

**ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION
FOR WESTERN ASIA**

**REPORT ON THE TWENTY-SIXTH SESSION
17-20 May 2010**

**ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL
OFFICIAL RECORDS: 2010**

SUPPLEMENT No. 21

UNITED NATIONS

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Summary

The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), pursuant to its resolutions 158 (XIV) of 5 April 1987 on holding the sessions of the Commission on a biennial basis, and 196 (XVII) of 31 May 1994 on the frequency of sessions of the Commission, held its twenty-sixth session at the United Nations House in Beirut from 17 to 20 May 2010.

Session meetings were held in two segments, one for senior officials and the other for ministers. At the senior officials' segment, consideration was given to the report of the Executive Secretary on the activities of the Commission, management issues, the draft strategic framework for the biennium 2012-2013, and progress made in the establishment of the ESCWA technology centre. During the session, two roundtables were held, the first on national youth policies within the frame of the World Programme of Action for Youth (WPAY), and the second on human and institutional capacity-building.

The session concluded with the adoption of recommendations made by the senior officials' segment and resolutions to be submitted to the Economic and Social Council for action or brought to the attention of the Council. This report presents those recommendations and resolutions and a summary of the main points that were raised in the course of the discussions.

CONTENTS

	<i>Paragraphs</i>	<i>Page</i>
Introduction	1-2	3
<i>Chapter</i>		
I. ISSUES CALLING FOR ACTION BY THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL	3	4
II. ISSUES TO BE BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL	4	11
III. RECOMMENDATIONS	5-6	19
IV. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION AND DISCUSSION	7-66	21
A. Requests by States Members of the United Nations and/or its specialized agencies that are not members of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) to participate as observers in the twenty-sixth session of the Commission	7	21
B. Policy issues in the ESCWA region	8-18	21
C. Report of the Executive Secretary on the activities of the Commission	19-37	23
D. Management issues.....	38-54	26
E. Revised draft strategic framework for the biennium 2012-2013.....	55-59	29
F. Progress made in the establishment of ESCWA technology centre	60-64	29
G. Date and venue of the twenty-seventh session of the Commission.....	65	30
H. Other business	66	30
V. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON ITS TWENTY-SIXTH SESSION.....	67	30
VI. ORGANIZATION OF WORK	68-87	30
A. Date and venue	68-69	30
B. Opening of the session.....	70-79	30
C. Participation.....	80	32
D. Election of officers	81-83	32
E. Credentials	84	33
F. Agenda.....	85-86	33
G. Documents.....	87	34
ANNEXES		
I. List of participants		35
II. List of documents		43

INTRODUCTION

1. The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) held its twenty-sixth session pursuant to its resolutions 158 (XIV) of 5 April 1987 on holding the sessions of the Commission on a biennial basis, and 196 (XVII) of 31 May 1994 on the frequency of sessions of the Commission.
2. This report covers the work and outcome of the twenty-sixth session of the Commission, which was held in Beirut from 17 to 20 May 2010. The session was composed of seven plenary meetings, five of which were for senior officials and two for ministers, in addition to two closed meetings.

I. ISSUES CALLING FOR ACTION BY THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

3. At its seventh plenary meeting, held on 19 May 2010, the Commission adopted three resolutions to be decided upon by the Economic and Social Council, the texts of which are set forth below.

292 (XXVI). Upgrading the Section for Emerging and Conflict-Related Issues to the level of a division and establishing a governmental committee on emerging issues and development in conflict settings

The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia,

Cognizant of the repercussions of successive conflicts in the region, in particular occupation and its negative impact on economic and social development in member countries, the importance of addressing that impact and adopting an approach that takes into account the realities of the region in solving development problems,

Emphasizing the need to sustain economic and social development efforts in all circumstances, in particular under conditions of crisis and occupation, as economic and social development represents a basic instrument for peacebuilding,

Guided by the outcome of the 2005 World Summit,¹ which stressed the correlation between development, human rights and peace, as no element can be realized without the others,

Guided also by the report of the Secretary-General on peacebuilding in the immediate aftermath of conflict² in which he calls for enhancement of the conflict management capacity of regional commissions, strengthening regional capacity in peacebuilding and creating employment opportunities, and building the capacity of the public sector and its institutions,

Recalling ESCWA resolutions 282 (XXV) of 29 May 2008 and 271 (XXIV) of 11 May 2006 on mitigating the impact on development of conflict, occupation and instability in the ESCWA region and strengthening the role of ESCWA in that regard,

Noting the recommendation of the Technical Committee³ at its third meeting on the establishment at ESCWA of a governmental committee on emerging issues and development in conflict settings, and the outcome of the consultations held between the secretariat and member countries participating in the working group charged with studying the issue,

Noting also peacebuilding efforts exerted by ESCWA through its programmes to mitigate the impact on development of conflict and occupation, and build the capacity of member countries to address the challenges stemming from conflict, emerging issues and instability,

1. Declares its commitment to the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and its support to the efforts of the Palestinian people and the Palestinian Authority towards the establishment of an independent State of Palestine, based on United Nations resolutions; its condemnation of the Israeli actions that violate the rights of Palestinians, including changing the demography of the occupied city of Jerusalem; imposing a

¹ General Assembly resolution 60/1.

² A/63/881-S/2009/304.

³ ESCWA, *Report of the Technical Commission on its Third Meeting*, Beirut, 21-22 July 2009 (E/ESCWA/2009/TC.3/6).

siege on Gaza; building the annexation and expansion wall on Palestinian territory; and obstructing efforts to achieve development and build Palestinian institutions;

2. *Calls upon* member countries:

(a) To continue to seek the achievement of peace and stability in the region and remedy the root causes of conflict within a framework of economic and social development programmes;

(b) To enhance development efforts, in particular in countries affected by conflict and occupation, in order to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs);

(c) To promote public sector institutional capacity-building efforts in view of the contribution of such efforts to addressing emerging issues and conflict, developing regional cooperation and coordination in that area;

(d) To intensify efforts to monitor and analyse potential sources of conflict and develop plans and programmes to address them;

(e) To formulate policies, programmes and strategies at the national and regional level with a view to addressing the repercussions of conflict and instability in member countries, preventing potential conflict and addressing the roots of such conflict and instability;

(f) To contribute to the mobilization of financial and human resources to support development efforts in situations of instability and foster preparedness of member countries to address potential future conflict.

3. *Decides* to establish a committee on emerging issues and development in conflict settings comprising member country representatives with functions and mandates to be determined after further consultation with member countries;

4. *Requests* the secretariat:

(a) To provide the necessary support for ESCWA subprogramme 7 in terms of financial and human resources and upgrade the section responsible for its implementation to the level of a division similar to other ESCWA subprogrammes, with a view to meeting the needs of member countries and intensifying its activities in the following areas:

- (i) **Emerging issues:** monitoring and analysing emerging issues and presenting recommendations, proposals and practical programmes to deal with them;
- (ii) **Development in situations of conflict and instability:** designing and implementing programmes, projects and activities aimed at mitigating the repercussions of conflict and instability, and contributing to peacebuilding;
- (iii) **Development in the least developed countries:** defining and meeting institutional needs in order to achieve the MDGs;
- (iv) **Development of public sector institutions:** designing and implementing projects and programmes for institutional development in member countries in all planning and management areas with a view to enabling them to address present and potential future crises and challenges;

(b) To provide organizational and technical support to the committee on emerging issues and development in conflict settings;

(c) To promote the effective participation of ESCWA and member countries in regional and international events and forums relating to conflict and emerging issues;

(d) To promote cooperation with international and regional organizations in the field of peacebuilding and development in conflict settings, build the institutional capacity of member countries, and design programmes and policies pursuant to international recommendations on development in conflict settings;

5. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to follow up on the implementation of the present resolution and submit a report on progress achieved in that regard to the Commission at its twenty-seventh session.

7th plenary meeting
19 May 2010

293 (XXVI). Upgrading the ESCWA Centre for Women to the level of a division and follow-up to the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action in the Arab countries after fifteen years: Beijing + 15

The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia,

Recalling the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action,¹ the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly “Women 2000: Gender Equality, Development and Peace for the Twenty-first Century”,² the Declaration of the Commission on the Status of Women on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the fourth World Conference on Women³ and the resolutions of the Arab Regional Conference Ten Years after Beijing: Call for Peace,⁴

Recalling also the Millennium Development Goals,⁵ in particular Goal 3 on promoting gender equality and empowering women, and its relevance to combating poverty and stimulating sustainable development,

Guided by the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,⁶ and reaffirming General Assembly resolutions 62/218 of 12 February 2008 and 60/230 of 23 December 2005 on the Convention and all other relevant international resolutions,

Recalling that the Commission on the Status of Women reaffirmed the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, which stressed the importance of the role assumed by the United Nations regional commissions in coordinating between member countries in order to harmonize positions and enable the national machineries for the advancement of women to contribute effectively to accelerating the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and all relevant follow-up activities,

¹ United Nations, *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women*, Beijing 4-15 September 1995 (A/CONF.177/20/Rev.1), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

² General Assembly resolution S-23/2, annex, and resolution S-23/3, annex.

³ United Nations, *Report of the Commission on the Status of Women on its Forty-ninth Session*, New York, 28 February - 11 and 22 March 2005 (E/2005/27-E/CN.6/2005/11), chap. 1.

⁴ ESCWA, *Report of the Arab Regional Conference Ten Years After Beijing: Call for Peace*, Beirut, 8-10 July 2004 (E/ESCWA/WOM/2004/IG.1/6), chap. I.

⁵ See: www.un.org/millenniumgoals.

⁶ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1249, No. 20378.

Recalling also its resolution 240 (XXII) of 17 April 2003 on the establishment within the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia of a committee on women and a centre for women at ESCWA, to act as the secretariat of the committee,

Noting the international efforts and the bases established by General Assembly resolution 63/311 of 2 October 2009 on system-wide coherence, which called for strengthening institutional arrangements in support of gender equality and the empowerment of women through all United Nations entities concerned with the advancement of women, bearing in mind the expected impact of the resolution on the role and mandates of the centres and divisions for the advancement of women at the regional commissions,

Taking into account the recommendation of the Committee on Women at its third session, held in Abu Dhabi from 14 to 15 March 2007, which requested ESCWA to undertake a central role in increasing cooperation, integration and exchange of expertise among member countries and providing support for building the institutional and human capacity of national machineries for the advancement of women, in cooperation and coordination with the United Nations Development Fund for Women, the League of Arab States, the Arab Women Organization and the Center for Arab Women Training and Research,

Noting the efforts exerted by ESCWA for the empowerment of women through building the capacity of national machineries for the advancement of women to integrate women into national policies and implement international conventions and other relevant international resolutions, in particular the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,

1. *Calls upon* member countries to adopt the resolution on the follow-up to the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action in the Arab countries after fifteen years: Beijing + 15, which was adopted by the Committee on Women at its fourth session, held in Beirut from 21 to 23 October 2009, and the outcome of the fifty-fourth session of the Commission on the Status of Women;⁷

2. *Requests* member countries to adopt the recommendation made by the Committee on Women at its fourth session on supporting the Centre for Women with additional human resources in order to upgrade it to the level of a division, similar to other divisions of ESCWA, with the aim of increasing its efforts in assisting member countries in the area of empowerment of women;

3. *Requests* the secretariat to complete administrative procedures related to the upgrading of the Centre for Women to the level of a division;

4. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to submit to the Commission at its twenty-seventh session a report on progress achieved in the implementation of the present resolution.

