

Introduction

1. The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific held its sixty-ninth session in Bangkok from 25 April to 1 May 2013. The present report covers the period from 24 May 2012 to 1 May 2013 and contains an account of the discussions and conclusions reached by the Commission.

Chapter I

Matters calling for action by the Economic and Social Council or brought to its attention

2. At its sixty-ninth session, the Commission adopted 17 resolutions and 12 decisions, which appear below. Resolutions 69/1 and 69/5 require action by the Council; the remaining resolutions are brought to the attention of the Council.

A. Resolutions adopted by the Commission at its sixty-ninth session

Resolution 69/1

A conference structure of the Commission for the inclusive and sustainable development of Asia and the Pacific¹

The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific,

Recalling its resolutions 64/1, in particular paragraph 8 in which it was decided to conduct, at its sixty-ninth session, a review of its conference structure, including its subsidiary structure, taking into account the outcome of the midterm review conducted at its sixty-seventh session, 67/15, 68/8 and 68/9,

Recalling also the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in June 2012, entitled “The future we want”,² in particular paragraph 100, and General Assembly resolution 67/226 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system, in particular paragraphs 21, 74, 144, 145 and 146,

Noting the Commission’s unique role as the most representative body for the Asia-Pacific region and its comprehensive mandate as the main economic and social development centre of the United Nations development system for the Asia-Pacific region,

Noting also the importance of strengthening cooperation and creating synergies within the United Nations development system at the global, regional and country levels in the Asia-Pacific region through enhanced collaboration between the secretariat and the funds, programmes, specialized agencies and other entities of the United Nations development system, as well as the need to build new partnerships within that system,

Recognizing the need for the Commission to adapt and respond to the evolving development challenges and opportunities for the Asia-Pacific region,

¹ See chap. III, paras. 277-288.

² General Assembly resolution 66/288, annex.

Underlining that the effectiveness and efficiency of the Commission's conference structure benefits from enhanced transparency, engagement and communication between member States and the secretariat, as well as with other stakeholders, in accordance with its rules of procedure,

Commending the Executive Secretary on the initiatives taken to strengthen the effectiveness and efficiency of the conference structure, in particular those taken to implement resolutions 64/1 and 67/15, and to facilitate an effective process of consultation among members and associate members on a comprehensive and thorough review of the conference structure of the Commission,

Having considered the report of the Executive Secretary on the final review of the conference structure of the Commission, including its subsidiary structure pursuant to resolutions 64/1 and 67/15,³ which was informed by the report on the external evaluation of the Commission's conference structure,⁴

1. *Decides* to revise its conference structure, with immediate effect, to conform to the pattern outlined in the annexes to the present resolution;

2. *Also decides* to conduct, at its seventy-first session, a review of the progress in implementation of the present resolution and requests the Executive Secretary to provide a report on the outcomes of the changes to the conference structure, which will serve as a basis for that review;

3. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to conduct further study and analysis, including from time to time through discussions in the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission, and to submit to the Commission at its seventy-first session a report on the programmatic, organizational and budgetary implications of:

- (a) Constituting a new committee on energy;
- (b) Converting the Committee on Information and Communications Technology into a committee on technology;
- (c) Reforming the governance structure of the regional institutions and their integration within the secretariat's programme of work;
- (d) Strengthening the effectiveness of the resolutions adopted by the Commission, including indications of measurable outcomes and reporting modalities for the actions to be undertaken by member States and the secretariat;
- (e) Convening the eight committees biennially, with four committees meeting each year for a maximum duration of three working days, with half a day or one day devoted to joint plenary sessions between multiple committees, if required. The Commission may mandate a specific committee or multiple committees to meet in the gap year where a particular topic becomes an urgent issue to the region;
- (f) Organizing, by the secretariat's subregional offices, preparatory meetings prior to Commission sessions on the theme of those sessions at the subregional level, with a view to enlisting due participation of representatives from civil society and the private sector to provide inputs into the theme study;

³ E/ESCAP/69/18.

⁴ E/ESCAP/69/INF/9.

4. *Also requests* the Executive Secretary:

(a) To combine the *Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific* and the theme study prepared for each session of the Commission into one flagship publication;

(b) To promote through videoconferencing and other means the participation of countries which do not have permanent missions to the secretariat in Bangkok in meetings of the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission;

5. *Calls upon* all development partners, in particular the relevant organizations of the United Nations development system, to support the Commission in promoting sustainable development in the Asia-Pacific region, and in fulfilling its mandate as the main economic and social development centre in the United Nations system for the Asian and Pacific region, through all appropriate mechanisms, including active participation in Commission sessions, enhanced cooperation on projects and policies aimed at supporting human development and the sharing of good practices and programme and administrative support.

