

281 (XXV). Addressing climate change issues in the Arab region

The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia,

Reaffirming the outcome of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, namely, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI) which supports initiatives to assess the consequences of climate change,¹

Convinced of the importance of the Ministerial Declaration of the 2007 high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council,² which reaffirms that responses to climate change should be coordinated, with a view to integrating social and economic development therein,

Recalling the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change,³ which noted the scientific consensus that climate change is a reality, and expressed the expectation that the Arab region will be one of the regions that is most vulnerable to the potential impact of climate change, including coastal zone threats, increased water scarcity and worsening drought and desertification,

Recalling also the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol, progress achieved on the associated commitments, and the Bali Road Map and Bali Action Plan,⁴ whereby Member States decided on the need to enhance action for international cooperation in undertaking vulnerability assessments and preparing natural disaster mitigation strategies, in view of the potential risks associated with climate change,

Acknowledging the outcomes of discussions that call upon the United Nations regional commissions to support regional action on climate change adaptation, mitigation, technology and finance,

Mindful of the emphasis given to climate change issues by the Arab Regional Implementation Meeting reports for the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) cycles, and the outcomes of the twelfth to sixteenth CSD sessions and their associated thematic topics related to water, energy, industrial development, climate change, agriculture, desertification, drought and rural development,

Welcoming the Arab Ministerial Declaration on Climate Change that was adopted on 6 December 2007 at the nineteenth session of the Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for the Environment, which affirmed their commitment to adopt national and regional action plans on climate change issues, with a view to assessing possible impacts and developing mitigation and adaptation programmes, and to include climate change-related policies in all sectors within national and regional policies for sustainable development,

¹ *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August – 4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 2, annex.

² Report of the Economic and Social Council for 2007, Ministerial declaration of the high-level segment “Strengthening efforts to eradicate poverty and hunger, including through the global partnership for development” (A/62/3).

³ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, *Climate Change 2007, Mitigation of Climate Change*, ISBN 978-0-521-88011-4.

⁴ Decision/COP.13.

Referring to ESCWA resolution 261 (XXIII) of 12 May 2005 on strengthening the cooperation between ESCWA and the League of Arab States in the field of economic and social development,

1. *Requests* the secretariat to prepare an assessment of the vulnerability to climate change of economic and social development in the region, with particular emphasis on fresh water resources;

2. *Encourages* member countries to actively support and participate in the preparation of the aforementioned vulnerability assessment, including by providing required facilities and information;

3. *Requests* the secretariat to take the measures necessary to increase awareness of climate change, in respect of adjusting to and alleviating its impact, and to work with member country Governments and initiate dialogue over the relevant recommendations;

4. *Also requests* the secretariat to develop an Arab framework action plan on climate change, in partnership with the League of Arab States, UNEP/ROWA and other relevant regional organizations;

5. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to make available through the regular budget the resources necessary to implement those activities;

6. *Also requests* the Executive Secretary to report on the findings and recommendations arising from the assessment and any additional action taken in that regard to the twenty-sixth session of the Commission.

10th plenary meeting
29 May 2008