7th plenary meeting
19 May 2010

294 (XXVI). Establishment of the ESCWA technology centre

The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia,

Recalling the 2005 World Summit Outcome,¹ Economic and Social Council resolution 2004/68 of 5 November 2004 and the Millennium Declaration,² which identified the promotion of science and technology as a United Nations priority,

⁷ United Nations, *Report of the Commission on the Status of Women on its Forty-ninth Session*, New York, 1-12 March 2010 (E/2009/27-E/CN.6/2009/15).

¹ General Assembly resolution 60/1.

² General Assembly resolution 55/2.

Recalling also General Assembly resolution 64/222 of 21 December 2009 adopting the Nairobi outcome document of the High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation,³ which emphasized the need to promote, including through South-South cooperation, access to and the transfer of technology,

Further recalling its resolution 284 (XXV) of 29 May 2008, which approved the establishment of the ESCWA Technology Centre for Development,

Expressing its appreciation to Jordan for its offer to host the Centre, and noting that resources for the centre should come from the following sources:

- (a) Support from the host country;
- (b) Support from ESCWA;
- (c) Income received by the Centre for services provided to beneficiaries;
- (d) Any other funding sources approved by the board of governors.

1. *Adopts* the statute of the ESCWA Technology Centre, in accordance with the present resolution, as the basis for its operations;

2. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to take all necessary steps for the prompt establishment of the Centre, including the conclusion of a headquarters agreement between the host country and the United Nations;

3. *Also requests* the Executive Secretary to establish the first founding board of governors by soliciting nominations from member countries;

4. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to report to the Commission at its twenty-seventh session on the implementation of this resolution, including the initial operating phase of the Centre, and the achievements of ESCWA in that regard.

Annex

DRAFT STATUTE OF THE ESCWA TECHNOLOGY CENTRE

Establishment

1. The ESCWA Technology Centre shall be established in accordance with the following terms and conditions.

Mission

2. The mission of the Centre is to assist members of ESCWA and public and private organizations to acquire the tools and capabilities necessary to accelerate socio-economic development in order to attain technological parity with other nations and regions of the world and to contribute to convert the economies of member countries into economies based on scientific and technological knowledge.

Objectives

3. The objectives of the Centre are to assist the members of ESCWA by strengthening their capabilities to develop and manage national systems; develop, transfer, adapt and apply technology; determine the

³ General Assembly resolution 64/222.

suitable technology for the region and facilitate its development and improve the legal and commercial framework for the transfer of technology. The Centre also aims at enhancing the technological and scientific knowledge content of major economic sectors in member countries.

Functions

4. The Centre will achieve the above objectives by undertaking such functions as:
 - (a) Conducting research and analysis of trends, conditions and opportunities;
 - (b) Providing advisory services;
 - (c) Disseminating information and promoting good practices;
 - (d) Developing partnerships and other networks with regional and international organizations and key stakeholders;
 - (e) Training national personnel, particularly scientists and policy analysts;
 - (f) Assessing the scientific and technological level and content of production and service sectors and measuring performance indicators of those sectors in relation with the transfer of scientific and technological knowledge.

Status and organization

5. The Centre shall have a board of governors (herein referred to as Board), an executive director and staff, and a technical committee.
6. The Centre shall be located in Amman, Jordan. A host country agreement shall be concluded between the Government of Jordan and the United Nations.
7. The activities of the Centre shall be in line with relevant resolutions and decisions adopted by the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Commission. The Centre shall be subject to the Financial and Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations and applicable administrative instructions and issuances.

Board of governors

8. The Centre shall have a board of governors consisting of a standing representative designated by the Government of Jordan, and no fewer than six additional representatives nominated by the other members of ESCWA and elected by the Commission. The representatives who are elected by the Commission shall be elected for a period of three years and shall be eligible for re-election one more time only. If a representative is unable to serve for the full term, the vacancy shall be filled by the Government of that representative. The Executive Secretary of ESCWA or his/her representative shall attend meetings of the board but shall not have the right to vote.
9. During the two year establishment period, a board of governors will be constituted comprising representatives of all member countries who so wish.
10. The Executive Director of the Centre shall serve as secretary of the board of governors and, in such capacity, shall keep and circulate minutes of board meetings to its members.
11. Representatives of (a) any State Member of the United Nations, (b) United Nations bodies and specialized and related agencies, and (c) such other organizations as the Board may deem appropriate as well as experts in fields of interest to the board may, at the board's discretion, be invited to attend board meetings.

12. The board shall meet at least once a year and shall adopt its own rules of procedure. Sessions of the board shall be convened by the Executive Secretary of ESCWA, who may propose special sessions of the board at his/her own initiative and shall convene such special sessions at the request of a majority of board members.

A quorum for board meetings shall be a majority of its members.

14. Each member of the board shall have one vote. Decisions and recommendations of the board shall be made by consensus or, where this is not possible, by a majority of the members present and voting. For the purposes of these rules, the phrase “members present and voting” means members casting an affirmative or negative vote. Members who abstain from voting are considered as not voting.

15. The board shall, at each regular session, elect a chairperson and vice-chairperson. The chairperson and the vice-chairperson shall hold office until the next regular session of the board. The chairperson or, in his/her absence, the vice-chairperson shall preside at board meetings. If the chairperson is unable to serve for the full session for which he/she has been elected, the vice-chairperson shall act as chairperson for the remainder of that session.

16. The board shall review the administration and financial status of the Centre and the implementation of its programme of work. The Executive Secretary of ESCWA shall submit an annual report as adopted by the board to the Commission at its regular sessions.

Executive director and staff

17. The Centre shall have an executive director and such additional staff as are appointed by the Secretary-General in accordance with United Nations regulations, rules and administrative instructions. The executive director and additional staff shall have the status of ESCWA staff members.

18. The executive director shall be responsible to the Executive Secretary of ESCWA for the administration of the Centre and the implementation of its programme of work.

Technical committee

19. The Centre shall have a technical committee consisting of experts from members of ESCWA and from intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. Members of the technical committee shall be appointed by the executive director in consultation with the Executive Secretary of ESCWA.

20. The technical committee shall be responsible for advising the executive director on the formulation of the programme of work and on other technical matters concerning the Centre’s operations.

21. Reports of meetings of the technical committee, and the executive director’s observations thereon, shall be submitted to the board at its next session.

22. The chairperson at each meeting of the technical committee shall be elected by the majority vote of those members of the technical committee present and voting.

Resources of the Centre

23. The Centre shall be financed from the following sources:

- (a) Support from the host country;
- (b) Support from ESCWA;
- (c) Income received by the Centre for services provided to beneficiaries;
- (d) Any other funding sources approved by the board of governors.

24. The Centre will endeavour to mobilize sufficient resources to support its activities in addition to those received from the host country pursuant to the agreement signed between the host country and the United Nations.

25. The United Nations shall maintain separate trust funds for donations for technical cooperation projects or other special contributions for activities of the Centre.

26. The financial resources of the Centre shall be administered in accordance with the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations.

Amendments

27. Amendments to the present statute shall be adopted by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA).

28. In the event of any procedural matter arising that is not covered by the present statute or rules of procedure adopted by the board of governors, the pertinent part of the terms of reference and rules of procedure of ESCWA shall apply.

Entry into force

29. The present statute shall enter into force on the date of its adoption by the Commission.

7th plenary meeting
19 May 2010

II. ISSUES TO BE BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

4. At its seventh plenary meeting, held on 19 May 2010, the Commission adopted a number of resolutions to be brought to the attention of the Economic and Social Council, the texts of which are set forth below.

295 (XXVI). Guiding Declaration of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia on giving greater attention to Youth Policies: An Opportunity for Development

The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia,

Stressing the need to enhance the capacity of member countries in formulating youth policies,

Having reviewed the main paper presented to the Commission at its twenty-sixth session, held in Beirut from 17 to 20 May 2010,¹ and which is based on the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond and the Supplement thereto;² the outcome and recommendations of the expert group meeting held in Abu Dhabi in 2009;³ and the regional survey conducted by ESCWA in 2008 on the response of member countries to the World Programme of Action for Youth (WPAY),

¹ ESCWA, *National Youth Policies within the Framework of the World Programme of Action for Youth* (E/ESCWA/26/4(Part I)).

² General Assembly resolutions 50/81 and 62/126. Pursuant to resolution 47/1 of the United Nations Commission for Social Development, the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond and the Supplement thereto became a unified set of guiding principles, to be referred to as the World Programme of Action for Youth (WPAY).

³ ESCWA, *Report of the Expert Group Meeting on Reinforcing Social Equity: Integrating Youth Into the Development Process*, 29-31 March 2009 (E/ESCWA/SDD/2009/3/Rev.1).

1. *Stresses* the importance of ESCWA continuing to assume its role as a regional hub in the following areas:

(a) Strengthening national capacity of member countries in the formulation of national policies and strategies targeting youth, organizing training workshops, preparing guides to enhance the capacity of national staff in the area of national policy formulation targeting youth, and encouraging research and surveys that determine the basic factors affecting youth and their needs, and ways in which these could be addressed;

(b) Activating the role of national coordination mechanisms and expanding them to include national organs concerned with youth issues in member countries;

(c) Preparing periodical regional reports on developments regarding the condition of youth in the region within the framework of the 15 priority areas of WPAY based on official data of member countries;

(d) Enhancing the role of national statistical offices in member countries in collecting and analysing statistical data on youth, developing multifunctional data systems and databases, and setting indicators and standards in accordance with the policies of each member country;

(e) Exchanging expertise between the countries of the region, and benefiting from successful experience in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of youth policies in the priority areas of WPAY;

(f) Adopting youth policies as a principal theme during the forthcoming meeting of the Regional Coordination Mechanism in 2010 and continuing efforts towards expanding the scope of cooperation between United Nations regional agencies and programmes in promoting the recommendations of the present declaration and developing the capacity of Governments in this regard;

(g) Enhancing cooperation and coordination between ESCWA, the League of Arab States and the Gulf Cooperation Council in the context of encouraging Governments in the region to formulate national youth policies and with regard to incorporating youth issues into the Arab Family Health Project;

2. *Stresses* the importance of the Guiding Declaration on giving greater attention to Youth Policies: An Opportunity for Development, contained in the annex to this resolution.

3. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to submit to the Commission at its twenty-seventh session a report on the implementation of this resolution.

Annex

Guiding Declaration of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia on giving greater attention to Youth Policies: An Opportunity for Development

1. *We*, the representatives of the countries members of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) participating in the twenty-sixth session of ESCWA and the round table on Youth Policies in the Arab World: Challenges and Opportunities, held at the United Nations House in Beirut from 17 to 20 May 2010 under the patronage of the Government of the Republic of Lebanon, represented by the Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies, His Excellency Mr. Nabih Berri;

2. *We note* the concurrence of the twenty-sixth session of ESCWA in 2010 with the United Nations International Year of Youth: Dialogue and Mutual Understanding;⁴

⁴ General Assembly resolution 64/134 of 18 December 2009.

