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**Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia**

Twenty-third session  
Damascus, 9-12 May 2005

Item 7 (a-ii) of the provisional agenda

**REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY  
ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMISSION**

**FOLLOW-UP TO IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED  
BY THE COMMISSION AT ITS TWENTY-SECOND SESSION**

*Consideration of the Establishment within the Economic and Social Commission  
for Western Asia of a United Nations Arabic Language Centre:  
resolution 239 (XXII)*

1. At its twenty-second session, the Commission adopted resolution 239 (XXII) in which it called upon the secretariat to consider the establishment of a United Nations Arabic Language Centre whose objective shall be to raise the technical and linguistic level of the Arabic terminology used in United Nations documents, through facilitating the use of the Arabic language in such documents; and to establish a committee responsible for determining the competences of the aforementioned Centre.
2. Since the adoption of the Commission resolution, the ESCWA Conference Services Section has developed an ESCWA internal database on Arabic terminology. The database is available to external users on the ESCWA website. ESCWA developed an Arabic glossary of development terms and formulated a project proposal on an information and communication technology e-glossary. It also rendered advisory services to the Arab Organization for Translation and Arab Union of Translators and contributed to a series of capacity-building workshops on issues related to digital Arabic language content and archiving. ESCWA has also participated in the formulation of terms of reference for the creation of an Arab Language Organization in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme Regional Bureau of Arab States.
3. Pursuant to the aforementioned resolution, the ESCWA secretariat has undertaken the following activities:
  - (a) The Executive Secretary initiated consultations with the Under-Secretary-General for General Assembly Affairs and Conference Management on the objective and financial and administrative implications of the proposed Centre;
  - (b) The Executive Secretary set up a Task Force on the Consideration of the Establishment of the Centre;
  - (c) The Task Force prepared a concept paper for the first phase of the project, which was submitted by ESCWA to the Under-Secretary-General for General Assembly Affairs and Conference Management;
  - (d) The Task Force also recommended the carrying out of a feasibility study to define clearly the scope of the Centre and to develop a practical plan of action for its implementation.