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**Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific****Seventy-sixth session**

Bangkok, 21 May 2020

Items 3 and 5 of the provisional agenda\*

**Special Body on Least Developed, Landlocked Developing and Pacific Island Developing Countries****Review of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific****Summary of progress in the implementation of Commission resolutions****Note by the secretariat***Summary*

The present document contains a summary of the progress made in the implementation of the resolutions of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific on which the secretariat is required to report to the Commission at its seventy-sixth session.

The Commission may wish to review the progress made and provide the secretariat with comments and further guidance on the effective implementation of the resolutions.

**I. Special Body on Least Developed, Landlocked Developing and Pacific Island Developing Countries****Resolution 74/1****Supporting the smooth transition of the least developed countries in Asia and the Pacific towards a sustainable graduation****1. Requirements of the operative paragraphs**

1. In paragraph 7 of its resolution 74/1, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) requested the Executive Secretary:

(a) To encourage high-level policy dialogue among the least developed countries, including countries in the process of graduation and countries that have already graduated in the Asia-Pacific region, inviting

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\* ESCAP/76/L.1/Rev.1.

relevant development partners and organizations of the United Nations system to share experiences and lessons learned in the context of a smooth transition and sustainable graduation, including during the annual sessions of the Commission and other intergovernmental meetings, as appropriate;

(b) To provide, upon request, targeted assistance, through capacity-building and policy analysis to graduating countries, within existing mandates and resources, to support the formulation and implementation of smooth national transition strategies towards sustainable graduation;

(c) To carry out, in line with ongoing work, publications and knowledge products, a needs assessment, before the final review, in 2020, of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011–2020, on how to support, in a coordinated manner, the least developed countries of the Asia-Pacific region in their graduation and smooth transition;

(d) To submit to the Commission at its seventy-sixth session a report on progress in the implementation of the resolution.

## 2. Progress made

2. In response to subparagraph 7 (a):

(a) A subregional workshop to prepare for smooth transition from the category of least developed countries, jointly organized by the Government of Vanuatu, the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, and the United Nations Development Programme, was held in Vanuatu in November 2018. Four Asia-Pacific small island developing States participated (Solomon Islands, Timor-Leste, Tuvalu and Vanuatu) to examine the impacts of graduation on their economies;

(b) The secretariat provided technical assistance to the Government of Vanuatu in developing a draft national graduation strategy, and it held a national workshop in Vanuatu in 2019 on the country's transition strategy to review and discuss that draft;

(c) In Solomon Islands in October 2019, the inter-agency task force on graduation of least developed countries, including ESCAP, held a workshop on preparing for a smooth graduation from the category of least developed country. Participants at the workshop exchanged information and lessons learned from countries that have graduated, such as Maldives and Samoa, and countries in the process of graduating, such as Vanuatu.

3. In response to subparagraph 7 (b):

(a) To support the formulation and implementation of smooth national transition strategies towards sustainable graduation, five analytical reports were produced on the following topics:

(i) Preparing to graduate: issues, challenges and strategies for the graduation of Kiribati from the category of least developed country;<sup>1</sup>

(ii) Least developed country graduation: challenges and opportunities for Vanuatu;<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Available at [www.unescap.org/publications/mpfd-working-paper-preparing-graduate-issues-challenges-and-strategies-kiribatis-ldc](http://www.unescap.org/publications/mpfd-working-paper-preparing-graduate-issues-challenges-and-strategies-kiribatis-ldc).

<sup>2</sup> Available at [www.unescap.org/publications/mpfd-working-paper-ldc-graduation-challenges-and-opportunities-vanuatu](http://www.unescap.org/publications/mpfd-working-paper-ldc-graduation-challenges-and-opportunities-vanuatu).

(iii) Least developed country graduation study: Solomon Islands – challenges and opportunities;

(iv) Graduation of Nepal from the least developed country group: potential implications and issues for consideration;

(v) Graduation of Bhutan from the least developed country group: potential implications and issues for consideration;

(b) Additional reports containing policy recommendations for Asia-Pacific least developed countries included *Asia's Landlocked Developing Countries: Structural Transformation, Poverty Reduction and Financing for Development* and *Asia-Pacific Countries with Special Needs Development Report: Structural Transformation and its Role in Reducing Poverty*;

(c) At the request of the Government of Bangladesh, the secretariat held two capacity-building workshops in Bangkok for government officials, focused on the Sustainable Development Goals and the sustainable graduation of Bangladesh from the category of least developed countries.

