

291 (XXV). Frequency of the sessions of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies

The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia,

Recalling the Commission decision in resolution 158 (XIV) of 5 April 1987 to hold its sessions biennially rather than annually,

Also recalling successive resolutions adopted between 1992 and 2003 on the establishment of the seven subsidiary bodies of the Commission and the frequency of their sessions,

Referring to the concern expressed at its twenty-fourth session over the lengthy interval between sessions, that led to the decision to establish a technical committee comprising senior officials from member countries, which would meet once every six months with a view to supporting ESCWA in achieving its aims,

Considering the recommendation of the Statistical Committee at its seventh session that a regional working group should be established composed of the directors of statistical offices in the region, to meet in years when the Committee does not, and a similar recommendation, made at its fifth session by the Technical Committee on Liberalization of Foreign Trade and Economic Globalization in the Countries of the ESCWA Region, that two separate expert group meetings should be held during the period between each Committee session, one dedicated to trade issues and the other to regional integration and financing for development,

Considering also the recommendations made by the Committee on Energy¹ and the Committee on Social Development² at their sixth sessions that their sessions should be held annually rather than biennially in order to increase interaction between member countries and between those countries and the secretariat,

Noting that the Technical Committee has so far held only one meeting since it was established,

Having deliberated on the key findings and the way forward in the report of the secretariat on the frequency of the sessions of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies,³ in conjunction with the lessons learned from evaluation of the sessions of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies and the way forward,⁴

Recognizing that the frequency of the sessions of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies cannot be considered separately from programme priorities, ESCWA intergovernmental machineries and other related factors,

1. *Decides* to defer consideration of the relevant recommendations of the Committees on Energy and Social Development, and of the Statistical Committee and the Technical Committee on Liberalization of Foreign Trade and Economic Globalization in the Countries of the ESCWA Region;

2. *Calls on* the secretariat to carry out an in-depth evaluation of the intergovernmental structure of ESCWA in the light of both programme priority, as identified by member countries and ongoing United Nations reforms;

¹ E/ESCWA/SDPD/2007/IG.1/7.

² E/ESCWA/SDD/2007/IG.1/8.

³ E/ESCWA/25/6(Part I)/Add.2, paras 17-23.

⁴ E/ESCWA/25/6(Part I)/Add.1, paras 13-15.

3. *Also calls on* the secretariat to support, closely monitor and assess the contribution of the Technical Committee;

4. *Appreciates* the sharing of lessons learned from the evaluation of the intergovernmental sessions held during the period 2004-2007;

5. *Invites* member Governments to review their internal distribution channels for ESCWA session documents, solicit feedback from the ministries or offices concerned on how distribution channels could be further improved and share the outcome of those reviews with the secretariat;

6. *Requests* the secretariat to:

(a) Improve and continually update the ESCWA website, with the aim of providing easy access for future delegates attending the sessions of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies to session documents and reports;

(b) Activate the member country official focal points identified by those countries;

7. *Decides* to review the outcome of the in-depth evaluation at the twenty-sixth session.

10th plenary meeting
29 May 2008