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**Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia**

Twenty-second session  
Beirut, 14-17 April 2003

Item 3 of the provisional agenda

**ANNOTATED PROVISIONAL AGENDA**

1. Opening of the twenty-second session

The inaugural meeting of the twenty-second session will begin at 10 a.m. on Monday 14 April 2003 at United Nations House, the permanent headquarters of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), in Beirut.

2. Election of officers

Pursuant to resolution 226 (XXI) dated 11 May 2001 concerning the election of officers for the sessions of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies, with effect from 2002, members shall assume the chairmanship of the sessions of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies, on a rotating basis, in Arabic alphabetical order. Pursuant to rule 12 of the Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, the Commission shall, at the commencement of each session, elect from among the representatives of its members, two Vice-Chairmen and a Rapporteur. The members of the bureau, who shall be eligible for re-election, shall remain in office until their successors have been elected.

3. Adoption of the agenda

Pursuant to rule 8 of the Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, the Commission shall, at the beginning of each session, after the election of the Chairman, adopt the agenda for that session (E/ESCWA/22/L.1).

4. Proposed organization of work

The Commission has before it E/ESCWA/22/L.2, that contains proposals concerning the organization of the work of the session. The Commission may adopt it in the form in which it was submitted or make amendments thereto.

5. Invitation to States Members of the United Nations and/or its specialized agencies that are not members of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) to participate as observers in the twenty-second session of the Commission

The Commission has before it E/ESCWA/22/3, concerning requests received from States Members of the United Nations and/or of the specialized agencies not members of the Commission to participate in the capacity of observer in the twenty-second session of the Commission, in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1818 (LV), paragraph 4, and rule 36 of the Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia.

6. Report of the Executive Secretary on the activities of the Commission

The Commission has before it the report of the Executive Secretary on the activities of the Commission (E/ESCWA/22/4), which appraises the Commission of the activities that have been undertaken since the twenty-first session of the Commission. This agenda item covers the following issues:

(a) The role of ESCWA in supporting the mandate of the United Nations (E/ESCWA/22/4(Part I))

The document submitted under this agenda item details the activities undertaken by ESCWA outside its programme of work with a view to securing relationships with member countries and representing the Secretary-General at regional and international gatherings, in addition to media activities.

(b) Progress made during 2002 in the implementation of the programme of work for the biennium 2002-2003 (regular programme and technical cooperation activities) (E/ESCWA/22/4(Part II))

The document submitted under this agenda item provides a summary of the progress made in implementing regular programme and technical cooperation activities, and of the services of the ESCWA regional advisers during the biennium 2002-2003.

(c) Follow-up to implementation of the resolutions adopted by the Commission at its twenty-first session (E/ESCWA/22/4(Part III))

The documents submitted under this agenda item detail the progress made in implementing the resolutions adopted by the Commission at its twenty-first session. The reports are as set forth below:

- (i) The establishment of an ESCWA consultative committee on scientific and technological development and technological innovation: resolution 225 (XXI) (E/ESCWA/22/4(Part III)/Add.1);
- (ii) Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003: resolution 232 (XXI) (E/ESCWA/22/4(Part III)/Add.2);
- (iii) The strengthening of cooperation between member countries in the field of shared water resources: resolution 233 (XXI) (E/ESCWA/22/4(Part III)/Add.3);
- (iv) Rationalization and increased efficiency of energy and the use of renewable sources of energy: resolution 234 (XXI) (E/ESCWA/22/4(Part III)/Add.4);
- (v) Adoption of the Agreement on International Roads in the Arab Mashreq: resolution 235 (XXI) (E/ESCWA/22/4(Part III)/Add.5);
- (vi) Rehabilitation of economic sectors in Palestine: resolution 237 (XXI) (E/ESCWA/22/4(Part III)/Add.6).

(d) Follow-up action at regional level to United Nations international conferences (E/ESCWA/22/4(Part IV))

The document submitted under this agenda item details the role played by the ESCWA secretariat in follow-up action at regional level since the twenty-first session of the Commission to United Nations international conferences. At regional level, ESCWA has participated in the follow-up to the 10 international conferences set forth below:

- (i) The fourth session of the World Youth Forum of the United Nations System;
  - (ii) The World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance;
  - (iii) Review of the Tenth Annual Commemoration of the International Year of the Family;
  - (iv) The International Conference on Financing for Development;
  - (v) The Second World Assembly on Ageing;
  - (vi) The Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly on Children;
  - (vii) The World Summit on Sustainable Development;
  - (viii) The World Summit on the Information Society;
  - (ix) The Fourth World Conference on Women;
  - (x) The International Conference on Population and Development.
- (e) Reports of the sessions of Commission subcommittees (E/ESCWA/22/4(Part V))

This part contains seven reports on the sessions of the six Commission subcommittees held during the biennium 2002-2003. They include the recommendations made by those subcommittees. The titles and document symbols of those reports are as set forth below:

- (i) Report of the Committee on Energy on its fourth session (E/ESCWA/ENR/2002/22);
  - (ii) Report of the Committee on Water Resources on its fifth session (E/ESCWA/ENR/2002/23);
  - (iii) Report of the Committee on Transport on its third session (E/ESCWA/TRANS/2002/2);
  - (iv) Report of the Committee on Transport on its fourth session (E/ESCWA/TRANS/2003/IG.1/6);
  - (v) Report of the Committee on Social Development on its fourth session (E/ESCWA/SD/2002/IG.I/9);
  - (vi) Report of the Statistical Committee on its fifth session (E/ESCWA/STAT/2002/3);
  - (vii) Report of the Technical Committee for the Liberalization of Foreign Trade and Economic Globalization in the Countries of the ESCWA Region on its third session (E/ESCWA/GRID/2003/IG.I/7).
- (f) Restructuring of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (E/ESCWA/22/4(Part VI))

This document describes the principal steps that have been taken by the secretariat with a view to restructuring its programme of work and administrative organization, pursuant to one of the recommendations made by the Commission at its twenty-first session, concerning the need to focus on a limited number of priorities of interest to member countries, with a view to strengthening Arab regional integration.

- (g) Financial status of the Commission's programmes (E/ESCWA/22/4(Part VII))

This document deals with various financial aspects of ESCWA programmes. It covers the regular budget, extrabudgetary resources and the ESCWA Trust Fund.

7. General debate: summary of the issues of which the twenty-second session is seized

This agenda item was allocated for the interventions of member countries with respect to all ESCWA activities and other issues relating to the session that delegations wish to introduce and that are of interest to every country. The aim is to permit each head of delegation to put forward his point of view.

8. Adoption of the agreement on international railways in the Arab Mashreq

The Commission has before it document E/ESCWA/TRANS/2002/1/Rev.1 entitled *Agreement on International Railways in the Arab Mashreq* and E/ESCWA/22/5, which contains information on the preparation of the agreement that is submitted to the Commission for adoption. The agreement will be open throughout the session, namely, from 14 to 17 April 2003, for signature by Heads of Government or the representatives of member countries empowered by their ministries for foreign affairs to sign the agreement, in accordance with the power of attorney authorized by the United Nations Department of Legal Affairs in New York.

9. Issues of significance to the future of the ESCWA region

This item, to which E/ESCWA/22/6 refers, contains two sub-items:

(a) The impact of the lack of stability in the Western Asia region on economic and social development

A debate will be convened on this sub-item, to which will be invited the heads of delegations and high-level speakers. The issue to be discussed is the challenges faced by the ESCWA region because of its lack of stability, the impact of that lack of stability on the economic, social and political situations and the role of the United Nations organizations working in the region in containing the damage arising from that lack.

(b) The strengthening of Arab regional cooperation (E/ESCWA/22/6/Add.1)

This document sets out the activities undertaken by the secretariat in order to strengthen the regional cooperation of ESCWA member countries, pursuant to the recommendation made by the Commission at its twenty-first session, concerning the need for the work of the secretariat to focus on Arab regional integration and the study of mechanisms that would activate such integration.

10. Draft programme of work and priorities for the biennium 2004-2005

Document E/ESCWA/22/7 is presented under this agenda item. It contains the draft programme of work and priorities for the biennium 2004-2005 and sets out the roles and objectives of the secretariat for the forthcoming biennium. It reviews the six subprogrammes to be undertaken by the secretariat and the relevant outcomes.

11. The role of ESCWA in coordinating United Nations Organization regional activities

Document E/ESCWA/22/8 is presented under this agenda item. It details the most important outcomes of the most recent meeting of the United Nations Regional Coordination Group, which comprises two representatives of each of the United Nations organizations working in the ESCWA region, and is considered as the appropriate mechanism for the strengthening of regional cooperation between those organizations. The document also describes the role of the ESCWA secretariat in coordinating the regional activities of the United Nations organization in the ESCWA region, highlighting the relevant activities it has undertaken.

12. Designating the sessions of the Commission as the forum for a biennial pledging conference: resolution 236 (XXI)

The Commission has before it E/ESCWA/22/9. Pursuant to resolution 236 (XXI) dated 11 May 2001, concerning the designation of the sessions of the Commission as the forum for a pledging conference, that conference will be held during ESCWA sessions with a view to providing additional support for the regular budget from extrabudgetary resources, thereby permitting the secretariat to strengthen and expand its activities. It is expected that each country will announce the size of the contribution that it wishes to make to ESCWA, as is the practice in other United Nations organizations, in order to allow ESCWA to meet the needs of the countries of the region despite the limited funds available under the regular budget, and in order to match the volume of contributions made to ESCWA with those made to other regional commissions.

13. Time and venue of the twenty-third session of the Commission

Rule 1, paragraph (a) of the Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia provides that Commission sessions shall normally be held in April, every other year, at a time to be determined by its members. Rule 2 of the same Terms of Reference provides that the sessions of the Commission shall normally be held at its headquarters. The Commission may recommend that the session be held outside the country in which its headquarters are located, should any member country wish to host the session and subject to the approval of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 40/243.

14. Other business

This item covers any issue which the members of the Commission may wish to discuss.

15. Adoption of the report of the Commission on its twenty-second session

The Commission will consider the draft report on its twenty-second session (E/ESCWA/22/L.10) and adopt both the report and the draft resolutions.

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