4. In response to subparagraph 7 (c):

(a) The secretariat organized scoping missions to the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Nepal and Vanuatu in 2018 to assess institutional capacity needs for the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011–2020 and to identify areas in which ESCAP could enhance capacity-building support to complement and enhance synergy with the existing efforts;

(b) The secretariat, with contributions from several United Nations bodies, resident coordinator offices, the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the International Trade Centre, held consultations at a workshop on the graduation of South Asian least developed countries (Bangladesh, Bhutan and Nepal) in 2019, in close collaboration with respective Governments, to examine the impact on existing flexibility and other special and differential treatments for least developed countries in WTO and other regional trade agreements and to identify capacity-building needs for effective and smooth graduation;

(c) The secretariat, in order to ensure coordinated support to least developed countries, organized joint missions with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development to the Lao People's Democratic Republic in 2018 and 2019 to facilitate policies on graduation;

(d) The secretariat joined missions to the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Myanmar, organized by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat, to conduct assessments of the possible impacts of graduation, the results of which will be compiled and released for dissemination in 2020.

## II. Social development

### A. Resolution 74/7

**Towards disability-inclusive sustainable development: implementation of the Beijing Declaration, including the Action Plan to Accelerate the Implementation of the Incheon Strategy**

#### 1. Requirements of the operative paragraphs

5. In paragraph 4 of its resolution 74/7, the Commission requested the Executive Secretary:

(a) To accord priority to support members and associate members in the implementation of the commitments contained in the Beijing Declaration and the Incheon Strategy to “Make the Right Real” for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific;

(b) To continue to provide technical assistance to members and associate members of the Commission to integrate disability perspectives and strengthen disability-inclusive development efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

(c) To report on progress in the implementation of resolutions 74/7 and 69/13 to the Commission at its seventy-sixth, seventy-eighth and seventy-ninth sessions.

## 2. Progress made

6. In response to subparagraph 4 (a), the secretariat held the fifth session of the Working Group on the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013–2022, in February 2019, to seek guidance from its members representing government and civil society on the implementation of the Incheon Strategy and the commitments contained in the Beijing Declaration. The Working Group adopted two decisions and 22 recommendations for actions to be taken by members and the secretariat. To identify the technical cooperation needs of member States in the implementation of the commitments contained in the Beijing Declaration, the secretariat organized the Regional Forum on Advancing Disability-Inclusive Development through the Beijing Action Plan to Accelerate the Implementation of the Incheon Strategy, held in Guangzhou, China, in December 2019. Building on the results of the Forum, the secretariat will conduct technical advisory missions to selected countries in 2020 to provide technical assistance with regard to policy assessment and development in specific areas of the Incheon Strategy and the Beijing Declaration.

7. To enhance the technical knowledge of member States on goal 3 of the Incheon Strategy, on enhancing access to the physical environment, public transportation, knowledge, information and communication, the secretariat published *Disability at a Glance 2019: Investing in Accessibility in Asia and the Pacific*. In the publication, which is focused on strategic approaches to achieving disability-inclusive sustainable development, the drivers and added value of increasing investment in accessibility are identified, together with key recommendations to narrow policy development and implementation gaps on accessibility and build an inclusive Asia and the Pacific for all. Furthermore, the secretariat prepared a policy paper entitled “Disability-inclusive public procurement: promoting universal design and accessibility”, in which it underscored the importance of including compliance with accessibility standards in bidding criteria in the public procurement process. With regard to goal 10 of the Incheon Strategy, on advancing subregional, regional and interregional cooperation, the secretariat supported the implementation of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Enabling Masterplan 2025: Mainstreaming the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, by providing the ASEAN secretariat and its members with lessons learned from the implementation of the Incheon Strategy.

8. In response to subparagraph 4 (b), the secretariat implemented two technical cooperation projects on disability statistics and disability-inclusive disaster risk reduction, respectively. The project on disability statistics enabled 17 member States to enhance their understanding of key concepts and methodology in disability data collection and their technical capacity to achieve target 17.18 of the 2030 Agenda, on the availability of high-quality, timely and reliable data. Furthermore, the secretariat addressed the importance of including

disability-disaggregated data in voluntary national reviews at the regional preparatory workshop for the 2019 voluntary national reviews, held during the Sixth Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development, in March 2019.

9. To support the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 11 (Sustainable cities and communities), the secretariat launched an e-learning tool for disability-inclusive disaster risk reduction at the Disability-inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction International Forum, held in Hyogo, Japan, in October 2018, in conjunction with the twentieth anniversary conference of the Asian Disaster Reduction Center. Furthermore, in support of the disability-inclusive implementation of Goal 5 (Gender equality), the secretariat organized the regional launch of the global Campaign for the Good Treatment of Girls, Boys and Adolescents with Disabilities in the World in September 2018, in collaboration with the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General on Disability and Accessibility.

## **B. Resolution 74/11 Strengthening regional cooperation to tackle inequality in all its forms in Asia and the Pacific**

### **1. Requirements of the operative paragraphs**

10. In paragraph 2 of its resolution 74/11, the Commission requested the Executive Secretary:

(a) To continue to conduct deeper interdisciplinary research and data analysis in order to map the groups of people who are at risk of being left behind;

(b) To continue to comprehensively analyse inequality trends;

(c) To continue to provide to members and associate members, upon request and subject to the availability of funds, technical assistance and capacity-building activities on policies and programmes that address inequality in all its forms, including on social protection and poverty and/or inequality impact assessment;

(d) To support regional cooperation on policy coordination, sharing of best practices and development experiences to address the issue of inequality in Asia and the Pacific;

(e) To continue to cooperate with members and associate members to deepen regional cooperation and support relevant initiatives to reduce extreme poverty and tackle inequality.