3. *We acknowledge* the importance of the United Nations resolutions on youth, the first of which was the Declaration on the Promotion among Youth of the Ideals of Peace, Mutual Respect and Understanding between Peoples, adopted in 1965;⁵

4. *We recall* the priority areas identified in WPAY, adopted by the General Assembly in its resolutions 50/81 of 14 December 1995 and 62/126 of 18 December 2007 and reaffirmed in subsequent resolutions, the most recent of which is resolution 64/130 of 18 December 2009;

5. *We note with appreciation* the achievements recorded in the Western Asia region during the last three decades, the first of which was the Regional Plan of Action on Youth, prepared in 1983 by the then Economic Commission for Western Asia, and which also include national youth strategies, the integration of essential youth needs into the objectives of national plans, and the adoption of the issue of youth participation as a means for the design and implementation of development programmes;

6. *We express* our appreciation of the value of youth as an essential agent in changing the present and shaping the future, and stress the importance of according priority to and providing care for youth;

7. *We recognize* that investing in youth brings guaranteed dividends and that national youth strategies are primarily an expression of the commitment by a society towards its citizens;

8. *We stress* that unemployment is one of the main concerns facing youth and which therefore underscores the importance of creating new and promising employment opportunities in developing areas in order to avoid a social and economic drain on society;

9. *We stress* the importance of Economic and Social Council resolution 1998/46, which entrusted the United Nations regional commissions with the role of team-leading and responsibility for ensuring coordination and cooperation in all areas relating to the economic and social programmes carried out by the United Nations system in their respective geographical regions through the Regional Coordination Mechanism;

10. *We emphasize* the comparative advantage of ESCWA, within the context of its functions, in inviting member countries to meet and to attend conferences, and in undertaking a leading role in coordinating efforts of regional organizations and country bureaux of United Nations organizations with regard to the implementation of WPAY;

11. *We welcome* the fifth World Youth Congress to be held in Istanbul, from 31 July to 13 August 2010, and the initiative of the Government of Mexico to host a World Youth Conference in Mexico City from 24 to 27 August 2010, both of which will focus on the issue of youth and development in the context of the Millennium Development Goals.

We renew our commitment to WPAY through the following:

1. *Activating* the response to WPAY by using the goals and targets proposed in the reports of the Secretary-General⁶ as a means to facilitate the formulation and monitoring of national youth policies;

2. *Developing* national youth policies in member countries which have not yet incorporated youth into their development programmes, and involving youth in the formulation of a vision based on rights and duties, reflecting their national youth development approach;

⁵ General Assembly resolution 2037 (XX) of 7 December 1965.

⁶ Goals and Targets for Monitoring the Progress of Youth in the Global Economy, Sixty-second session (A/62/Add.1 – E/2007/7/Add.1); Implementation of the World Programme of Action for Youth: Progress and Constraints with Respect to the Well-Being of Youth and their Role in Civil Society (E/64/61 – E/2009/3).

3. *Reviewing* existing youth policies and strategies with a view to activating them within the context of WPAY, pursuing efforts towards developing sources of self-financing to secure the resources needed for policy implementation and supplementing them from other national, regional and international sources;

4. *Adopting* a human rights-based approach in formulating national youth policies, engaging all social, economic and political actors in supporting and protecting the rights of youth, and changing the prevailing perceptions of youth, including youth with special needs, from mere receivers of grants or services to people possessing rights;

5. *Resorting* to the 15 priority areas of WPAY as a basic framework for identifying national priorities and requirements, discussing them through governmental institutions, civil society organizations and private sector organizations, with the participation of young people, and achieving a societal consensus in that regard in order to ensure the commitment of all parties;

6. *Allocating* part of the statistical work programme in member countries to monitor youth development and pursuing the development of a list of indicators needed for that purpose, as a preliminary list subject to revision and which could be tailored to the priorities of each country;

7. *Exerting* the utmost effort to establish a high-level national mechanism, in countries where such a mechanism is currently lacking, to undertake coordination between ministries and parties concerned with youth issues, defining the functions of each party, enhancing their competence and setting cooperation frameworks allowing national youth policy to cover all sectors, to be implemented through national partnership between non-governmental organizations, governmental offices, ministries and other major stakeholders.

7th plenary meeting
19 May 2010

296 (XXVI). Enhancing public sector institutions and resources to attain national development goals

The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia,

Guided by the Declaration on the Rights to Development¹ that consecrated Development as an inalienable human right and by the existing direct correlation between modernization of the public sector and the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs),

Guided also by General Assembly and Economic and Social Council resolutions and decisions pertaining to the mutually reinforcing relationship between public administration and development, with particular emphasis on General Assembly resolution 60/34 and Economic and Social Council resolution 2008/32, which clearly acknowledge the positive impact of institutional development and capacity-building on socio-economic development,

Recognizing that development/modernization of the public sector and its institutions and resources is a continuous and evolutionary process that contributes to improving performance in development areas,

Welcoming the growing interest expressed by member countries in public sector institutions and resource development/modernization programmes,

¹ General Assembly resolution 41/128 of 4 December 1986.

Noting with appreciation the positive impact of the various public sector institutions and resource development activities and initiatives implemented by ESCWA aiming at enabling the public sector to lead national modernization and development endeavours, as well as documenting successful experiences in increasing extrabudgetary resources and forging partnerships to facilitate the implementation of public sector development programmes,

Noting with great concern the introduction of public sector development/modernization concept through institutional development as a key component of ESCWA's strategy for the enhancement of national socio-economic development efforts,

1. *Appeals* to member countries to:

(a) Continue public sector institutions and resource modernization/development, as needed, and enhance the resilience of those institutions to occupation, conflict and their spillover effects, in addition to the ramifications of global and regional challenges;

(b) Build upon the successes achieved through implemented public sector development/modernization strategies as a tool for conflict mitigation and peacebuilding;

(c) Invest additional resources in meeting the requests of member countries for building the capacities of public sector workers, particularly in the fields of enhancing and developing public human and financial resource management;

2. *Requests* the secretariat to:

(a) Follow up successful public sector development initiatives taken by some member countries aiming at increasing progress in achieving the MDGs and mitigating the negative impact and spillover effects of emerging global challenges;

(b) Enhance institutional development programmes through strengthening analytical research, advisory services and training, integrating further research and analysis in the normative and operational work, and continuing to work with national and international partners in developing joint interventions to that effect, particularly in conflict-affected countries;

(c) Draw guidance from successful international and regional models, disseminate best practices and build on them through a collaborative approach with member countries;

(d) Ensure that additional human and financial resources are made available for the required normative and operational work to devise public sector development/modernization programmes, particularly in the areas of strengthening and developing public human and financial resource management in member countries upon their request;

3. *Invites* member countries and donors to support ESCWA in its endeavour to formulate and implement public sector development/modernization initiatives in member countries aimed at further enhancing public sector institutional capacity to lead the attainment of national development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, and strengthen peacebuilding efforts;

4. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to submit to the Commission at its twenty-seventh session a report on the progress achieved in implementing this resolution and the achievements of ESCWA in that regard.

297 (XXVI). Arab MDG monitor for societal progress

The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia,

Noting with deep concern that the lack of requisite data and information in some member countries on development indicators, including those related to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), particularly the goals of promoting the gender equality and empowering women, and the situation of youth, and the impact of that lack on official statistics, thereby hindering the planning and implementation of evidence-based policies, and undermining the ability of countries to monitor their national development indicators,

Recognizing the fundamental importance of national statistical capacity in producing reliable and timely indicators of societal progress,

Recalling Economic and Social Council resolution 2006/6 of 24 July 2006, which expressed deep concern for the lack of adequate data to assess national trends in the context of monitoring progress towards the realization of all internationally agreed development goals, including MDGs, and the lack of capacity at the national level to use existing data to inform and monitor the implementation of national development policies and strategies,

Recalling also Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/27 of 28 July 2000, in which the Council reaffirmed the importance of national efforts to build statistical capacity in all countries, including through statistical training, and of effective international support in that regard for developing countries and countries emerging from conflict,

Affirming the importance of intensifying cooperation between the countries of the region in order to realize MDGs by 2015,

Commending the efforts exerted by the secretariat in following up the realization of MDGs, in particular reports on the progress made towards realizing MDGs in the ESCWA region,

1. *Calls upon* all member countries to enhance coordination between national statistical offices and implement national strategies for statistical development, with a view to improving the coverage and transparency of indicators and methods of reporting on them and disseminating effective methods of monitoring nationally and internationally agreed development goals, including MDGs, by:

(a) Defining priorities and developing a strategy to provide data for all indicators;

(b) Identifying ways, including through capacity-building to improve monitoring and reporting on development indicators, including indicators relating to MDGs;

(c) Ensuring that the supporting metadata comply with standard guidelines;

2. *Requests* the secretariat to develop an MDG monitor for societal progress towards realization of MDGs, including gender equality and youth empowerment by:

(a) Supporting member countries, according to their needs and requirements, in realizing MDGs through capacity-building in compiling and disseminating statistics, integration of MDGs into development plans, monitoring the progress made and measuring its impact, and preparing national and regional reports in coordination with relevant parties;

(b) Assessing the quality of national data and development indicators, including MDGs, and providing adequate resources to improve data quality and convergence with international standards.

3. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to submit to the Commission at its twenty-seventh session a report on the progress made in the implementation of the present resolution, including on improving gender and youth statistics at the regional level, and the achievements of ESCWA in that regard.

7th plenary meeting
19 May 2010

298 (XXVI). Social development

The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia,

Recognizing the significance of social development and human well-being for all, as stressed in the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development,¹

Referring to the social development-related aspects of the 2005 World Summit Outcome,² the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the United Nations Millennium Declaration,³

Taking into consideration ESCWA resolution 285 (XXV) of 29 May 2008 concerning integrated social policy, which requests the secretariat to work with member countries towards the adoption of the integrated social policy approach; enhance participatory dialogue on social policy; and implement the internationally agreed plans of action and recommendations, including MDGs and priority areas of the World Programme of Action for Youth (WPA Y),⁴

Noting that social policies in the region are ultimately designed to promote an equitable and inclusive process of social development, taking into consideration regional specificity; and that social development is based upon broad qualitative changes that allow member countries to achieve their national development goals,

Taking into consideration that Subprogramme 2 of the proposed Strategic Framework for the biennium 2012-2013 addresses not only integrated social policy, but also the various socio-demographic groups and partnerships between government and civil society to implement social development policies, programmes and projects,

Noting that the similar subprogrammes of other United Nations regional commissions are entitled “Social Development”,

1. *Endorses* the change in the title of Subprogramme 2 from “Integrated Social Policies” to “Social Development”;

2. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to submit to the Commission at its twenty-seventh session a report on the implementation of this resolution.

7th plenary meeting
19 May 2010

¹ General Assembly, Report of the World Summit for Social Development, Copenhagen, 6-12 March 1995, chap. I, resolution 1, annex 1 (A/CONF.166/9).

² General Assembly resolution 60/1 of 16 September 2005.

³ General Assembly resolution 55/2 of 13 September 2000.

⁴ General Assembly resolutions 50/81 of 14 December 1995 and 62/126 of 18 December 2007.

299 (XXVI). Adoption of the amendments introduced to the programme of work for the biennium 2010-2011

The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia,

Taking note of the progress made in 2010 in implementing the programme of work for the biennium 2010-2011,

Also taking note of the amendments introduced to the programme of work,

Expressing satisfaction with the achievements made,

Convinced by the justifications presented in support of the amendments to the programme of work in order to give it sufficient flexibility,

1. *Adopts* the amendments introduced to the programme of work for the biennium 2010-2011;
2. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to follow up implementation of the programme of work and, if necessary, include activities to address any variables that may emerge in the ESCWA region;
3. *Also requests* the Executive Secretary to convey to member countries information on further amendments that may be introduced to the programme of work, in the report on progress made in implementing the programme of work for the biennium 2010-2011 that will be distributed to member countries.