*Fifth plenary meeting
1 May 2013*

Annex I
Conference structure of the Commission

I. The Commission

1. The Commission shall meet annually under an overarching theme selected by member States, with each session comprising a senior officials segment of three days followed by a ministerial segment of two days, for a total of five working days, to discuss and decide on important issues pertaining to inclusive and sustainable development in the region, decide on the recommendations of its subsidiary bodies and of the Executive Secretary, review and endorse the proposed strategic framework and programme of work and take any other decisions required in conformity with its terms of reference.

2. The sessions of the Special Body on Least Developed and Landlocked Developing Countries and the Special Body on Pacific Island Developing Countries shall be held jointly for a maximum of one day during the senior officials segment and shall have a status commensurate with the Committees of the Whole; a one-day preparatory meeting of the Special Body will be held immediately before the beginning of the Commission session.

3. The Commission session may include a distinguished person's lecture and high-level representatives of United Nations agencies may be invited to participate in panel discussions held during the Commission session, and corporate leaders and civil society organizations may be invited to participate in the session as appropriate, in accordance with the rules of procedure of the Commission.

4. The Informal Working Group on Draft Resolutions of the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission, which convenes prior to the Commission session, shall be reconstituted as the Working Group on Draft Resolutions during the senior officials segment and shall have a status commensurate with the Committees of the Whole.

5. The number of simultaneous meetings of the Committees of the Whole, including their commensurate bodies, held during the senior officials segment of the annual session of the Commission shall not exceed two.

6. Draft resolutions shall reflect the substantive deliberations of member States; furthermore, without prejudice to rule 31 of its rules of procedure, members of the Commission intending to submit draft resolutions to the Commission are strongly encouraged to submit them to the Executive Secretary at least one month prior to the commencement of the session of the Commission in order to allow sufficient time for review by members and associate members of the Commission, and the Commission shall not consider draft resolutions submitted within one week of the first day of the Commission session.

7. The report of the Commission will be composed of the decisions and resolutions of the Commission. The draft record of proceedings of the Commission, prepared by the secretariat, will be circulated among members and associate members for comment within 15 days after the conclusion of the session. Members and associate members will be requested to provide comments within 15 days of receiving the draft record of proceedings. The secretariat's final record of proceedings of the Commission session will be issued within two months of the conclusion of the session, taking into account the relevant comments of members and associate members.

II. Subsidiary structure

8. The subsidiary structure of the Commission shall consist of the following eight committees:

- (a) Committee on Macroeconomic Policy, Poverty Reduction and Inclusive Development;
- (b) Committee on Trade and Investment;
- (c) Committee on Transport;
- (d) Committee on Environment and Development;
- (e) Committee on Information and Communications Technology;
- (f) Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction;
- (g) Committee on Social Development;
- (h) Committee on Statistics.

9. The eight committees shall meet biennially, with four committees meeting each year, for a maximum duration of five days for each session.

10. Within their respective areas of purview, the committees shall:

- (a) Review and analyse regional trends;
- (b) Identify, in consultation with member States, their priorities and emerging issues and consult on regional approaches, taking into consideration subregional aspects;
- (c) Promote regional dialogue, including its subregional synergies, and an exchange of experiences on policies and programmes;
- (d) Consider common regional positions as inputs to global processes and promote regional follow-up to their outcomes;
- (e) Propose issues for consideration by the Commission as the basis for possible resolutions;
- (f) Monitor the implementation of Commission resolutions;

(g) Promote a collaborative approach to addressing the development challenges of the region, where appropriate, between Governments and civil society, the private sector and United Nations and other international institutions at the regional and subregional levels.

11. Further, within their respective areas of purview, the committees shall provide the secretariat, including its regional institutions, with guidance in reviewing the proposed strategic framework and programme of work.

12. The following areas shall be mainstreamed into the work of all committees:

(a) Implementation of the relevant internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals;

(b) Poverty reduction and balanced integration of the three pillars of sustainable development;

(c) Gender equality;

(d) Priority needs of least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States.

13. Representatives of civil society and the private sector may, upon consultation with member States, be invited to join the Committee sessions as appropriate, in accordance with the rules of procedure of the Commission.