### **2. Progress made**

11. In response to subparagraphs 2 (a) and (b), the secretariat has conducted interdisciplinary research and data analysis to identify the population groups that are furthest behind in access to a range of basic services and opportunities, including education, health care, nutrition, basic water and sanitation, clean energy and decent work. The secretariat has also studied how unequal access to these opportunities and services has changed over time. These results have been published in an online database and in a series of thematic policy papers on inequality of opportunity. Leading up to the adoption of the resolution in May 2018, the secretariat had produced three such papers, on decent work, education and clean energy. Since May 2018, three more thematic policy papers have been produced, focused on the groups that are furthest behind and access gaps in child nutrition, women's health care, and clean water and basic sanitation. In December 2019, the secretariat also issued a paper on financial inclusion. In addition, the secretariat has produced two publications, namely

*Closing the Gap: Empowerment and Inclusion in Asia and the Pacific* (the theme study for the seventy-fifth session of the Commission) and *Social Outlook for Asia and the Pacific: Poorly Protected*. These two publications constitute a comprehensive analysis of inequality trends and the importance of inclusive social policies to reverse the trends.

12. In response to subparagraph 2 (c), the secretariat has supported member States and the United Nations country teams in Bangladesh, Kyrgyzstan, Nepal, Papua New Guinea, Timor-Leste and Turkmenistan with detailed country-specific information and analysis on measuring inequality and leaving no one behind. To build capacity and share knowledge on social protection, the secretariat has also completed four modules on why social protection is needed, how to design inclusive social protection systems, how to implement inclusive social protection schemes and how to finance social protection.

13. In response to subparagraph 2 (d), the secretariat enhanced and updated its Social Protection Toolbox with new good practices from across the region, interactive games and informative videos on how and why social protection coverage needs to be extended to all. Subregional workshops were also convened in Kyrgyzstan, Nepal and Thailand to enhance the sharing of knowledge and information on inequality, social protection and reaching the furthest behind. At these workshops, discussions were held on how the secretariat's analytical products could support voluntary national review processes in member States.

14. Lastly, in response to subparagraphs 2 (d) and (e), the secretariat established the Group of Experts for Strengthening Regional Cooperation on Social Protection in Asia and the Pacific in early 2019. The establishment of the Group followed the recommendation made by the Committee on Social Development at its fifth session, held in November 2018, to develop a regional modality for strengthening regional cooperation on social protection. The Group consists of official representatives of ESCAP members and associate members, and all five ESCAP subregions are represented in its composition. In 2019, the Group met twice to develop the blueprints of a draft regional modality on social protection.

### **III. Disaster risk reduction and statistics**

#### **Resolution 74/6**

#### **Advancing disaster-related statistics in Asia and the Pacific**

##### **1. Requirements of the operative paragraphs**

15. In paragraph 1 of its resolution 74/6, the Commission requested the Committee on Statistics, at its sixth session, and the Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction, at its sixth session, to review the results of the work of the Expert Group on Disaster-related Statistics in Asia and the Pacific and to submit those reviews to the Commission at its seventy-sixth session.

16. In paragraph 2 of its resolution 74/6, the Commission requested the Executive Secretary:

(a) To continue to support the development of disaster-related statistics using the framework of the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction Sendai Monitoring;

(b) To continue to accord priority to coordination with other national and international institutions, including through the Global Partnership on Disaster-related Statistics, the working group on geospatial information and

services for disasters of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management, the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Asia and the Pacific, and the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management, in order to help to ensure alignment with internationally agreed development goals and to continue to foster cooperation and synergies among relevant initiatives on statistical development and geospatial information management;

(c) To support the preparation of a joint report by the Secretary-General, ESCAP, the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, pursuant to decision 49/113 of the Statistical Commission, taking into consideration the work of the Expert Group on Disaster-related Statistics in Asia and the Pacific.

## 2. Progress made

17. In response to paragraph 1, the Committee on Statistics and the Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction have reviewed the Disaster-related Statistics Framework at their respective sixth sessions (2018 and 2019). The Committee on Statistics endorsed the statistical contents of the Framework and supports its application to produce harmonized statistics related to disasters, to strengthen the evidence base for disaster risk reduction policies and to assist in monitoring the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 and the 2030 Agenda. The Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction noted the results of the work of the Expert Group on Disaster-related Statistics in Asia and the Pacific, including the Disaster-related Statistics Framework.

