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Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)

Executive Committee
First meeting
Amman, 8-9 June 2015

Item 2 of the provisional agenda

Provisional agenda and annotations

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ANNOTATIONS

1. Opening of the meeting

The opening session of the first meeting of the Executive Committee will convene in the Conference Hall of Kempinski Hotel in Amman at 10 a.m. on Monday, 8 June 2015. Given that the country chairing the ESCWA ministerial session also chairs the meetings of the Executive Committee, the first meeting of the Committee will be chaired by the representative of Bahrain, the country which is currently chairing the twenty-eighth session of the Commission. The representative of Bahrain will give the inaugural speech, followed by Ms. Rima Khalaf, Under-Secretary-General and Executive Secretary of ESCWA who will give the welcoming speech.

2. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters

At its twenty-eighth ministerial session (Tunis, 15-18 September 2014), the Commission adopted resolution 320 (XXVIII) concerning the redesignation of the Technical Committee as the “Executive Committee” and amending its terms of reference to enable it to make decisions in the period between the biennial sessions of the Commission.

Rule 8 of the Rules of Procedure of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, which apply to subsidiary bodies, states: “At the beginning of each session, once the Chair has assumed his/her duties in accordance with rule 12, the Commission shall adopt the agenda for that session on the basis of the provisional agenda.” Pursuant to that rule, the provisional agenda and annotations for this meeting will be presented to the Executive Committee in document E/ESCWA/2015/EC.1/L.1.

The proposed organization of work will be presented to the Committee in document E/ESCWA/2015/EC.1/L.2. The Committee shall adopt the agenda and the organization of work as submitted or in amended forms.

3. Follow-up issues (E/ESCWA/2015/EC.1/3)

The secretariat will present the following documents to the Executive Committee:

(a) Implementation of recommendations made by the Technical Committee at its eighth meeting (E/ESCWA/2015/EC.1/3(Part I))

This document presents the action taken by the secretariat and **member States** pursuant to recommendations made by the Technical Committee at its eighth meeting (Amman, 10-12 December 2013).

Representatives of member States are invited to take note of the progress set out in this document and offer suggestions in that regard.

- (b) Implementation of the Tunis Declaration on Social Justice in the Arab Region and resolutions adopted by the Commission at its twenty-eighth session
(E/ESCWA/2015/EC.1/3(Part II))

This document presents an overview of the actions and activities undertaken by the secretariat and member States to implement the Tunis Declaration on Social Justice in the Arab Region and the resolutions adopted by the Commission at its twenty-eighth session.

Representatives of member States are invited to take note of the progress set out in this document and offer suggestions in that regard. They are also invited to present progress achieved at the national level.

- (c) Evaluation of the work of ESCWA
(E/ESCWA/2015/EC.1/3(Part III))

ESCWA established a comprehensive methodological framework for evaluation in 2001 following the adoption of a new evaluation policy that follows the standards adopted by the United Nations Evaluation Group within the United Nations system. Since then, ESCWA has striven to mainstream the evaluation culture as a foundation for accountability and learning. The report presented by the secretariat under this item gives an explanation of the principles of accountability and learning and the evaluation approach adopted by ESCWA and the proposed strategy for the future evaluation plan. The secretariat will provide member States regularly with evaluation reports on the work of its subprogrammes and substantive evaluations upon their completion for their consideration and comments.

Representatives of member States are invited to offer suggestions on focus areas in the evaluation programme to be implemented in the period 2016-2017.

4. Consideration of the request of Mauritania for membership of the Commission
(E/ESCWA/2015/EC.1/4)

The Committee will be presented with the document containing a request by Mauritania for membership of the Commission.

The Commission adopted, at its twenty-seventh session, resolution 302 (XXVII) of 10 May 2012, in which it invited all other Arab non-member countries to become members of ESCWA. The Technical Committee reaffirmed its support for that resolution at its seventh and eighth meetings (18-19 March 2013 and 10-12 December 2013), emphasizing that ESCWA membership should be restricted to the members of the League of Arab States. This reflects the desire of Arab States to harmonize the goals, activities and projects undertaken by ESCWA with the priorities of the Arab region, as well as with efforts exerted by the League of Arab States to promote Arab regional integration.

Pursuant to the Terms of Reference of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, countries requesting membership should present official applications, which will be decided by the United Nations Economic and Social Council upon recommendations in that regard submitted by the Commission to the Council.

5. Regional and global issues
(E/ESCWA/2015/EC.1/5)

- (a) Palestine under occupation and the Fourth Geneva Convention
(E/ESCWA/2015/EC.1/5(Part I))

The representatives of member States participating in the twenty-eighth session of ESCWA have requested that the report prepared annually by the secretariat on the repercussions of the Israeli

occupations on the living conditions of the Palestinian people (which is presented to the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly) be presented to them in order for member States to reach consensus on and express support for the recommendations formulated in the report.