14. The specific issues to be addressed by each of the eight committees in carrying out the above functions are listed in annex II to the present resolution.

III. Ad hoc ministerial conferences and other intergovernmental meetings

15. Subject to the approval of the Commission, ad hoc ministerial conferences and other intergovernmental meetings may be organized on specific and cross-sectoral issues.

16. No more than six such ministerial conferences or other intergovernmental meetings may be held during a calendar year, and the total number of days shall not exceed twenty.

17. In those years when a ministerial conference or intergovernmental meeting is held covering issues normally discussed in a committee, the corresponding committee need not be convened.

IV. Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission

18. The functions of the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission shall be in accordance with the terms of reference contained in annex III to the present resolution.

19. The Advisory Committee may, if necessary, establish its own working groups on consideration of specific issues.

20. The Advisory Committee shall meet with sufficient frequency both in formal and informal meetings on topical subjects, especially prior to the Commission session. The number of formal meetings of the Advisory Committee per calendar year shall not be less than six or more than twelve. Any additional meetings, formal or informal, will be held in consultation with the Advisory Committee and the Executive Secretary, and may not require documentation by the secretariat, unless otherwise requested by the Advisory Committee.

21. Should the need arise to seek the views of United Nations entities or other intergovernmental organizations on subjects of interest to the Advisory Committee, members of the Advisory Committee can, if consensus has been reached, request the secretariat to invite representatives of particular United Nations entities or other intergovernmental organizations to attend a subsequent session of the Advisory Committee.

22. The Advisory Committee shall periodically review the work of subregional offices and regional institutions, and actively follow up and report on the implementation of resolutions by member States. The secretariat shall facilitate the reporting on resolutions by preparing the requisite guidelines and templates.

V. Existing regional institutions under the auspices of the Commission

23. The following institutions under the auspices of the Commission shall continue to function as prescribed in their respective statutes and terms of reference:

- (a) Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology (APCTT);
- (b) Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Sustainable Agriculture (CAPSA);
- (c) Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific (SIAP);
- (d) Centre for Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization (CSAM);
- (e) Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development (APCICT).

VI. General provisions

A. Rules of procedure

24. Unless otherwise specified by the Commission, the rules of procedure of the Commission, including those pertaining to the decision-making process, shall apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to the committees.

B. Informal session

25. An informal session among the heads of delegations during the ministerial segment of each Commission session may be organized but shall not be institutionalized. The agenda for the informal session shall be decided by consensus and the annotated agenda shall reach members at least thirty days before the opening of the session to ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of the session. Simultaneous interpretation shall be provided.

Annex II

Issues to be addressed by the committees subsidiary to the Commission

The issues listed below are the primary issues to be addressed by each committee. The Commission may adjust the list of issues for any committee at any time, as appropriate; the committees shall likewise retain the flexibility to address new or emerging issues brought to their attention by the secretariat upon consultation with member States.

1. Committee on Macroeconomic Policy, Poverty Reduction and Inclusive Development:

- (a) Experiences and practices in formulating and implementing macroeconomic policies to reduce poverty and achieve sustainable and inclusive development;

(b) Regional economic development policies and options, including in the area of financing for development;

(c) Strategies for achieving the Millennium Development Goals, with a special focus on poverty reduction;

(d) Pro-poor economic growth for increasing the income and employment of the poor;

(e) Policy options and programmes for reducing rural poverty, including those with a gender dimension, through the sustainable development of secondary crops.

2. Committee on Trade and Investment:

(a) Regional cooperative mechanisms and agreements in trade, investment and finance, including the Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement;

(b) Policy options on trade and investment, enterprise development and finance;

(c) Policy options and strategies for sustainable economic growth and rural poverty reduction through agro-technology transfer and agro-based enterprise development;

(d) Technology transfer to address regional development challenges.

3. Committee on Transport:

(a) Transport policy options and programmes, including those targeting the Millennium Development Goals;

(b) The Asian Highway, Trans-Asian Railway and other initiatives promoted by the Commission for planning international intermodal transport linkages;

(c) Measures to improve road safety and the efficiency of transport operations and logistics;

(d) Support for the accession and implementation of international transport agreements.

4. Committee on Environment and Development:

(a) Integration of environmental sustainability in development policy;

(b) Policies and strategies for the use of sustainable planning and the use of water resources;

(c) Regional cooperation for enhanced energy security and the sustainable use of energy resources;

(d) Policies and strategies for promoting inclusive and sustainable urban development.