18. In addition to endorsing the content of the Disaster-related Statistics Framework, the Committee on Statistics:

(a) Supports the next phase of work to apply the Disaster-related Statistics Framework to the production and dissemination of statistics and indicators;

(b) Supports the development of training materials and technical assistance programmes on the implementation of the Framework;

(c) Generally supports the recommendation to transform the Expert Group into a technical working group, subject to review by the Committee of the draft terms of reference for the technical working group.

19. In response to paragraph 2, ESCAP is coordinating closely with the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management, the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction to support further developments for disaster-related statistics in the region. The work is mainly taking place in the context of two projects, which were designed to contribute to the overall quality of the Sendai Framework Monitor for the Sustainable Development Goals.

20. The secretariat is currently implementing a project to develop training curriculum and resources to support capacity development for implementing the Disaster-related Statistics Framework, including the development of e-learning courses in collaboration with the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction and other partners. A pilot training course was held in Jakarta from 3 to 5 December 2019 with participants from Fiji, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, the Philippines and Vanuatu.

21. The second project is a cooperative effort with member States in Central Asia to develop a set of disaster-related statistical geospatial indicators as analytical tools in monitoring and reporting on progress towards the achievement of the disaster-related Sustainable Development Goals. The secretariat and regional experts developed geospatial indicators for the analysis of droughts, floods, air pollution and sandstorms at a series of expert group meetings and conducted a pilot test in Kazakhstan. Key findings from this project were reflected in *The Disaster Riskscape across Asia-Pacific: Pathways for Resilience, Inclusion and Empowerment – Asia-Pacific Disaster Report 2019*.

22. The new regional technical working group on disaster-related statistics and its draft terms of reference were approved by the Bureau of the Committee on Statistics at its 23rd meeting, held on 22 April 2019. The technical working group aims, among other things, to: (a) provide a platform for discussion and sharing experiences and research on the development of new tools and data sources for producing official statistics related to disasters; (b) maintain and expand a pool of expertise for technical support to guide the national implementation of norms and standards for disaster-related statistics; and (c) coordinate and exchange advancements from Asia and the Pacific with related global and regional initiatives from other regions.

23. The Statistics Division of the Secretariat, ESCAP, ECE, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction prepared a report on disaster-related statistics for the fiftieth session of the Statistical Commission, in which they underscored the growing demand for disaster-related statistics, the current state of activities globally and the summary of work done by international and regional organizations. Based on the report, there is much potential for coordination and cooperation on this topic.

24. On the basis of the above report, the Statistical Commission adopted its decision 50/116<sup>3</sup> at its fiftieth session, in which it requested the Statistics Division of the Secretariat, ESCAP, ECE, ECLAC and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, in consultation with members of the existing regional expert groups and task forces, to take the following actions: (a) consider options and modalities for the establishment and coordination of a formal mechanism under the purview of the Statistical Commission to advance a common statistical framework on disaster-related statistics; (b) consider options and modalities for the establishment and coordination of a network across the expert communities to sustain cooperation, coordination and fundraising for enhancing statistics related to hazardous events and disasters; and (c) report back to the Statistical Commission at a suitable time.

25. Accordingly, an inter-agency expert group on disaster-related statistics was established under the purview of the Statistical Commission, with the primary objective of developing a common statistical framework on disaster-related statistics. The inter-agency expert group will be co-chaired by the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction and ESCAP.

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<sup>3</sup> *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2019, Supplement No. 4 (E/2019/24-E/CN.3/2019/34), chap. I, sect. B.*

## IV. Transport

### A. Resolution 74/2

#### **Promotion of the Regional Framework for the Planning, Design, Development and Operation of Dry Ports of International Importance**

##### 1. Requirements of the operative paragraphs

26. In paragraph 3 of its resolution 74/2, the Commission requested the Executive Secretary:

(a) To accord priority to the promotion of the Regional Framework for the Planning, Design, Development and operation of Dry Ports of International Importance by assisting members and associate members in their efforts to realize the vision of a sustainable integrated intermodal transport and logistics system;

(b) To encourage effective coordination with other United Nations and multilateral agencies, relevant subregional organizations, international and regional financing institutions, multilateral and bilateral donors and the private sector while promoting the Regional Framework;

(c) To facilitate the sharing of experiences and good practices in the planning, design, development and operation of dry ports of international importance while promoting the Regional Framework;

(d) To seek effective cooperation and collaboration with international and regional financing institutions, multilateral and bilateral donors, private sector investors and international organizations, as appropriate, to mobilize further financial and technical support to the wider development of dry ports of international importance in accordance with their respective mandates;

(e) To report to the Commission at its seventy-sixth session on the progress made in the implementation of the resolution.

##### 2. Progress made

27. Following the adoption of resolution 74/2 by the Commission, the secretariat developed a three-phase plan for its implementation, comprehensively addressing operative paragraphs 3 (a) to 3 (d) thereof.

