observer capacity and on a self-financing basis.

11.7 Any member of the Working Group may contribute the technical inputs of subject specialists to facilitate consideration of a matter on which a decision or recommendation would be required of the Working Group. The ESCAP secretariat may also invite such specialists to facilitate recommendations by the Working Group. An invitation to a specialist to provide technical inputs to a session in an observer capacity shall be limited to

² The composition of the Working Group, 2018–2022, is available at www.maketherightreal.net/working-group.

that specific session and such an observer shall not participate in decision-making by the Working Group.

Rule 12

Entry into force and amendments to these rules of procedure

12.1 These rules of procedure shall enter into force on the date of their adoption by the Working Group.

12.2 Any aspect of these rules of procedure may be amended or overridden during a Working Group session, provided the amendment or exception is consistent with the spirit and intent of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013–2022, and agreed to by the Working Group.