7th plenary meeting
19 May 2010

300 (XXVI). Adoption of session reports of the subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia,

Affirming the importance of the role played by its subsidiary bodies in formulating, coordinating and following-up work in their respective competences, for the promotion of the best interests of member countries,

Recognizing the importance of implementing the recommendations made by those bodies to enable ESCWA to undertake its duties in the competences falling within the remit of its subsidiary bodies,

Having considered the recommendations contained in the following reports: Report of the Statistical Committee on its eighth session (E/ESCWA/SD/2008/IG.1/9); Report of the Committee on Energy on its seventh session (E/ESCWA/SDPD/2009/IG.1/7); Report of the Committee on Social Development on its seventh session (E/ESCWA/SDD/2009/IG.1/6); Report of the Committee on Women on its fourth session (E/ESCWA/ECW/2009/IG.1/7); Report of the Technical Committee on its third session (E/ESCWA/2009/C.3/6); Report of the Committee on Water Resources on its eighth session (E/ESCWA/SDPD/2008/IG.1/7); Report of the Committee on Transport on its tenth session (E/ESCWA/EDGD/2009/IG.1/8); Report of the Technical Committee on Liberalization of Foreign Trade, Economic Globalization and Financing for Development in the Countries of the ESCWA Region on its sixth session (E/ESCWA/EDGD/2009/IG.2/7); Report of the Technical Committee on its fourth session (E/ESCWA/2010/C.4/9/Report); Report of the Committee on Transport on its eleventh session (E/ESCWA/EDGD/2010/IG.1/8/Report).

1. *Adopts* the recommendations contained in those reports, excluding decisions made by the Commission in the course of the current session;
2. *Calls upon* member countries to cooperate with ESCWA in taking and activating measures to ensure that those recommendations are implemented.

7th plenary meeting
19 May 2010

301 (XXIV). Adoption of the draft strategic framework for the biennium 2012-2013

The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia,

Recalling the draft strategic framework for the biennium 2012-2013,

Bearing in mind that the draft strategic framework was subject to amendment during the discussion of subprogrammes by specialized intergovernmental committees with member countries,

Noting that the draft strategic framework was based on the priorities of member countries with respect to economic and social development,

1. *Adopts* the draft strategic framework for the biennium 2012-2013;
2. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to distribute the strategic framework in the form adopted by member countries;
3. *Also requests* the Executive Secretary to submit a report to the Commission at its twenty-seventh session on the progress made in implementing the strategic framework including amendments introduced thereto in addition to achievements of ESCWA in that regard.

7th plenary meeting
19 May 2010

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

5. Representatives of member countries participating in the senior officials segment discussed agenda items including, in particular, the report of the Executive Secretary on the activities of the Commission; management issues; the draft strategic framework for the biennium 2012-2013; progress made in the establishment of ESCWA technology centre. Discussions concluded with a number of recommendations, as follows:

(1) To stress the importance of ESCWA's commitment to the results-based management approach, in order to assess the effectiveness of each of the seven sub-programmes, based on specific indicators and targets, and using a methodology that measures achievements, shortcomings and possible improvements in future programmes;

(2) To adopt an evolutionary approach to evaluation, combining self-assessment and external evaluation by an independent body. In addition, member countries should be involved as partners in the planning and implementation of field programmes and projects as well as beneficiaries concerned by their outcomes and implications, so that their role is not limited to being informed of the evaluation process;

(3) To stress the importance of cooperation between the United Nations Information Centre (UNIC) at ESCWA and media in member countries, in order to increase awareness of the Commission's role and its developmental role in building capacities and advancing the development process;

(4) To expand the scope of coordination in different areas such as statistics, women's issues and the MDGs. These areas should be addressed by all parties responsible for reporting on the MDGs and other international agreements, rather than by a limited number of official agencies.

(5) To strengthen cooperation between ESCWA and international and regional organizations in relation to the sub-programmes, in order to enhance exchange of expertise with each organization in its own area of competence;

(6) To strengthen partnerships among governments, local governing bodies, civil society organizations and the private sector in local development projects, allowing them to be part of the planning, implementation, support and assessment of these projects, so as to reflect the role of ESCWA in providing services to the Governments and peoples of member countries;

(7) To focus on developing informal sectors not covered by official statistics in member countries where statistics on those sectors are not available;

(8) To support national machineries for women and take measures to facilitate their access to decision-making positions and to mobilize financial and technical resources in order to assist countries facing difficulties in achieving the MDGs by the year 2015;

(9) To activate the Rapid Response Mechanism, in light of the accelerated developments witnessed in the region and the world, enabling it to receive requests and proposals from member countries and to respond to them effectively;

(10) To publish more periodical country reports on such important areas as competitiveness, integration and economic diversification;

(11) To speed up the issuance of bulletins, especially on the Internet and ensure their availability in Arabic with a view to increasing their beneficial uses as well as to widely disseminate ESCWA publications that can be downloaded free of charge;

(12) To facilitate access to the content of ESCWA's library, digitize as much material as possible and post it on ESCWA's website for downloading;

(13) To allow no less than four weeks time between senior officials meetings and ministerial meetings during the ESCWA session;

(14) To give greater support to ESCWA's Technical Cooperation programme in view of its success in providing valuable advisory services to member countries and enhance its working capacities in the Arabic language.

6. The Drafting Committee discussed draft resolutions regarding different topics on the agenda, and proposed relevant amendments. Draft resolutions will be submitted to the ministers for approval, taking into consideration amendments proposed by the senior officials.

IV. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION AND DISCUSSION

A. REQUESTS BY STATES MEMBERS OF THE UNITED NATIONS AND/OR
ITS SPECIALIZED AGENCIES THAT ARE NOT MEMBERS OF THE ECONOMIC AND
SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR WESTERN ASIA (ESCWA) TO PARTICIPATE
AS OBSERVERS IN THE TWENTY-SIXTH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION
(Agenda item 4)

7. Requests to participate as observers in the twenty-sixth session were received from eight States Members of the United Nations that are not members of ESCWA, namely, Belgium, China, France, Islamic Republic of Iran, Netherlands, Somalia, Tunisia and United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Those requests were approved by the Commission, which received also similar requests from a number of United Nations organizations and bodies. It should be noted that Morocco has permanent observer status at all ESCWA sessions.

B. POLICY ISSUES IN THE ESCWA REGION
(Agenda item 5)

8. The Commission discussed this agenda item at two roundtables. The first addressed national youth policies within the framework of the World Programme of Action for Youth, while the second addressed human and institutional capacity-building.

1. *National youth policies within the framework of the World Programme of Action for Youth*

9. Following the endorsement of the Technical Committee at its fourth meeting (Beirut, 26-27 January 2010) of the proposal made by the secretariat with respect to the theme for the twenty-sixth session of the Commission, the topic of national youth policies was selected as the main theme of the session.

10. That theme was addressed by the Commission at a ministerial roundtable in view of its relevance to countries of the region, particularly in the light of the proclamation by the United Nations of 2010 as the International Year of Youth: Dialogue and Mutual Understanding.

11. A representative of the secretariat made a presentation on national youth policies within the framework of the World Programme of Action for Youth on the basis of document E/ESCWA/26/4(Part I), which stressed the need to use the World Programme of Action for Youth as a policy framework aimed at continuing practical guidelines for national efforts and international support in the area of youth development. The presentation touched on the regional survey conducted by ESCWA in 2008 on the response of member countries to the World Programme of Action for Youth, which highlighted the need to work towards enhancing effectiveness and expanding the scope of national projects for youth. The presentation noted the importance of addressing youth as a socio-demographic group that has its own needs and that requires the formulation of national policies aimed at empowering youth and providing them with opportunities to realize their potential. It concluded with a summary of the way forward for ESCWA to promote national capacities in the area of formulating national youth policies and plans of action.

12. During the discussion following the presentation, H.E. Ms. Maythaa al-Shamsi, State Minister in the United Arab Emirates, noted that the growing number of young people in the countries of the region, while posing several challenges, provided opportunities for benefiting from the capacities of youth in the development process. She stressed the importance of political commitment to activate the response of member countries to the World Programme of Action for Youth, and the need to draw guidance from the Programme within the framework of the three systems affecting the status of youth in the region, namely, the family, educational institutions and society. She added that the media also played a significant role in youth development.

13. Subsequently, a dialogue was held between a group of Arab young people who were selected from various schools and universities in Lebanon, and ministers participating in the session. The roundtable was directed by Ms. Fadia Kiwan, Professor of Political Science at Saint Joseph University. The discussion addressed the following themes:

(a) *Youth and education*: The discussion focused on the issue of improving youth education and educational outputs, the importance of bridging the existing divide between different educational levels, harmonization between educational outputs and labour-market needs, and the role of the family during preparation for basic education;

(b) *Youth and employment*: The discussion addressed the challenges associated with youth employment, including economic difficulties, conflict and wars, emigration, high costs of social services, capital migration and weak infrastructure;

(c) *Youth and health*: Under this topic, the group of young people presented suggestions for addressing the main problems they face with regard to lifestyle, general health, reproductive health and medical institutions;

(d) *Youth participation in decision-making and public life*: The discussion addressed the obstacles that hinder the effective participation of youth in decision-making. Ministers stressed the need to identify priority areas requiring change, and to adopt a positive and practical attitude aimed at allowing adaptation to existing challenges;

(e) *Youth and globalization*: Participants stressed the need to address the main problems faced by young people in the context of globalization and its impact on their countries, to promote cultural exchanges between youth from all countries of the region, and to work towards promoting student exchanges between Arab universities;

(f) *Youth and exceptional issues*: Participants stressed the need to solve the problem of youth unemployment and to have a common Arab position in addressing the challenges faced by the region and preventing their negative impact on youth.

14. At the conclusion of the roundtable, the secretariat delivered certificates of appreciation to those ESCWA members that had worked on formulating and implementing youth strategies, namely, Bahrain, Jordan and Palestine.

15. During the roundtable, the secretariat distributed a booklet, entitled “Youth Development in the ESCWA Region: Statistical Profiles, National Strategies and Success Stories” (E/ESCWA/SDD/2010/Booklet.1).

2. *Human and institutional capacity-building*

16. A representative of the secretariat made a presentation on prioritizing institutional development in the ESCWA region: towards a modernized public sector, based on document E/ESCWA/26/4(Part II). The presentation highlighted the correlation between development and public sector modernization. It pointed out that public sector development through institutional and human capacity-building is the major factor that contributes to improving economic and social performance. It highlighted the possibility of applying the new concept of public sector modernization in the ESCWA region and the challenges it is facing. It concluded with a set of recommendations to be taken into consideration in the areas of policy and capacity-building in order to strengthen institutional infrastructure and achieve administrative reform. Recommendations included conducting field surveys in coordination with concerned parties in member countries aimed at identifying development priorities and requirements, and working with member countries on formulating public sector

strategies and human capacity-building programmes. The aim is to create effective institutions that can resist crises and mitigate their impact, and assist member countries in terms of enabling the public sector to respond to the needs and aspirations of citizens.

17. Ms. Hiba Khodr of the American University in Beirut presented a paper on the importance of human capacity-development in modernizing the public sector. She noted that achieving national development goals required public sector modernization through administrative reform and that administrative reform required formulating strategies based on the reality of administrative problems and needs. She stressed the importance of human and institutional capacity-building, building institutions, activating their role and strengthening existing institutional structure as the foundations to improving economic and social indicators.

18. Mr. Ibrahim Osman of the Faculty of Business Administration at the American University of Beirut presented a paper on public sector activation: strategies for the ESCWA region, in which he noted the importance of participatory decision-making in which all concerned parties participate and rely on effective evaluation of impact potential risks and possible opportunities. The presentation concluded with a set of recommendations on disseminating official data, achieving sustainable development, consolidating bases for partnership among various parties concerned with the decision-making process and ensuing expected consequences, human capacity-building and promoting public-private cooperation.

C. REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMISSION
(Agenda item 6)

19. The Commission considered this agenda item, which comprises five sub-items, on the basis of document E/ESCWA/26/5.

1. *Programme performance report for the biennium 2008-2009*

20. A representative of the secretariat gave a presentation on the performance of ESCWA programme of work for the biennium 2008-2009, based on document E/ESCWA/26/5(Part I). The presentation included an overview of results achieved by each of the seven subprogrammes, the obstacles and challenges hindering implementation and lessons learned from the assessment process.

21. During the discussion, national delegates stressed the importance of ESCWA in adhering to the results-based management approach in order to assess the effectiveness of each subprogramme by relying on well-defined indicators of achievements, deficiencies and improvement possibilities in future programmes of work. They also stressed the need to enhance coordination among ESCWA divisions as well as the need for participation by member countries in designing plans and conducting follow-up and assessments, thereby ensuring continuing political commitment to the programmes and improving results.

22. Representatives from member countries indicated the importance of making use of the media across the region to inform the public on the role played by ESCWA in building capacities and driving the development process. They emphasized the need to expand the scope of coordination such that it would not be limited to certain government bodies, but rather would include other parties concerned with reporting on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and international agreements. They also underlined the importance of cooperation between ESCWA and international organizations, and noted that ESCWA was in fact cooperating with specialized United Nations organizations in the implementation of its subprogrammes.

23. Moreover, national delegates stressed the importance of promoting community development and partnerships with local administrative offices in development projects and the need to include marginalized groups in statistics as well as such informal sectors as agriculture. They noted the difficulties encountered by women in Arab countries with respect to participation in public and political life and emphasized the need to support national machineries for the advancement of women and to take measures to facilitate women's access to decision-making. They also indicated the need to mobilize financial and technical resources to assist countries facing difficulties in achieving MDGs by 2015.

24. In response to the points raised by delegates, the representative of the secretariat affirmed that their comments would be taken into consideration. He pointed out that ESCWA adopted the results-based approach in assessing its programmes and activities and ensured that member countries participated in the early stages of programme planning, assessment and adaptation to new priorities and to the needs of member countries with regard to advisory services and technical assistance in priority areas.

25. With regard to the media, the representative of the secretariat indicated that ESCWA has formulated a communication strategy with member countries, which will be included in the next strategic framework, aimed at promoting cooperation between ESCWA and both national statistical offices and national machineries for the advancement of women in following up on international commitments and conventions on women. The representative of the secretariat also indicated that ESCWA organized various training activities on the usage of international instruments, conventions and standards and on amending national legislation to conform to provisions and requisites thereto.

*2. Follow-up to the implementation of the resolutions adopted by the Commission
at its twenty-fifth session*

26. Under this sub-item, the Commission was presented with document E/ESCWA/26/5(Part II). Representatives of ESCWA divisions summarized the activities undertaken by ESCWA pursuant to the resolutions adopted by the Commission at its twenty-fifth session (Sana'a, 26-29 May 2008). Delegates from member countries took note of the completed activities and those still being undertaken. These resolutions are as follows:

- (a) Resolution 281 (XXV). Addressing climate change issues in the Arab region;
- (b) Resolution 282 (XXV). Mitigating the impact on development of conflict, occupation and instability in ESCWA member countries;
- (c) Resolution 282 (XXV). ESCWA member country compliance with international standards for enhancing national statistical systems;
- (d) Resolution 284 (XXV). Establishment of the ESCWA regional technology centre;
- (e) Resolution 285 (XXV). Integrated social policy;
- (f) Resolution 286 (XXV). Gender statistics for equality and empowerment of women;
- (g) Resolution 287 (XXV). Strengthening statistical capacities for evidence-based policymaking;
- (h) Resolution 288 (XXV). Establishing an Arabic language centre at ESCWA;
- (i) Resolution 289 (XXV). Supporting the comprehensive development efforts of Yemen;
- (j) Resolution 290 (XXV). Call for regional action to accelerate implementation of the Monterrey Consensus in Western Asia;
- (k) Resolution 291 (XXV). Frequency of the sessions of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies.

27. Commenting on the presentation, a representative from a member country stressed the need to set up a logical approval for following up the implementation of resolutions based on tables that identified accomplishments, ongoing projects and proposed measures to achieve them.

28. The secretariat praised that suggestion, provided that an objective mechanism containing indicators could be set up, which would allow member countries to participate in the follow-up process since a part of the required measures falls under their responsibility.

3. Technical cooperation programme and regional advisory services

29. Under this sub-item, the Commission was presented with two documents on technical cooperation activities and regional advisory services undertaken by ESCWA in the biennium 2008-2009, namely: those under the Regular Programme of Technical Cooperation (RPTC) in document (E/ESCWA/26/5(Part III)/A); and those funded by the United Nations Development Account in document (E/ESCWA/26/5(Part III)/B).

30. A representative of the secretariat gave an overview of those activities and services, and pointed out that the aim of RPTC was to assist member countries by providing them, at their request, with policy advice, technical support and capacity-building activities in line with ESCWA areas of expertise, programme of work and expected accomplishments. The representative presented a snapshot of the projects funded by the Development Account where ESCWA acted as a lead agency and the progress made in association with the expected accomplishments envisaged in ESCWA subprogrammes.

31. A representative from a member country noted the need to strike a balance in the advisory services provided by ESCWA to member countries, and suggested the need to prepare a new working method in that area that would incorporate a fast response unit at ESCWA aimed at facilitating timely and effective access to required services.

4. Financial status of the Commission

32. Under this sub-item, the Commission was presented with document E/ESCWA/26/5(Part IV). A representative of the secretariat presented a review of all financial aspects of the Commission programmes, which covered regular budget, extrabudgetary resources, and the ESCWA Trust Fund for Regional Activities.

33. The presentation concluded by calling on member countries, funds and donors to contribute to increasing extrabudgetary resources in order to support ESCWA projects and enable it to meet the increasing demands and needs of member countries.

34. In the course of the discussion, national delegates underscored the need to mobilize and ensure sustainability of additional extrabudgetary resources and enable ESCWA to supplement regular budget resources and acquire sufficient flexibility in order to meet the increasing demands of member countries for advisory services in specialized subjects, which require financial and human resources and the variation of operational activities under its subprogrammes.

35. Delegates stressed the importance of formulating resource mobilization strategies resources that secure extrabudgetary resources for ESCWA, similarly to those in other regional commissions.

5. Reports of the sessions of the subsidiary bodies of ESCWA

36. The Commission was presented with reports of the seven subprogrammes on their sessions which were held between the twenty-fifth and twenty-sixth ministerial sessions, in addition to the reports of the Technical Committee on its meetings held in that same period. Those reports, which include recommendations, topics of discussion, information on the organization of the session and list of participants and documents submitted to it, are listed below:

- (a) Report of the Statistical Committee on its eighth session (E/ESCWA/SD/2008/IG.1/9);
- (b) Report of the Committee on Energy on its seventh session (E/ESCWA/SDPD/2009/IG.1/7);
- (c) Report of the Committee on Social Development on its seventh session (E/ESCWA/SDD/2009/IG.1/6);

- (d) Report of the Committee on Women on its fourth session (E/ESCWA/ECW/2009/IG.1/7);
 - (e) Report of the Technical Committee on its third session (E/ESCWA/2009/C.3/6);
 - (f) Report of the Committee on Water Resources on its eighth session (E/ESCWA/SDPD/2008/IG.1/7);
 - (g) Report of the Committee on Transport on its tenth session (E/ESCWA/EDGD/2009/IG.1/8);
 - (h) Report of the Technical Committee on Liberalization of Foreign Trade and Economic Globalization and Financing for Development in the Countries of the ESCWA Region on its sixth session (E/ESCWA/EDGD/2009/IG.2/7);
 - (i) Report of the Technical Committee on its fourth session (E/ESCWA/2010/C.4/9/Report);
 - (j) Report of the Committee on Transport on its eleventh session (E/ESCWA/EDGD/2010/IG.1/8/Report).
37. The Commission endorsed the recommendations and took note of the items contained in those reports.

D. MANAGEMENT ISSUES
(Agenda item 7)

38. The Commission considered this agenda item on the basis of document E/ESCWA/26/6, which comprised two sub-items, namely: streamlining the work of the Commission, and proposed amendments to the programme of work for the biennium 2010-2011.

1. Streamlining the work of the Commission

39. Under this agenda sub-item, the Commission was presented with three documents, namely: lessons learned from the evaluation of the sessions of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies in document E/ESCWA/26/6(Part I)/A; upgrading the ESCWA Centre for Women to a division in document E/ESCWA/26/6(Part I)/B; and upgrading the Section for Emerging and Conflict-Related Issues to a division and establishing an intergovernmental committee on emerging issues and development in times of crisis in document E/ESCWA/26/6(Part I)/C.

(a) *Evaluation of the intergovernmental structure of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies*

40. The secretariat presented document E/ESCWA/26/6(Part I)/A, which provides a background to the evaluation process undertaken by the secretariat of the conduct of sessions of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies; the consolidated evaluation results of eight sessions held during the period from February 2008 to December 2009; key lessons learned, including best practices; and the way to build on them for future planning. The representative of the secretariat made a presentation on the intergovernmental structure of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies pursuant to ESCWA resolution 291 (XXV), which requests the secretariat to carry out an in-depth evaluation of the intergovernmental structure of ESCWA in the light of programme priorities, as identified by member countries, and ongoing United Nations reform.

41. The representative of the secretariat indicated the following: (a) the secretariat prepared the terms of reference of the evaluation in accordance with the norms and standards of the United Nations Evaluation Group for the period from January 2004 to June 2009; (b) the evaluation aimed at assessing the effectiveness of the work of the Commission in achieving the expected objectives and results, and at facilitating interaction and coordination on regional priorities and emerging issues, facilitating the follow-up and monitoring of

resolutions and recommendations; and (c) future evaluations would address various stakeholders and compile information using different approaches, including by meeting delegation members to gather opinions on the work of the Commission and using an online questionnaire seeking comments on the role of ESCWA as a source of information as well as its role in coordination and follow-up.

42. In the course of the discussion, national delegates highlighted the need to define clearly the role of ESCWA in the region in order to facilitate its evaluation. They stressed the need to involve member countries in all stages of the evaluation, noting the importance of using several methodologies for compiling requisite information for the evaluation, including one on one interviews and group discussions.

43. A representative from a member country expressed satisfaction with the structure and contents of the sample questionnaire that comprises questions on the opinions of parties concerned and member countries on all advisory services provided. However, he suggested making an adjustment to the four answer options provided by adding one corresponding to neutral answers in order to strike a balance between positive and negative answers.

44. In response to comments by national delegates, the secretariat indicated that it would conduct lateral meetings with delegates participating in the session to ask for their opinion on the effectiveness of the work of the Commission, the focus priorities for the next period and the ways to conform the strategy of ESCWA to national requirements. It was agreed that ESCWA would complete the final evaluation report by July 2010, make an estimate of its financial cost and define the ensuing programme amendments and submit it to the Technical Committee for discussion and adoption.

(b) *Upgrade the Centre for Women in ESCWA to a division*

45. A representative of the secretariat presented document E/ESCWA/26/6(Part I)/B that includes justifications for the adoption of the draft resolution on upgrading the ESCWA Centre for Women to a division, which was prepared by the Committee on Women at its fourth session, and on the need to provide it with the necessary financial and human resources to enable it to undertake effectively its mandate and meet the requirements and aspirations of member countries, pursuant to relevant General Assembly resolutions. The representative of the secretariat indicated that the Centre needed additional resources in order to conduct its work in a timely and effective manner, especially given the growing number of countries that had ratified the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women or removed their reservation with respect to some of its provisions; the growing number of member countries requesting assistance in implementing international commitments; the need to keep abreast with national, regional and international developments in the area of women advancement and gender equality; and to support national machineries for the advancement of women in their tasks.

