



**Sixth Meeting of the ESCWA Consultative Committee on
Scientific and Technological Development and Technological Innovation (ESTIC)**
Beirut, 3-4 April 2012

Preliminary Information Note

A. Background

1. The ESCWA Consultative Committee on Scientific and Technological Development and Technological Innovation (ESTIC) was established in 2001, pursuant to Resolution 225 adopted by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UN-ESCWA) during its 21st ministerial session (10-11 May 2001), and then ratified by the United Nations Economic and Social Council in its substantive session of 2001. According to Resolution 225, the Committee should be formed of distinguished experts in science, technology and innovation, and should meet at least once every two years with the following main duties: (a) Advising on member country endeavours to acquire modern technology including the need for support, with particular reference to information and communications technology (ICT), science and new technology; (b) Proposing ways to promote regional cooperation for the transfer, adaptation and mastery of technology; (c) Advising on priorities related to ESCWA work programmes in the fields of developing scientific and technological capabilities and technological innovation; and (d) Following-up on international and regional resolutions relating to science, technology and innovation and their implementation in member countries.

2. The Information and Communications Technology Division (ICTD) of UN-ESCWA was mandated to provide substantive servicing to the Committee, according to the Secretary-General Bulletin dated 27 December 2002 (ST/SGB/2002/16) that established the organizational structure of ESCWA.

3. Since its establishment in 2001, five meetings of the Committee were held, in 2002, 2004, 2006, 2008, and 2010.¹ The 2002 meeting² focused on the uses of new technologies, including ICT, for poverty reduction and employment creation. The 2004 meeting³ addressed building the information society in the Arab region. The 2006 and 2008 meetings⁴ addressed the subject of the establishment of the ESCWA Technology Centre (ETC) for Development,⁵ and reviewed the ICTD work progress and programme.

4. The fifth/previous meeting was held in Beirut, during 29-30 March 2010, and has addressed the progress achieved, and reviewed the future strategies for maximizing the benefits of ICTs in the development processes. It resulted with a number of recommendations and featured a special session on technologies and climate change and the launching of the 2009 Regional Profile of the Information Society in Western Asia.

B. Objectives

5. The sixth ESTIC meeting will review ICTD's achievements during the biennium 2010-2011, its work programme for 2012-2013, and its strategic framework for 2014-2015. The latter will be submitted for adoption by the 2012 twenty-seventh ESCWA ministerial session and afterwards by the United Nations Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly.

6. The meeting will also follow-up on Resolution 294 (XXVI) and Statute of the ESCWA Technology Centre (ETC), dated 19 May 2010, that was adopted by the 2010 twenty-sixth ministerial session, regarding the establishment of the Centre in Jordan after signing the Host Country Agreement. It will review the work

¹The Committee Web page <http://www.escwa.un.org/divisions/ictd/estic/> includes background information and meeting links.

² First ESTIC meeting was held on 18 July 2002 in conjunction with the Forum on Technology, Employment and Poverty Alleviation in the Arab Countries (Beirut, 16-18 July 2002).

³ Second ESTIC meeting was held on 24 November 2004 following the Second Regional Preparatory Conference for the WSIS – Partnership for building the Arab information society (Damascus, 22-23 November 2004).

⁴ Third and Fourth ESTIC meetings were held in Beirut, during 6-7 March 2006, and in Manama, during 1-2 April 2008.

⁵ ESCWA Technology Centre related ESCWA Resolutions: 254 (XXIII), 12 May 2005 (Establishment of the ETC); 274 (XXIV), 11 May 2006 (approved the establishment of the Centre); 284 (XXV), 29 May 2008 (to finalize the hosting arrangement); and 294 (XXVI) and Statute of the Centre, 19 May 2010 (to establish the Centre in Jordan after signing the Host Country Agreement).

progress on the Centre and also submit a report to the 2012 twenty-seventh ESCWA ministerial session. The sixth ESTIC meeting will include a panel on emerging topics.

C. Topics

7. The main topics and issues to be addressed at the sixth ESTIC meeting include:
- (a) ESCWA ICT Division and progress made from the previous ESTIC meeting;
 - (b) ICTD activities implemented during 2010-2011 and under implementation in the work programme for 2012-2013, and the proposed strategic framework for 2014-2015;
 - (c) Establishment of the ESCWA Technology Centre, and 2011 achievements and 2012 activities;
 - (d) Selected thematic topics for the ICT Policies and Applications Sections, and the ESCWA Technology Centre;
 - (e) Launching of the 2011 Regional Profile of Information Society in Western Asia.

D. Outcomes

8. The outcomes of the sixth ESTIC meeting, especially draft resolutions, will be submitted for approval by the 2012 twenty-seventh ESCWA ministerial session that will be held in Beirut, Lebanon, during 7-10 May 2012. These outcomes will consist of:
- (i) Report and recommendations regarding the ETC in relation to the Centre's first year of official operations, plan of work, and prospects of cooperation and collaboration across the UN system;
 - (ii) Draft resolutions, as needed, related to the ETC/ Arab IGF Process/ follow-up to WSIS;
 - (iii) Recommendations for the implementation of the 2012-2013 work programme;
 - (iv) Refinement of the proposed strategic framework for 2014-2015;
 - (v) Recommendations of the sixth ESTIC meeting.

E. Organization

9. The sixth meeting of ESTIC is organized by the ICTD of ESCWA, and will be held during **3-4 April 2012**, at ESCWA Headquarters, in Beirut, Lebanon.

F. Participants

10. Participants in the meeting include distinguished experts in the area(s) of science, technology and innovation, including ICT, from academic institutions, research centres, governmental institutions, ministries and enterprises engaged in innovative activities, as well as from international and regional organizations. Invited participants should send their registration form (attached) before **Sunday 18 March 2012**.

G. Languages

11. The working languages of the meeting will be Arabic and English. Simultaneous translation will be provided during the meeting.

H. Additional information and correspondence

12. The Web page <http://www.escwa.un.org/information/meetingdetails.asp?referenceNum=1791E> includes updated information on the meeting. Correspondences and inquiries are to be addressed to:

Ms. Rola Mehio, Staff Assistant, ICTD, UN-ESCWA, Beirut, Lebanon
Phone: +961-1-978548, Fax: +961-1-981510, escwa-ictd@un.org