28. In accordance with phase I (May–August 2018) of the implementation plan, a series of subregional capacity-building workshops on the promotion of the Regional Framework for the Planning, Design, Development and operation of Dry Ports of International Importance were organized for the countries of the following subregions: South-East Asia (Bangkok, 23 and 24 May 2018), North and Central Asia (Almaty, Kazakhstan, 31 May and 1 June 2018) and South Asia (New Delhi, 1 and 2 August 2018) to create awareness about the Regional Framework and its practical recommendations among the relevant stakeholders, including government policymakers and dry port operators. At the workshops, government officials and dry port operators of the above-mentioned subregions increased their knowledge and strengthened their capacity to successfully plan, develop and operate dry ports of international importance.

29. In response to subparagraph 3 (b), the secretariat liaised with the Asian Institute of Transport Development in India to assist in the promotion of the Regional Framework in the countries of South Asia, in particular by holding the above-mentioned subregional workshop in New Delhi, and by preparing relevant articles for the *Asian Journal of Transport and Infrastructure*.

Furthermore, in response to the request of the Government of Indonesia, the secretariat also provided technical assistance at the national workshop on the Regional Framework, organized by the Ministry of Transportation of Indonesia (Bekasi, Indonesia, 21 and 22 March 2019).

30. In response to subparagraph 3 (d) and in line with phase II of the implementation plan (August 2018–December 2019), the secretariat approached the Government of the Republic of Korea to propose two mutually complementary projects on dry ports development. The funding support for one of the projects has been received from the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport of the Republic of Korea. The beneficiary countries of the approved project are Cambodia, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Viet Nam and Thailand. The aim of the project was to study the policies and institutional frameworks for the development of dry ports of international importance, and to propose guiding principles to achieve consistency among them and facilitate the uninterrupted movement of consignments between dry ports located in different countries. The participating Governments appraised the project and requested further technical assistance to ensure that the recommendations would be implemented at the national level. In response to this request, national workshops were held in Cambodia and the Lao People’s Democratic Republic on 22 and 24 October 2019, respectively.

31. Upon the completion of phase II, the secretariat will develop proposals for technical assistance projects to promote the Regional Framework in the countries of North, Central and South Asia in 2020–2021, in phase III of the implementation plan.

32. The promotion of the Regional Framework, which is itself a tool to assist in the implementation of the Intergovernmental Agreement on Dry Ports, is resulting in the growing interest of ESCAP member States in accession to the Agreement.

33. In particular, the Government of the Lao People’s Democratic Republic deposited its instrument of ratification of the Intergovernmental Agreement on Dry Ports with the Secretary-General on 5 November 2019. In accordance with article 5, paragraph 2, of the Agreement, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic officially became a party to the Agreement 30 days after the date of deposit, on 6 December 2019.

34. At its 3rd meeting, held in Bangkok on 13 and 14 November 2019, the Working Group on Dry Ports was informed by the representatives of Azerbaijan, Nepal and Turkey that their internal procedures for the ratification of the Intergovernmental Agreement on Dry Ports were nearing completion and their accession to it could be expected shortly.

### **3. Issues for consideration by the Commission**

35. The Commission may wish to take the following actions:

(a) Encourage interested member States to become parties to the Intergovernmental Agreement on Dry Ports;

(b) Consider requesting the secretariat to further develop the capacity of member States to enhance the efficiency of dry ports in their respective territories through further promotion of the Regional Framework;

(c) Provide further guidance to the secretariat on the most useful areas of support in promoting the development and efficient operation of dry ports in the region.

**B. Resolution 74/3  
Improving road safety in Asia and the Pacific for sustainable transport systems**

**1. Requirements of the operative paragraphs**

36. In paragraph 8 of its resolution 74/3, the Commission requested the Executive Secretary:

(a) To continue the activities aimed at supporting the implementation of the objectives and goals of the Decade of Action for Road Safety and of the 2030 Agenda targets related to road safety;

(b) To continue to monitor the progress made in meeting the updated Regional Road Safety Goals and Targets for Asia and the Pacific 2016–2020;

(c) To collaborate with the World Health Organization (WHO), the other regional commissions, in particular ECE, partners in the United Nations Road Safety Collaboration, international and regional organizations and financing institutions, multilateral and bilateral donors and the private sector, including in the areas of technical and financial support, to improve road safety in Asia and the Pacific;

(d) To report to the Commission at its seventy-sixth session on progress in the implementation of the resolution.

**2. Progress made**

37. In response to subparagraph 8 (a), the secretariat strengthened its road safety initiatives in line with the Decade of Action for Road Safety and the 2030 Agenda as well as the Regional Action Programme for Sustainable Transport Connectivity in Asia and the Pacific, phase I (2017–2021), which includes improving road safety as one of its seven pillars.