46. With regard to the proposed organizational chart for the envisioned division for the advancement of women, the representative of the secretariat indicated that it would comprise two sections, namely: (a) a section for the empowerment of women, which would be responsible for implementing the programmes aimed at empowering women in all fields, particularly women participation in social and political fields in member countries; and (b) a section for gender mainstreaming, which would be responsible for supporting the efforts of member countries in mainstreaming that concept in their national plans and policies, and institutional programmes and structures, as well as in ESCWA.

47. In the course of the discussion, national delegates pointed out the importance of the draft resolution on upgrading the ESCWA Centre for Women to a division by stressing the relevance of the role of that Centre in empowering women in all fields of education, employment, health and participation in public and political life, and stressing also the relevance of the advisory services provided by the Centre which are being required by a growing number of member countries. Delegates underlined the need for the envisioned division to

launch initiatives and projects with the private sector and civil society aimed at addressing all aspects of social, economic and political empowerment of women.

48. In response to the comments by national delegates, the secretariat distributed document E/ESCWA/26/6(Part I)/B/Add.1, which clarifies the programme budget implications of upgrading ESCWA Centre for Women to a division, and provides the estimated financial resources needed for the work of the proposed division in the bienniums 2010-2011 and 2012-2013. In that context, the Executive Secretary noted that adopting the draft resolution on upgrading the Centre to a division would not impose additional funds on member countries. Rather it would require support from their representatives at the United Nations to promote this proposed resolution in the budget discussions. He stressed the need for a contribution of the public sector companies and businesses in support of ESCWA extrabudgetary resources, similar to other regional commissions, in order to enable it to conduct projects that benefit the interests of the countries of the region.

(c) *Upgrade the Section for Emerging and Conflict-Related Issues to a division and establish an intergovernmental committee concerned with emerging issues and development in times of crisis*

49. A representative of the secretariat presented document E/ESCWA/26/6(Part I)/C and noted that the continuing instability, conflict, occupation and their regional spillover effects were the main causes that hampered development in the region. In that context, the Section for Emerging and Conflict-Related Issues (ECRI), which is responsible for the implementation of Subprogramme 7 on Conflict Mitigation and Development in the ESCWA region, has received an increasing number of requests for its services from member countries since its establishment, particularly in the areas of public sector modernization and the formulation of policies, strategies and programmes for mitigating the impact of conflict and its regional spillover effects on socio-economic development in the region.

50. Consequently, the representative of the secretariat indicated that it was necessary to upgrade ECRI to a division and provide the required human and financial resources in order to meet the growing demands of member countries for services provided by the Section. In parallel, the representative of the secretariat noted also the need to establish an intergovernmental committee on emerging issues and development in times of crisis, which was recommended by the Technical Committee at its third meeting (Beirut, 21-22 July 2009).

51. In the course of the discussion, delegates commended the role played by ESCWA in mitigating the impact of conflict on development in the region, and raised questions concerning the terms of reference of the envisioned intergovernmental committee, including the task of monitoring and identifying regional and international challenges that can hinder peace-building and development efforts, and setting up an early warning system. Moreover, some delegates pointed out the overlapping terms of reference of the proposed intergovernmental committee and division. The discussion concluded by stressing the need to adopt the draft resolution on upgrading the Section for Emerging and Conflict-Related Issues to a division and establishing an intergovernmental committee concerned with emerging issues and development in times of crisis, provided that the terms of reference of the committee would be revised.

52. In response to the comments by national delegates, the secretariat explained that it adopted strategies that were adequate to the reality of each conflict and post-conflict affected country. It indicated that the terms of reference of the envisioned committee were formulated on the basis of consultations with member countries, and expressed its readiness to introduce the amendments suggested by national delegates. He added that a revised version would be distributed to them in the course of the session for adoption.

2. Proposed amendments to the programme of work for the biennium 2010-2011

53. Under this sub-item, the secretariat presented document E/ESCWA/26/6(Part II), which contains the proposed amendments to the programme of work for the biennium 2010-2011. The amendments were made

pursuant to new mandates entrusted to ESCWA by the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session, and in accordance with emerging global and regional needs and challenges that have emerged since the Commission adopted the programme of work for the biennium 2010-2011 at its twenty-fifth session.

54. Delegates took note of the amendments and emphasized their relevance to the programme of work in order to correspond to the developments occurring in reality and the amended mandates entrusted to the Commission. They agreed to adopt those amendments in the resolution submitted in that regard.

E. REVISED DRAFT STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR THE BIENNIUM 2012-2013
(Agenda item 8)

55. Under this sub-item, a representative of the secretariat presented document E/ESCWA/26/7, which contains the revised draft strategic framework for the biennium 2012-2013, and gave a brief on the goals and expected accomplishments of each of the seven subprogrammes.

56. In the course of the discussion, delegates pointed out to the need for advance coordination with member countries on the formulation of the strategic framework, and for expanding the scope of Subprogramme 4 to include, in addition to information and communications technology services, production, adaptation, development and transfer of technology in the ESCWA region.

57. National delegates referred to the importance of clarifying the nature of programmes and activities being prepared in order to achieve the goals envisaged in the strategic framework, thereby developing measurable quantitative and qualitative indicators of achievement for the assessment of progress achieved in realizing each goal.

58. The secretariat indicated that identifying activities and relevant budget resources would take place at a later stage and would subsequently be submitted to member countries for revision and comments.

59. The Commission endorsed the revised draft strategic framework for the biennium 2012-2013.

F. PROGRESS MADE IN THE ESTABLISHMENT OF ESCWA TECHNOLOGY CENTRE
(Agenda item 9)

60. Under this item, the Commission was presented with document E/ESCWA/26/8, which includes the draft resolution on the establishment of ESCWA technology centre and the draft statute of the centre. A representative of the secretariat asked national delegates to review the draft statute with a view to adopting it and, subsequently, concluding a headquarters agreement between the United Nations and Jordan, the host country.

61. In the course of the discussion, national delegates asked questions with regard to the procedures of electing members of the board of governors and appointing the director of the centre, the mission and nature of work of the centre at regional and international levels, and the extent to which it builds on successful similar experiences in other regions.

62. In response to those questions, the representative of the secretariat referred to provisions in the statute by which the executive director would be appointed by the Secretary-General in accordance with United Nations regulations, rules and administrative instructions; and, in turn, the executive director would appoint members of the technical committee that would be established within the centre, in coordination with the Executive Secretary and member countries, as well as the board of governors which would be designated by the Government of Jordan and six additional representatives nominated by other members of ESCWA and elected by the Commission.

63. The representative suggested that member countries could nominate their candidates during the founding stage provided that the election would take place according to the statute of the centre at the twenty-seventh session of the Commission.

64. The Commission took note of the status of the project to establish the centre and approved the proposed draft statute, thereby paving the way for the conclusion of the agreement with the host country.

G. DATE AND VENUE OF THE TWENTY-SEVENTH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION
(Agenda item 10)

65. It was decided that the Commission would hold its twenty-seventh session in Beirut in April 2012.

H. OTHER BUSINESS
(Agenda item 11)

66. No proposals were received under this agenda item.

**V. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE COMMISSION
ON ITS TWENTY-SIXTH SESSION**

67. At its plenary closing session, held on 20 May 2010, the Commission adopted the draft report on its twenty-sixth session, on the understanding that the agreed amendments would be incorporated therein.

VI. ORGANIZATION OF WORK

A. DATE AND VENUE

68. The Commission held its twenty-sixth session at the United Nations House in Beirut from 17 to 20 May 2010. It convened seven plenary meetings, during which it discussed its agenda items.

69. Stressing the cultural aspect of its development mission, the Commission inaugurated the ministerial segment with a concert presented by the "Al-Fayhaa" choir, which performed a repertoire of traditional songs and music from different countries.

B. OPENING OF THE SESSION

70. The two-segment session was opened in two stages. The senior officials' segment was opened on the morning of Monday 17 May 2010, while the ministerial segment was opened on the morning of Wednesday 19 May 2010 at the United Nations House in Beirut.

1. Senior officials' segment

71. At the opening of the senior officials' segment, Mr. Mohammad Ahmed Al-Hawri, Deputy Minister for Economic Studies and Forecasts, Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation in Yemen, which assumed the chairmanship of the twenty-fifth session, made the opening statement in which he commended the success achieved by ESCWA in most of its programmes for the biennium 2008-2009, despite the impact of the global financial crisis on the socio-economic situation in the region. He emphasized the role played by ESCWA in finding creative solutions to address that impact which affects all social and economic sectors.

72. Mr. Badr Omar AlDafa, United Nations Under-Secretary-General and Executive Secretary of ESCWA, made a statement in which he welcomed delegations and stressed the importance of their participation as a confirmation of their commitment to the issues and priorities of the region and the need for joint efforts in order to achieve regional integration. The Executive Secretary stressed the importance of formulating integrated social policies; providing employment opportunities for young people and involving

them in development programmes and plans; increasing the participation of women in economic, social and political life; and mitigating the negative effects of inflation and high prices. He affirmed the resolve of ESCWA in strengthening a people-based approach in its endeavour to achieve sustainable economic and social development in the region.

73. Upon the election of Jordan to chair the twenty-sixth session, Ms. Zeina Toukan, Director of International Cooperation at the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation in Jordan, made a statement in which she indicated that Jordan would spare no effort during its tenure as chair of the twenty-sixth session in working with ESCWA and member countries to pursue the achievements made during the past session, and to present ideas and proposals for enhancing the development mission of the Commission to better serve member countries.

2. Ministerial segment

74. H.E. Mr. Abdel Karim Ismail al-Arhabi, Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs and Minister of Planning and International Cooperation in Yemen, which assumed the chairmanship of the twenty-fifth session of the Commission, made the opening statement of the ministerial segment in which he welcomed the participants. He affirmed the importance of choosing youth development as the main theme of the session, noting that economic and social challenges stemming from the global financial crisis, economic and trade globalization, climate change and lack of security, were all elements that added to the responsibilities of member countries in developing youth, strengthening their capacities and generating employment opportunities for them, in collaboration with international organizations and development partners. He added that human and institutional capacity-building were closely correlated to good governance, sound management, accountability and transparency; and as such were among the main pillars of sustainable development.

75. H.E. Mr. Jaafar Hassan, Minister of Planning and International Cooperation in Jordan, extended his thanks to Yemen for its efforts in assuming its chairmanship of the twenty-fifth session. He stressed the need to work towards intensifying the accomplishments made and adopt measures that contribute to strengthening cooperation among countries of the region and achieving regional cooperation. He underlined the urgent challenges posed by increasing population growth rates and youth unemployment, noting the importance of sound planning with regard to human resources and institutional capacities. In that context, he affirmed the importance of continued development of the education sector and modernization of curricula, producing accurate data, organizing technical training to ensure congruity of education outputs with labour market needs. He highlighted the reforms implemented by Jordan aimed at promoting the role of young people, the large regional projects in the fields of energy, transport and water, the importance of benefiting from successful experiences, forging partnerships and organizing training sessions. He announced that Jordan was looking forward to hosting the ESCWA technology centre to strengthen the technology sector.

76. H.E. Mr. Abdel Rahman Bin Mohammad al-Atiyeh, Secretary-General of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), made a statement in which he noted the record of achievements of ESCWA in terms of activities since its establishment. He informed participants of the achievements of the GCC in various political, military and environmental areas, in particular with regard to youth and sports. He stressed that the GCC was according great attention to the subject of developing youth and promoting their role, given its direct link to the development process as a whole. He added that GCC member countries had adopted national policies and programmes targeting youth development and empowerment as well as youth employment creation.

