

47/15. Regional support for the alleviation of poverty⁵

The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 45/199 of 21 December 1990, adopting the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade in which, *inter alia*, the General Assembly noted the severity of poverty problems in developing countries and agreed that the objective of eradicating poverty was of the highest priority,

Recalling also General Assembly resolution 44/212 of 22 December 1989 on international cooperation for the eradication of poverty in developing countries,

Recalling further the Commission's concern for improved quality of life for the rural and urban poor as expressed in its resolution 45/1 of 5 April 1989 on a regional social development strategy towards the year 2000 and beyond, in which it urged that the themes of distributive justice, poverty eradication and popular participation be incorporated in the strategy, and resolution 45/4 of 5 April 1989 on an integrated programme on rural development,

Reiterating the urgent need to expand activities related to the alleviation of rural poverty and the need for the secretariat to accord top priority to such activities in its future programmes,

Deeply concerned that the ESCAP region still contains the largest concentration of people living in abject poverty, with hunger, malnutrition, disease, illiteracy and premature death being widespread and an integral part of their existence,

Noting that women and children are particularly vulnerable in situations of poverty,

Noting with concern that the growing number of landless farmers in some countries, as well as the rapidly increasing rural-urban migration all over the region, is intensifying and spreading poverty and making it an even more intractable problem,

Convinced that the sharp increase in poverty in certain developing countries of the ESCAP region, particularly the least developed countries, and the persistence of poverty even in developing countries of the region which have satisfactory growth rates, could threaten the very socio-political fabric of those countries and societies and undermine peace and harmony,

Convinced also that the difficult tasks of alleviation of poverty are multifaceted and intersectoral in character and need to be addressed urgently through an interdisciplinary approach,

Further convinced that the alleviation of poverty cannot be achieved without sustained development and accelerated economic growth,

Noting that the elimination of poverty was accorded priority under the fifth programming cycle of

the United Nations Development Programme by its Governing Council,

Also noting that poverty alleviation and economic growth remains one of the main concerns of the Commission,

Recognizing the need for taking direct and more effective measures to reduce poverty, including integration of the poor into the mainstream of economic activities,

1. *Calls upon* member countries to give the highest priority to the initiation and implementation of poverty alleviation activities, wherever appropriate, by incorporating them as integral components of their respective national development plans and programmes;

2. *Invites* member countries to strengthen their existing national coordinating agencies dealing with poverty alleviation programmes or to create such mechanisms, where necessary, as well as to promote the participation of rural and urban disadvantaged communities in the decision-making process in regard to such programmes, and to alter the structural disadvantages faced by the poor in asset ownership and skills development;

3. *Calls upon* the member countries to formulate strategies to create employment, including on-farm, off-farm and non-farm employment, and self-employment, and to promote employment in the private sector, and to recognize the importance of the informal sector, thereby offering the poor an opportunity to live in human dignity;

4. *Recognizes* that a supportive international economic environment, together with a growth-oriented development approach, is crucial to the successful efforts of developing countries, particularly least developed countries, in dealing with the eradication of poverty;

5. *Requests* the Executive Secretary:

(a) To formulate appropriate policies and programmes from a regional perspective for the alleviation and eventual elimination of poverty;

(b) To accelerate the exchange of ideas, experience and expertise, through technical cooperation among developing countries where appropriate, relating to poverty alleviation policies, strategies and programmes among member countries, including grass-roots level programmes for the poor, such as landless agricultural workers, marginal and small farmers, rural artisans, urban slum dwellers, the informal sector, small-scale entrepreneurs, women workers, and other economically and socially disadvantaged people of the community;

6. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to include, as appropriate, the objective of alleviation and eradication of poverty in the consideration of issues at: (i) the Fourth Asian and Pacific Ministerial Conference on Social Welfare and Social Development to be held in 1991; (ii) the Fourth Asian and Pacific Population Conference to be held in 1992; and (iii) the Ministerial Conference on Urbanization to be held also in 1992;

⁵ See para. 292 above.

7. *Further requests* the Executive Secretary to report to the Commission at its forty-ninth session on progress in the implementation of the present resolution and to examine the possibility of holding a meeting at the ministerial level in 1994 on the question of poverty alleviation in the ESCAP region with particular reference to least developed countries.

724th meeting
10 April 1991

47/6. Assistance to the countries in the Asian and Pacific region affected by the Persian Gulf crisis⁶

The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific,

Welcoming the end of the hostilities in the Persian Gulf and hoping that lasting peace and security will be achieved in the region,

Noting that the Persian Gulf conflict and the subsequent imposition of economic sanctions pursuant to Security Council resolution 661 (1990) would have severe repercussions on the immediate and long-term economic outlook of many countries, particularly as regards their foreign exchange earnings and the supply of energy,

Noting also that the Persian Gulf conflict has had an adverse impact on the environment of that region,

Noting further that despite the measures already taken by the affected countries themselves to alleviate the adverse effects of the crisis there is continuing need for external assistance,

Noting the Security Council's recognition of the need to provide immediate technical, financial and material assistance on an urgent basis to States whose economies have suffered from the Persian Gulf crisis and the application of economic sanctions,

Recalling the letter of 23 January 1991 from the Secretary-General of the United Nations to States Members of the United Nations and multilateral financing institutions expressing the strongest possible support to the above recommendations of the Security Council,

Noting with appreciation the generous assistance already received in response to the Secretary-General's appeal,

Stressing the urgent need for greater and continuing response to that appeal,

Aware that some of the States which have been seriously affected by the Persian Gulf crisis are in the Asian and Pacific region,

1. *Invites* member States and specialized agencies of the United Nations, multilateral financing institutions and donor countries to take the necessary

and appropriate steps to assist effectively those developing countries in the Asian and Pacific region adversely affected by the Persian Gulf crisis, including assistance to allow those countries to give serious consideration to steps that might be taken to assist effectively in the reconstruction and rehabilitation of the Persian Gulf region;

2. *Urges* multilateral institutions to respond promptly and in an appropriate manner, to the extent possible, to the needs of those developing countries and to play a catalytic role in mobilizing additional assistance;

3. *Also urges* multilateral institutions to respond promptly and in an appropriate manner to the needs of refugees and others dislocated by the crisis and to play a catalytic role in mobilizing additional assistance for them;

4. *Requests* the Executive Secretary, in cooperation with relevant international organizations and affected countries, to correlate information on the possible impact on the ESCAP region of the environmental degradation that has taken place and to inform the Commission with a view to considering possible measures;

5. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to use his good offices with the Presidents of the United Nations General Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council in order to obtain the assistance requested under this resolution;

6. *Further requests* the Executive Secretary to keep the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission informed of progress in implementation of the present resolution.

724th meeting
10 April 1991

47/7. Integration of environment and development in Asia and the Pacific⁷

The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific,

Concerned at the serious threat to environmentally sound and sustainable development posed by environmental degradation and the depletion of natural resources in the ESCAP region,

Emphasizing therefore the urgent need for all countries to intensify their efforts to protect and improve the quality of the environment at the national, subregional, regional and global levels,

Recalling Commission resolution 267 (XLIV) of 20 April 1988, in which it decided to convene a ministerial-level conference on the environment in 1990,

⁶ See para. 179 above.

⁷ See para. 364 above.