38. Since mid-2018, the secretariat has been implementing a project on tackling the main causes of road traffic crashes, fatalities and injuries in Asia-Pacific countries to achieve the road safety targets of the Sustainable Development Goals. The project addresses two of the main causes of road traffic crashes (speeding and drink-driving). Two reports have been prepared on speeding and drink-driving issues. Under this project, the secretariat organized the following events:

(a) A regional seminar on road safety, held in New Delhi on 24 and 25 April 2019, in association with the Asian Institute of Transport Development;

(b) Two subregional capacity-building workshops, for South-East Asia in Manila on 30 and 31 July 2019, and for North and Central Asia in Baku on 3 and 4 October 2019.

39. The secretariat is also implementing a project on strengthening speed management in the Philippines, in collaboration with the Global Road Safety Partnership and other cooperating entities, with the overall objective of contributing to the reduction of speed-related road crashes and their severity levels in the Philippines by improving road user behaviour.

40. In order to create awareness and broaden and deepen understanding of road safety issues, the secretariat published the *Transport and Communications Bulletin for Asia and the Pacific*, No. 89, “Improving Road Safety”, which included six articles on various approaches to improving road safety in specific contexts.

41. In response to subparagraph 8 (b), the secretariat has focused on monitoring the progress made in road safety in line with the updated Regional Road Safety Goals and Targets for Asia and the Pacific 2016–2020. In this regard, the secretariat, in partnership with the World Bank, the International Automobile Federation, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the International Transport Forum, and with support from WHO and the Road Safety Fund, is working towards establishing an Asia-Pacific road safety observatory. The establishment of the observatory was initiated at a workshop held in Singapore on 20 and 21 March 2019.

42. The secretariat prepared two infographics with regional road safety data and trends and an analytical report based on the WHO *Global Status Report on Road Safety 2018*. It also conducted two sets of surveys to assess the situation related to speeding and drink-driving problems in member States.

43. In response to subparagraph 8 (c), the secretariat actively collaborated with various partners to improve the road safety situation in Asia and the Pacific, including by organizing the events listed below.

44. A national capacity-building workshop on road safety was held in Kathmandu on 19–22 March 2019, in collaboration with the secretariat of the Special Envoy for Road Safety, ECE and the Ministry of Physical Infrastructure and Transport of Nepal, as well as other local entities. A draft strategy and action plan on road safety in Nepal (2020–2030) was developed at the workshop in line with the five pillars of the Global Plan for the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011–2020.

45. A meeting on supporting the traffic safety information system of countries in South-East Asia was held in Bangkok on 14 June 2019, in association with the International Transport Forum and supported by the WHO offices in Geneva and Thailand. The meeting was focused on reviewing recent developments on road safety in South-East Asia and examining the linkage of national and local actions to global initiatives and processes.

46. A second workshop on the development of a road safety observatory in the region was held in Bangkok on 3 and 4 December 2019, in collaboration with ADB, with the main objective of seeking country support. Representatives of WHO, the World Bank, ADB and other regional and international organizations participated in the workshop.

## V. Trade and investment

### **Resolution 74/10**

### **Implementation of the Ministerial Declaration on Enhancing Regional Economic Cooperation and Integration to Support the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda in Asia and the Pacific**

#### **1. Requirements of the operative paragraphs**

47. In paragraph 2 of its resolution 74/10, the Commission requested the Executive Secretary:

(a) To accord priority to the implementation of the commitments contained in the Ministerial Declaration;

(b) To continue to accord priority to enhancing economic cooperation and integration in Asia and the Pacific in the programme of work of the Commission and through its conference structure;

(c) To continue to facilitate member States' efforts with regard to regional economic cooperation and integration in a manner that promotes the 2030 Agenda;

(d) To support the convening of a third Ministerial Conference on Regional Economic Cooperation and Integration in Asia and the Pacific in 2021, as appropriate;

(e) To report to the Commission at its seventy-sixth and seventy-eighth sessions on the implementation of the resolution.

## 2. Progress made

48. In the Ministerial Declaration, emphasis is placed on the need to promote market integration by striving to reduce trade and transit costs through trade facilitation and by addressing protectionism. In that regard, since 2018, ESCAP has implemented capacity-building projects and held workshops on trade facilitation and related aspects of trade, investment and innovation policies. Legal and technical readiness assessments for cross-border paperless trade were conducted in eight developing countries in Asia and the Pacific during the biennium. The secretariat has also produced research and developed databases to enable evidence-based policymaking and cooperation in this area, including a bilateral ESCAP-World Bank Trade Cost Database and the United Nations Global Survey on Digital and Sustainable Trade Facilitation ([untfsurvey.org](http://untfsurvey.org)). The secretariat also continued to support the work of the Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement participating States with regard to trade facilitation, services, rules of origin, and investment, as well as the preparations for the implementation of the Framework Agreement on Facilitation of Cross-border Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific. At its sixth session, held from 13 to 15 March 2019, the Committee on Trade and Investment recommended that the secretariat continue its activities in trade and investment with a view to promoting regional cooperation among ESCAP members and associate members to achieve the targets of the 2030 Agenda. At its annual meetings, the Asia-Pacific Foreign Direct Investment Network for Least Developed and Landlocked Developing Countries promoted regional cooperation in attracting and facilitating such investment for sustainable development.