5. Committee on Information and Communications Technology:

(a) Integration of information and communications technology-related issues in development policies, plans and programmes;

(b) Transfer and application of information and communications technology at the regional and subregional levels;

(c) Development of human and institutional capacity in the use of information and communications technology;

(d) Information and communications technology applications for disaster risk reduction.

6. Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction:
 - (a) Policy options and strategies on multi-hazard disaster risk reduction and mitigation;
 - (b) Regional cooperation mechanisms for disaster risk management, including space and other technical support systems;
 - (c) Multi-hazard assessment, preparedness, early warning and response to disaster risks.
7. Committee on Social Development:
 - (a) Implementation of internationally agreed commitments, including those agreed at the United Nations on social development, population, ageing, disability, youth and disadvantaged groups, gender equality and health;
 - (b) Policy options, strategies and good practices in social policy and protection;
 - (c) Social policies and financing aimed at building inclusive societies.
8. Committee on Statistics:
 - (a) Ensure that all countries in the region by 2020 have the capability to provide a basic range of population, economic, social and environmental statistics;
 - (b) Create a more adaptive and cost-effective information management environment for national statistical offices through stronger collaboration.

Annex III

Terms of reference of the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission

The Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission shall have the following functions:

- (a) To strengthen close cooperation and consultation between the member States and the secretariat, including by providing advice and guidance to be taken into account by the Executive Secretary while undertaking the respective activities;
- (b) To serve as a deliberative forum for substantive exchange of views and provide guidance on the formulation of the agenda of the Commission and in connection with economic and social developments that have an impact on the Asia-Pacific region;
- (c) To advise and guide the Executive Secretary in drawing up proposals for the strategic framework, programme of work and theme topics for sessions of the Commission consistent with the guidance provided by the Commission;
- (d) To receive, on a regular basis, information on the administrative and financial functioning of the Commission;
- (e) To advise and guide the Executive Secretary in monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the Commission's programme of work and resource allocation;
- (f) To review the draft calendar of meetings prior to its submission to the Commission at its annual session;
- (g) To advise and guide the Executive Secretary on the provisional agenda for sessions of the Commission and committees subsidiary to the Commission, consistent with the need to ensure a results-oriented and focused agenda that is aligned

with the developmental priorities of member States, as defined by them, as well as chapter II of its rules of procedure;

(h) To advise and guide the Executive Secretary on the identification of emerging economic and social issues and other relevant issues for incorporation into the provisional agendas and on the formulation of the annotated provisional agendas for Commission sessions;

(i) To be informed of collaboration and related arrangements between the secretariat and other international and regional organizations, in particular on long-term cooperation programmes and joint initiatives, including those to be proposed by the Executive Secretary and conducted under the aegis of the Regional Coordination Mechanism;

(j) To carry out any other tasks entrusted to it by the Commission.

Resolution 69/2

Final review of the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action in the Asia-Pacific region⁵

The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 58/201 on the Almaty Programme of Action: Addressing the Special Needs of Landlocked Developing Countries within a New Global Framework for Transit Transport Cooperation for Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries,⁶ and General Assembly resolution 59/245 on specific actions related to the particular needs and problems of landlocked developing countries: outcome of the International Ministerial Conference of Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and Donor Countries and International Financial and Development Institutions on Transit Transport Cooperation,

Recalling also its resolutions 67/1 on the Ulaanbaatar Declaration: Outcome of the High-level Asia-Pacific Policy Dialogue on the Implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action and other Development Gaps Faced by the Landlocked Developing Countries, 63/9 on implementation of the Busan Declaration on Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific and the Regional Action Programme for Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific, phase I (2007-2011), 65/6 on support for the establishment of an international think tank of landlocked developing countries,

Taking note of the outcome document of the midterm review of the Almaty Programme of Action, which was adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 63/2,

Recalling the outcome document of the High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals,⁷ which was held from 20 to 22 September 2010, and General Assembly resolution 66/214, in which the Assembly decided to hold a comprehensive ten-year review conference on the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action in 2014,

⁵ See chap. III, paras. 27-47.

⁶ *Report of the International Ministerial Conference of Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and Donor Countries and International Financial and Development Institutions on Transit Transport Cooperation, Almaty, Kazakhstan, 28-29 August 2003 (A/CONF.202/3), annex I.*

⁷ General Assembly resolution 65/1.