77. The Executive Secretary read out a message from the United Nations Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki Moon, to the twenty-sixth session of ESCWA. In the message, the Secretary-General noted the importance of meeting at a time of major challenges that continued to threaten the region, including climate change, water scarcity, the food crisis and the recession. He stressed the need to boost decent work for all, foster social inclusion and reduce inequalities. He praised the Commission for choosing youth as a focus topic for policy discussions, which would benefit the wider global dialogue on youth issues that is set to take place on the

occasion of the United Nations International Year of Youth starting on 12 August 2010. He also welcomed the focus on human and institutional capacity-building in view of the fact that public sector modernization and administrative reform are central for the attainment of national development goals and for the building of resilient States.

78. The Executive Secretary made a statement in which he welcomed the Speaker of the House of Parliament in Lebanon, H.E. Mr. Nabih Berri, and thanked him for his patronage of the session. He praised ESCWA for continuing to perform its development mission, which is becoming increasingly difficult in the light of severe conditions faced by the countries of the region. He stressed the importance of the roundtable on youth in highlighting the achievements of member countries in integrating youth in the development process; and underlined the need to conduct a constructive critical review of approaches in addressing youth development issues in order to find practical solutions that are compatible with the demographic, social and economic specificities of the region. Additionally, he stressed the importance of addressing the issue of public sector modernization in view of the fact that it is a principal pillar for the achievement of MDGs. He indicated that building and strengthening institutional and human capacities were major factors in terms of improving economic and social performance. He called for peace in all its political, economic and social dimensions on the basis of equitable and comprehensive solutions and self-determination.

79. H.E. Mr. Nabih Berri, Speaker of the House of Parliament in Lebanon, made a statement in which he affirmed the role played by ESCWA in advancing the development process in the region, under the supervision of its Executive Secretary who is known for his adherence to competency. He noted that the Lebanese youth suffered from a lack of employment, which was leading to a continuous drain of competent young human resources. He stressed the need to reduce the political and economic exclusion of youth by formulating comprehensive and integrated strategies targeting youth and based on accurate statistics in order to identify youth priorities and needs, and empower them to participate in the development process and benefit from its dividends. He added that the strategy needed to focus on, among others, bridging the divide between outputs of the educational system and labour market needs through the establishment of high councils for education in the countries of the region, coordinating between governmental and non-governmental parties in addressing youth priorities, introducing reforms to generate employment opportunities for youth, and confronting the immigration of the most educated youth caused by their economic and social marginalization. He concluded by calling on governments to commit to the World Programme of Action for Youth, deliver on their pledges and preserve the invaluable source represented by youth for the advancement of the future of the region and its countries.

C. PARTICIPANTS

80. The session was attended by representatives of the 14 ESCWA member countries. It was also attended by representatives of Belgium, China, France, Islamic Republic of Iran, Netherlands, Somalia, Tunisia and United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, in the capacity of observers, in addition to representatives of Morocco in the capacity of permanent observers. Other observers included representatives of United Nations system programmes, bodies and institutions; international and non-governmental organizations, and other organizations; in addition to experts. This session was characterized by the attendance of a large group of young Lebanese and Arab students from various academic institutions in Lebanon. The list of participants is contained in annex I to this report.

D. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

1. *Senior officials' segment*

81. Rule 12 of the Rules of Procedure of the Commission provides that member countries shall assume the chairmanship of the sessions of the Commission on a rotating basis, in the Arabic alphabetical order. It also provides that the Commission shall, at the beginning of each session, elect from among the representatives of its members two Vice-Chairmen and a Rapporteur, who shall remain in office until such time as their successors shall be elected and eligible for re-election.

82. Accordingly, Ms. Zaina Toukan, Director of International Cooperation at the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation in Jordan, assumed the chairmanship of the meetings of the senior officials' segment. The Commission elected Mr. Mohammad Ahmad Bin Aziz al-Shihi, Under-Secretary of the Ministry of Economy in the United Arab Emirates, and Ms. Lolwa Saleh al-Awadi, Secretary-General of the High Council for Women in Bahrain, as vice-chairpersons of the session; and Mr. Ali Abdel Karim Ali, Ambassador of the Syrian Arab Republic in Beirut, as rapporteur.

2. Ministerial meetings

83. H.E. Mr. Jaafar Hassan, Minister of Planning and International Cooperation in Jordan, assumed the chairmanship of the ministerial meeting of the twenty-sixth session. The representatives of the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain assumed the positions of vice-chairmen; while the representative of Syrian Arab Republic assumed the position of rapporteur.

E. CREDENTIALS

84. In accordance with Rule 11 of the Rules of Procedure of the Commission, the credentials of the representatives were submitted to the Executive Secretary, examined by officers and found to be in order.

F. AGENDA

85. At its first meeting, the Commission adopted the agenda as presented in document E/ESCWA/26/L.1. The agenda was adopted as follows:

- “1. Opening of the twenty-sixth session.
2. Election of officers.
3. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters.
4. Consideration of requests by States Members of the United Nations and/or its specialized agencies that are not members of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) to participate as observers in the twenty-sixth session of the Commission.
5. Policy issues in the ESCWA region:
 - (a) Youth in the Arab world: challenges and opportunities;
 - (b) Human and institutional capacity-building.
6. Report of the Executive Secretary on the activities of the Commission:
 - (a) Programme performance report for the biennium 2008-2009;
 - (b) Follow-up to implementation of the resolutions adopted by the Commission at its twenty-fifth session;
 - (c) Technical cooperation programme and regional advisory services;
 - (d) Financial status of the Commission;
 - (e) Reports of the Commission subsidiary bodies on their sessions.
7. Management issues:
 - (a) Streamlining the work of the Commission:

- (i) Evaluation of the intergovernmental structure of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies;
- (ii) Upgrade the Centre for Women in ESCWA to a division;
- (iii) Upgrade the Section for Emerging and Conflict-Related Issues to a division and establish an intergovernmental committee concerned with emerging issues and development in times of crisis;

(b) Proposed amendments to the work programme for the biennium 2010-2011.

- 8. Revised draft strategic framework for the biennium 2012-2013.
- 9. Progress made in the establishment of ESCWA technology centre.
- 10. Date and venue of the twenty-seventh session of the Commission.
- 11. Other matters.
- 12. Adoption of the report of the Commission on its twenty-sixth session.”

86. At the same meeting, the Commission adopted the proposed organization of work for its twenty-sixth session, presented in document E/ESCWA/26/L.2, after introducing amendments thereto.

G. DOCUMENTS

87. The list of documents submitted to the Commission at its twenty-sixth session is contained in annex II to this report.

Annex I

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

A. ESCWA MEMBER COUNTRIES

Bahrain

H.E. Sheikh Mohamed Bin Khalifa Al Khalifa
Under-Secretary
Ministry of Transportation

H.E. Mr. Abdul-Rahman Mubarak Al-Sulaiti
Ambassador of Bahrain to the Syrian Arab
Republic

H.E. Mr. Kadhim Al Orayedh
Ambassador
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Mr. Aref Hasan Al-Mansoori
Director of Human Resource and Finance
Ministry of Transportation

Mr. Khalifa Hassan Al-Ammari
Chief, Public Transport Services
Ministry of Transportation

Ms. Bahija Mohamed Al Daylami
Assistant Secretary-General
Supreme Council for Women

Ms. Shaima Abdulla Salman AlMutaweah
Regional Cooperation Specialist
Supreme Council of Women

Mr. Mazen Anwar Abdul-Rahim
Senior Youth Programmer Coordinator
Supreme Council for Women

Ms. Amal Seddiq Al-Majed
President of the Youth Committee
Supreme Council for Women

Mr. Hisham Muhammad Al-Jowder
Chargé D'Affaires of the Director of Youth and
Sports Affairs
General Organization for Youth and Sports

Mr. Jamal A. Wahab Qarooni
Labour Advisor
Ministry of Labour

Egypt

H.E. Mr. Mohammad El-Urabi
Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs for
Economic Relations
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

H.E. Mr. Ahmed Fouad El-Bidewi
Ambassador of Egypt to Lebanon

Mr. Mohamed El-Fiky
Second Secretary
Embassy of Egypt to Lebanon

Iraq

H.E. Mr. Omar Ahmed Karim Al-Barzanji
Ambassador of Iraq to Lebanon

Ms. Nour Abboud Mohamad Al Hachemi
Diplomatic Attaché
Embassy of Iraq in Lebanon

Jordan

H.E. Mr. Jaafar Hassan
Minister of Planning and International
Cooperation

Ms. Zeina Zeid Toukan
Director
International Cooperation Department
Ministry of Planning and International
Cooperation

Ms. Hazar I. Badran
Coordinator of the World Bank Group Relations
with Jordan, American and International
Organizations Relations Department
Ministry of Planning and International
Cooperation

Kuwait

Mr. Adel A. Al-Wuqayan
Secretary-General
Supreme Council for Planning and Development

Kuwait (continued)

Mr. Bader Abdulrahman Al Rifai
Director of Secretary General Office
Supreme Council for Planning and Development

Ms. Eman Ibrahim Al-Haddad
Head of the International Organizations
Department
Ministry of Finance

Ms. Shorouq Ali Al-Khalil
Foreign Affairs Researcher
Ministry of Finance

Lebanon

H.E. Mr. Ali Hussein Al Chami
Minister of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants

Ms. Wafaa Dikah Hamzé
Former Minister
Member of the Executive Board of the National
Commission for Lebanese Women

Mr. Hassan Saleh
Diplomat, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and
Emigrants
Cabinet of the Minister of Foreign Affairs

Ms. Mirna Khawly
Diplomat
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants

Mr. Abbas Mteirek
Head of Service of Treaties
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants

Oman

H.E. Mr. Mohammed Bin Khalil Bin Saleh Al
Jazmi
Ambassador of Oman to Lebanon

Mr. Hamed Bin Jaber Bin Saud Al-Mahrooqi
Director General for Services Sectors
Development
Ministry of National Economy

Ms. Amina Hamdan Al Hamdan
Director of Human Resource Development
Ministry of National Economy

Ms. Suad Muhammed Al-Fadhel
Director of Technical Cooperation
Ministry of National Economy

Palestine

Mr. Bashar Ghazi Abdalla Juma'a
Director General of the Geographic Center and
Technical Support
Ministry of Planning and Administrative
Development

Mr. Mahmoud Abdallah Mahmoud Ataya
Acting General Director, Social Development
Directorate
Ministry of Planning and Administrative
Development

Mr. Wael Nazeeh Ismail Taha
Acting General Director, Planning and Policy
Making
Ministry of Youth and Sport

Mr. Ashraf Atef Dabbour
Chargé D'affaires
Embassy of Palestine in Lebanon

Qatar

H.E. Mr. Saad A. Almuhanadi
Plenipotentiary Ambassador of Qatar to Lebanon

Mr. Khalid Mohamed Al Baker
Minister Plenipotentiary
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Saudi Arabia

H.E. Mr. Khaled Bin Muhammad Al-Gosaibi
Ministry of Economy and Planning

Mr. Bandar Bin Abdelaziz Alwaily
Deputy Minister for Sector Planning
Planning Expert
Ministry of Economy and Planning

Mr. Ahmad Salem Alzahrany
Secretary General
Higher Committee for Administrative Reform
Institute of Public Administration

Mr. Abdullah Ali Al-Marwani
Director of Research and Studies Department
Ministry of Economy and Planning