49. In the Ministerial Declaration, emphasis is also placed on the development of seamless connectivity across the region in transport, energy, and information and communications technology (ICT), among other areas, including through cooperation and collaboration on regional initiatives. In this regard, the secretariat held capacity development workshops to address multiple dimensions of infrastructure development (namely ICT, transport and energy). In particular, policymakers from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Mongolia were equipped with tools and knowledge products relevant to their respective national contexts, which enabled them to identify opportunities and challenges in infrastructure connectivity and to propose feasible mechanisms to address connectivity deficits in a sustainable manner.

50. To advance the region's progress on power grid connectivity, the Expert Working Group on Energy Connectivity was established in 2017. To support the deliberations of the Expert Working Group and the development of a regional road map on power system connectivity, four subregional studies were prepared (on South-East Asia, South and South-West Asia, North and Central Asia, and East and North-East Asia). The draft regional road map on power system connectivity, entitled "Promoting cross-border electricity connectivity for sustainable development", was developed in 2019. In it, technical and institutional barriers to be addressed were identified, and key strategies that the region could implement to advance the interconnection of electricity grids were

proposed. In addition, a new project to develop a strategy for power grid interconnection in North-East Asia has been launched, with a consolidated report containing collated and updated analysis on the subregion's interconnection and highlights of the potential synergies with climate change mitigation and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

51. In the Ministerial Declaration, additional emphasis is placed on enhancing regional financial cooperation, including in the areas of domestic resource mobilization, financial inclusion, development of capital markets and public-private partnerships, in a manner that supports financial stability. In this regard, ESCAP convened the second session of the Committee on Macroeconomic Policy, Poverty Reduction and Financing for Development, held in Bangkok from 6 to 8 November 2019. The Committee discussed approaches to strengthen regional tax cooperation and enhancing regional cooperation to leverage financing for countries with special needs, among other issues. The secretariat continued to produce knowledge products and carry out capacity-building efforts in the following areas: estimating investment requirements to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals in Asia and the Pacific; domestic resource mobilization, with a focus on tax issues and municipal public finance; infrastructure financing; access to finance by small and medium-sized enterprises; and strengthening financial interlinkages among the countries of the United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia. The secretariat also established the Infrastructure Financing and Public-Private Partnership Network of Asia and the Pacific with support from the China Public-Private Partnerships Centre.

52. In the Ministerial Declaration, further emphasis is placed on addressing shared vulnerabilities, risks and challenges by developing multi-hazard early warning systems, innovative tools and institutional mechanisms to mitigate the impact of disasters, environmental degradation and the effects of climate change. The secretariat utilized holistic approaches to explore synergistic opportunities across infrastructure sectors through the co-deployment of fibre-optic cables along roads, railways, power grids and oil and gas pipelines, and through the use of methodological tools and policymaking and planning tools to build climate and disaster-resilient infrastructure.

## **VI. Statistics**

### **Resolution 71/14**

#### **Asian and Pacific Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Decade, 2015–2024**

##### **1. Requirements of the operative paragraphs**

53. In paragraph 5 of its resolution 71/14, the Commission requested the Executive Secretary:

(a) To accord priority to the implementation of the commitments contained in the Ministerial Declaration to “Get Every One in the Picture” in Asia and the Pacific and Regional Action Framework on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific;

(b) To continue collaborating closely with relevant donors and other development partners to assist country actions by strengthening technical support available at the national, subregional and regional levels, facilitating regional and interregional cooperation, undertaking advocacy campaigns and helping countries to mobilize resources and access financing options;

(c) To actively promote a holistic approach to civil registration and vital statistics as these systems have a critical role in achieving inclusive and

people-centred development, particularly in achieving the post-2015 development agenda, including by exploring means to strengthen collaboration and coordination among development partners at all levels;

(d) To support the Regional Steering Group for Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific in performing its oversight and strategic guidance functions for the Regional Action Framework and custodianship of the Asian and Pacific Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Decade;

(e) To report to the Commission on progress in the implementation of the resolution at its seventy-second, seventy-sixth and eighty-first sessions, in accordance with the reviews timetabled in the Regional Action Framework.

## 2. Progress made

54. In response to subparagraph 5 (a), the secretariat accorded priority to the implementation of the Regional Action Framework on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific through the work of a dedicated team on civil registration and vital statistics within its subprogramme 7 on statistics.