The report presented to the Committee under this item contains an overview of the major articles of the Fourth Geneva Convention and examples of violations by Israel of those articles. The objective of this report is to raise awareness of this issue and initiate a dialogue on ways to enforce international law and, in particular, respect for the provisions of the Geneva conventions in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

Representatives of member States are invited to take note of the content of the report and make suggestions thereon.

(b) Financing for development
(E/ESCWA/2015/EC.1/5(Part II))

Financing is seen as a major impediment for sustainable development projects. Finding financial resources to fund such projects is a major challenge in developing countries in general and in least developed countries in particular, as financing needs are currently high and expected to rise further in coming years.

The secretariat will present a report on the status of financing for development in the Arab region and recent initiatives in that regard, as well as relevant challenges and opportunities. The report also sets out the ongoing preparations for the third International Conference on Financing for Development to be held in Addis Ababa, in July 2015.

Representatives of member States are invited to take note of the content of the report and make suggestions thereon.

(c) Preparations for negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda
(E/ESCWA/2015/EC.1/5(Part III))

The document presented to the Committee under this item contains an overview of the activities undertaken by ESCWA to prepare for the negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda, emphasizing the importance of the three dimensions of sustainable development. This process is facing challenges at the Arab regional level given the transformations taking place in many member States. ESCWA is currently supporting the efforts undertaken by the League of Arab States to coordinate the Arab position in those negotiations. ESCWA also organized, in cooperation with the League and the United Nations Environment Programme, the second High Level Forum on Sustainable Development, held in Bahrain from 5 to 7 May 2015.

Representatives of member States are invited to take note of the outcomes of the Forum.

(d) Preparations for negotiations on climate change
(E/ESCWA/2015/EC.1/5(Part IV))

The document presented to the Committee under this item contains an overview of the activities undertaken by ESCWA to prepare for the participation of member States in the international negotiations on climate change. ESCWA has provided assistance to build the capacity of Arab negotiators regarding climate change issues through three workshops organized in cooperation with the League of Arab States. During those workshops, participants were briefed on the history of the climate change negotiation process and the outcomes of the conferences of the parties to

the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC/COP). Two other workshops on the subject co-organized by ESCWA and the League are planned during 2015, prior to COP-21, to be held in Paris in December 2015.

Representatives of member States are invited to take note of those preparations and make comments thereon.

- (e) Activities undertaken by ESCWA to follow up on the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action after 20 years (Beijing +20) in the Arab region (E/ESCWA/2015/EC.1/5(Part V))

In 2015, the Commission on the Status of Women of the Economic and Social Council is undertaking a 20-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action. The five regional commissions of the United Nations, including ESCWA, were requested to prepare regional reports in that regard based on national reviews undertaken by member States.

The ESCWA Centre for Women has developed, in close collaboration with the UN-Women/Regional Office for Arab States and the League of Arab States, a programme of activities in preparation for the adoption of the regional report on the 20-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (Beijing +20) in the Arab region.

Representatives of member States are invited to take note of the activities programme and make comments thereon.

6. Proposed programme of work for the biennium 2016-2017 (E/ESCWA/2015/EC.1/6)

The secretariat will present the proposed ESCWA programme of work for the biennium 2016-2017, which contains the overall orientation of the programme and the objectives, expected accomplishments and indicators of achievement of each subprogramme, in addition to the proposed outputs to be delivered by ESCWA within the regular budget and with funds from the United Nations Development Account and extrabudgetary resources. In formulating the proposed outputs, the secretariat took into consideration emerging regional and global priorities.

Representatives of member States are invited to review the proposed programme of work and make comments thereon.

7. Session reports of the ESCWA subsidiary bodies (E/ESCWA/2015/EC.1/7)

The Committee will have before it four reports of four of the seven subsidiary bodies of ESCWA on their sessions, held since the twenty-eighth session of ESCWA. Those reports contain an overview of the topics discussed, information on the organization and documentation of the sessions and the participants. The following reports will be submitted to the Committee:

- (a) Report of the fifteenth session of the Committee on Transport (E/ESCWA/EDGD/2014/IG.1/8/Report);
- (b) Report of the eleventh session of the Committee on Statistics (E/ESCWA/SD/2015/IG.1/7/Report);
- (c) Report of the tenth session of the Committee on Energy (E/ESCWA/SDPD/2015/IG.1/7/Report);
- (d) Report of the ninth session of the Committee on Liberalization of Foreign Trade, Economic Globalization and Financing for Development (E/ESCWA/EDID/2015/IG.1/10/Report).

The Committee is invited to adopt those reports.

10. Date and venue of the second meeting of the Executive Committee

The Committee will decide on the date and venue of its second meeting.

11. Other matters

This item shall cover any other matters that the members of the Committee may decide to discuss.

12. Adoption of the recommendations made by the Executive Committee at its first meeting

The Committee will consider the draft recommendations made at its first meeting for discussion and adoption.