55. In response to subparagraph 5 (b), the secretariat continued collaborating with relevant development partners and donors to support member States and associate members in improving their civil registration and vital statistics systems. This collaboration occurred under the auspices of the Asia-Pacific Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Partnership, which comprises multiple United Nations agencies and development partners with mandates to help to strengthen civil registration and vital statistics nationally, regionally and globally. The secretariat has also been supporting global work, such as the development of new manuals and handbooks. Examples of collaborative activities carried out by the secretariat since 2015 include the following:

(a) Implementing two projects on vital statistics report-writing benefiting a total of 20 countries. The projects were funded by the Data for Health initiative of Bloomberg Philanthropies and jointly implemented with other development partners such as the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Population Fund and the Pacific Community;

(b) Supporting the establishment and work of subregional civil registrars networks, such as the Pacific Civil Registrars Network and the Civil Registration Professionals of South Asia, as well as other expert groups, workshops, training programmes and reviews related to civil registration and vital statistics, by contributing human and financial resources and technical advice to assist with the organization of meetings;

(c) Conducting technical assistance in selected countries to support the production of vital statistics based on civil registration;

(d) Supporting advocacy for civil registration and vital statistics and their importance to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda, and maintaining a repository of resources and work, or regional knowledge hub, on civil registration and vital statistics, through the website at [www.getinthepicture.org/](http://www.getinthepicture.org/) and regular communication with the national civil registration and vital statistics focal points and other stakeholders.

56. In response to subparagraph 5 (c), the secretariat promoted a holistic approach to civil registration and vital statistics by organizing a training session on the development of national civil registration and vital statistics strategies, with participants from 11 countries, to support improvements to civil registration and vital statistics systems as a whole. In addition, the secretariat participated in the global work on the development of the United Nations Legal Identity

Agenda, which is aimed at supporting civil registration as a foundation for legal identity.

57. In response to subparagraph 5 (d), the secretariat has continued providing support to the Regional Steering Group for Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific by organizing annual meetings and continuously developing substantive documents in that regard. The Steering Group has provided strategic guidance on the implementation of the Regional Action Framework. At its 3rd meeting, held in 2017, the Steering Group called for the organization of the midterm review of the implementation of the Regional Action Framework at the ministerial level, a recommendation which was subsequently approved by the Commission at its seventy-fourth session.

58. In response to subparagraph 5 (e), the secretariat, under the guidance of the Steering Group and in close collaboration with other development partners, conducted the baseline and national target-setting process as described in the Regional Action Framework, and is actively supporting the midterm review of the implementation of the Regional Action Framework and the preparations for the Second Ministerial Conference on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific, to be held in Bangkok from 6 to 9 October 2020.

## **VII. Review of the conference structure of the Commission pursuant to resolution 73/1**

### **Resolution 74/5**

#### **Transition of the Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Sustainable Agriculture to an intergovernmental organization outside the United Nations system**

##### **1. Requirements of the operative paragraphs**

59. In paragraph 7 of its resolution 74/5, the Commission requested the Executive Secretary:

(a) To take all the necessary administrative and legal steps, as appropriate, by 30 June 2018, to assist the Centre in transforming from a subsidiary body of the Commission to a new organization;

(b) To cooperate with the new organization, and to sustain the partnership, as appropriate;

(c) To take measures to transfer unspent voluntary funding to the new organization, subject to the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations;

(d) To reflect the changes emanating from the above decisions in her report to the Commission at its seventy-fifth session, in 2019, on the midpoint review of the conference structure;

(e) To report to the Commission at its seventy-sixth session on progress in the implementation of the resolution.

##### **2. Progress made**

60. In response to subparagraph 7 (a), the status of the Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Sustainable Agriculture as a subsidiary body of ESCAP and a regional institution ended, as of 30 June 2018. Administrative and legal measures taken included the conclusion of all ongoing substantive activities, the termination of staff contracts, the return of the premises to the host Government

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and the issuance of a note verbale and notice on the revised communication channels.

61. In response to subparagraph 7 (b), in 2018, ESCAP supported the member State consultation on the establishment of the new organization, including in particular by organizing the informal meeting of the Governing Council member States, held on 25 June 2018, at which representatives discussed the conceptual design of the new organization and the identification of necessary processes and a timetable for its establishment, among other issues.

62. In view of assisting with the preparation of necessary documentation for the new organization (such as a draft charter, specification of legal basis, and administrative rules and regulations), in July 2018, the secretariat provided relevant reference materials from similar cases of intergovernmental organizations outside the United Nations system. In May 2019, the secretariat met officials from the host Government and, in June 2019, provided the requested information to support the establishment of the new organization.

63. In response to subparagraph 7 (c), a hard disk containing the Centre's knowledge property was handed over to the Ministry of Agriculture of Indonesia. Guidelines on the use of this information, including the description of the secondary rights of the new organization over the future use of the Centre's knowledge property, were agreed to and signed by the Ministry in June 2018.

64. The Centre's financial accounts have been cleaned up in preparation for financial closure and the transfer of unspent funds to the new entity as per the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations. In addition, all property items have been processed, and approval has been obtained from the Headquarters Property Survey Board for transfer to the new organization, once it is established.