Saudi Arabia (continued)

Mr. Saleh Bin Abdulaziz AlNassar
Secretary General
National Center for Youth Studies
King Saud University

Mr. Mohammed Bin Abdallah Al-Debasi
General Manager
General Directorate of Activities of Youth
General Presidency of Youth Welfare

Mr. Majid Bin Ramsey Atteyah
First Secretary
Embassy of Saudi Arabia to Lebanon

The Sudan

H.E. Mr. Idriss Suleiman Yusuf
Ambassador of the Sudan to Lebanon

Ms. Ikhlass Mohammed Ali
Deputy Manager, Department of United Nations
Organizations
Ministry of International Cooperation

Mr. Elhadi Siddig Ali Numirey
Counsellor
Embassy of Sudan to Lebanon

Syrian Arab Republic

H.E. Mr. Ali Abdel Karim Ali
Ambassador of the Syrian Arab Republic to
Lebanon

Mr. Refaat Hejazi
Director General, Human Development
Department
State Planning Commission

Mr. Fadlala Gharzaldeen
Director General, Macroeconomics Department
State Planning Commission

Mr. Muhannad Nadim
Assistant Director General, International
Organizations Directorate
State Planning Commission

Mr. Wadah Alrakkad
Syrian Commission for Directorate Population
Unit
Syrian Commission for Family Affairs

Mr. Ghassan Anjary
Consul
Embassy of Syrian Arab Republic
Lebanon

Mr. Abdul-Latif Sabbagh
Media Advisor, Ambassador Office
Embassy of Syrian Arab Republic to Lebanon

United Arab Emirates

Mr. Mohammad Ahmad bin Abdelaziz Al-Shihi
Deputy Minister of Economy

Mr. Yousef Eisa Al Refaei
Director
Human Resource and Finance Department
Ministry of Economy

Mr. Hazaa Ahmed Almansouri
Diplomat
Embassy of United Arab Emirates to Lebanon

Yemen

H.E. Mr. Abdul Kareem Al-Arhabi
Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs
Minister of Planning and International
Cooperation

H.E. Mr. Faisal Amin Abu-Ras
Ambassador of Yemen to Lebanon

Mr. Mohammed Ahmed Al-Hawri
Deputy Minister for Economic Studies and
Forecasts
Ministry of Planning and International
Cooperation

Mr. Sultan Al-Dubei
General Manager of Protocols
Ministry of Planning and International
Cooperation

Mr. Mansoor Ali Albashiry
General Manager of Economic Studies
Ministry of Planning and International
Cooperation

Mr. Ibrahim Sharaffuddin
Director, Department for United Nations
Organizations
Ministry of Planning and International
Cooperation

Yemen (continued)

Ms. Amani Mohammed Zabara
International Economic Studies Director
Ministry of Planning and International
Cooperation

Mr. Amin Mohsin Al-Hamdani
Diplomat
Embassy of Yemen to Lebanon

B. STATES MEMBERS OF THE UNITED NATIONS NOT MEMBERS OF ESCWA

Morocco

Mr. Ali Oumlil
Ambassador of Morocco to Lebanon

Tunisia

Mr. Lassaad M'Hirsi
Counselor
Embassy of Tunisia to Lebanon

Somalia

Mr. Adnan Traboulsi
Consul of Somalia
Lebanon

C. UNITED NATIONS SECRETARIAT

Regional Commissions New York Office
(RCNYO)

Ms. Daniela Simioni
Social Affairs Officer

D. UNITED NATIONS PROGRAMMES AND AGENCIES

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

Mr. Ray Torres
Representative
Lebanon

Ms. Vivian Lopez
Regional Advisor Adolescent Development
MENA Regional Office
Jordan

United Nations Development Programme
(UNDP)

Ms. Mona Hammam
UNDP Deputy Assistant Administrator
RBAS Deputy Regional Director
Cairo

United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCR)

Mr. Jean-Paul Cavalieri
Deputy Representative
Lebanon

United Nations Fund Population (UNFPA)

Ms. Henrietta Aswad
Regional Communication Advisor
Jordan

Ms. Asma C. Kurdahi
Assistant Representative
Lebanon

United Nations Human Settlements Programme
(UN-HABITAT)

Mr. Ali Shabou
Chief, UN-HABITAT Office
Amman

Association of Former International Civil
Servants (AFICS)

Ms. Mirvat Tallawy
Egypt

Mr. George Abou Jaoudeh
Chief
Lebanon

Ms. Thoukaa Al-Khalidi
Consultant
Lebanon

E. UNITED NATIONS ORGANIZATIONS AND SPECIALIZED AGENCIES

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United
Nations (FAO)

Ms. Solange Matta Saade
Assistant FAO Representative (Programme)
Lebanon

International Labour Organization (ILO)

Ms. Shaza Ghaleb El Jondi
United Nations Reform Analyst
Regional Office
Lebanon

United Nations Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

Mr. Abdel Moneim M. Osman
Director
Regional Bureau for Education in the Arab States
Lebanon

United Nations Industrial Development
Organization (UNIDO)

Mr. Khaled El Mekwad
Representative
Head of Regional Office

F. INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND RELATED BODIES

League of Arab States

Mr. Salah Mohamed Idris
Head of Investment and Finance Section
Economic Affairs Sector
Egypt

Mr. Tarek Al Nabulsi
Head of Social Committee Division for Arab
ECOSOC
Egypt

Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)

Mr. Abdulrahman Bin Hamad Al-Atyah
Secretary General
Saudi Arabia

Council of Ministers of Labour and Council of
Ministers of Social Affairs in GCC States

Mr. Salem Ali Almuhairi
General Director
Executive Bureau
Bahrain

Mr. Mahmood Ali Hafud
Social Affairs Director
Bahrain

Arab Labour Organization

Mr. Ahmad Mohammad Loqman
Egypt

Ms. Iman Abd El Maksoud
Counselor
Egypt

Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific
Organization (ALECSO)

Mr. Hisham A. Nashabé
Director of Higher Education/Makassed
Philanthropic Islamic Association of Beirut
Lebanon

Arab Federation for Food Industries

Mr. Haythem Jaffan
President
Syrian Arab Republic

Arab Federation for Food Industries (continued)

Ms. Rouda Diri
Representative
Syrian Arab Republic

Arab Towns Organizations

Mr. Ghassan Samman
Sector Head of Media and International Relations
Kuwait

International Center for Agricultural Research in
the dry Areas (ICARDA)

Mr. Pierre Gerges Kiwan
ICARDA Representative

Mr. Hassan Machlab
Manager, Terbol Research Station and Beirut
Office
Lebanon

European Union

Mr. Johan Ekerhult
Second Secretary
Political and Trade Officer
Lebanon

G. GOVERNMENTAL AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

General Union of Chambers of Commerce,
Industry and Agriculture for Arab Countries

Ms. May Dimashkieh Serhal
Economic Research Manager
Lebanon

Amnesty International

Mr. Ahmad Karaoud
Head of Office
Regional Office of the Middle East and North
Africa
Lebanon

Royal Scientific Society

Mr. Tareq Al-Hadid
Executive Director, External Affairs (Assistant of
the President)
Jordan

Arab Countries Water Utilities Association
(ACWUA)

Mr. Khaldon H. Kashman
Secretary General
Jordan

M1 Group

Mr. Ziad S. Mikati
Analyst
Public Policy
Lebanon

ANU-Liban

Mr. Samir Michel Daher
President
Lebanon

Ms. Ghina Charif
Member
Lebanon

Mentor Arabia

Ms. Farida Allaghi
Executive Director
Lebanon

Hariri Foundation

Mr. Moustafa Zaatari
General Manager
Lebanon

Lebanese Association on Nutrition and
Development (LAND)

Mr. Adel Cortas
President
Lebanon

International Association of Lions Clubs

Mr. Amir H. Elsabeh
Chairperson
Public Relations Committee
Lebanon

Lebanon Family Planning Association

Mr. Toufic Osseiran
President
Lebanon

Lebanese Council of Women

Ms. Mona Kamar Mrad
Vice President
Lebanon

National Commission for Lebanese Women
(NCLW)

Ms. Afife El Sayed
Executive Board Member
Lebanon

Ms. Fahmiya Charaf-Eddine
Professor
Lebanon

Imam Sadr Foundation

Ms. Rabab Al Sadr
Manager
Lebanon

Mr. Mohammad Bassam
Manager
Lebanon

Arab Institute for Training and Research in
Statistics

Mr. Fathi Nsour
General Director
Jordan

Arab Lawyers Union

Mr. Ibrahim Essamlali
Secretary General
Egypt

Mr. Saber Ammar
Assistant Secretary General
Egypt

Mr. Omar M. Zein
Assistant Secretary General
Lebanon

Ms. Lamia Sabri Mobadda
Chief Women Committee
Egypt

Bar Association

Ms. Sonia Ibrahim Attieh
Lawyer
Lebanon

General Women's Union

Mr. Mohamed Ibrahim Mansouri
Advisor
United Arab Emirates

Princess Anoud Charity Organization

Ms. Fouzia Aba Al-Khail
Manager of Women Sector
Saudi Arabia

Consumers Lebanon Association (CLA)

Mr. Ghaleb El Sibai
Administrative Supervisor
Lebanon

National Rehabilitation and Development Center
(NRDC)

Mr. Khaled Al Mohtar
General Manager
Lebanon

Fares Foundation

Mr. Walid Jalal Dagher
Public Relations Manager
Lebanon

Lebanese Physical Handicapped Union (LPHU)

Mr. Hassan Mroui
President
Lebanon

Mr. Marwan El Bast
Project Coordinator
Lebanon

Al Manbar Allobnany AlmostakeI

Mr. Mohammed El Hassan
General Coordinator
Lebanon

Rotary International

Mr. Michel P. Jazzar
Representative to United Nations – ESCWA
2006-2009
Lebanon

Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd

Sister Hanan Youssef
Representative
Lebanon

Ms. Carla El Ashkar
Social Worker
Lebanon

H. EXPERTS

Ms. Maitha Al-Shamisi
Minister of State
United Arab Emirates

Mr. Ibrahim H. Osman
Professor
Olayan School of Business
American University of Beirut
Lebanon

Ms. Hiba Khodr
Professor of Public Policy and Public
Administration
American University of Beirut
Lebanon

Ms. Fadia Kiwan
Director of the Institute of Humanities
Saint Joseph University
Lebanon

I. EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Beirut Arab University (BAU)

Mr. Omar Houry
Professor, Faculty of Law and Political Sciences
Lebanon

Lebanese University

Mr. Ali Faour
Dean
Geography Department
Lebanon

Ms. Khairieh Khalil Kaddouh
Professor, Researcher and Advisor in Youth
Affairs
Institute of Social Sciences, First Branch
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Mr. Ghassan El Ezzi
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Mr. Ghassan Chlouk
Professor, Faculty of Economic Sciences and
Business Management
Lebanon

Notre Dame University (NDU)

Mr. Ziad Fahed
Assistant Professor, Faculty of Humanities
Lebanon

Saint Joseph University

Ms. Hala Soubra Itani
Professor
Lebanon

Annex II

LIST OF DOCUMENTS

Symbol	Item	Title
E/ESCWA/26/1	3	Agenda and annotations
E/ESCWA/26/2	3	Organization of work
E/ESCWA/26/3	4	Consideration of requests by States Members of the United Nations and/or its specialized agencies that are not members of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) to participate as observers in the twenty-sixth session of the Commission
E/ESCWA/26/4	5	Policy issues in the ESCWA region
E/ESCWA/26/4(Part I)	5 (a)	National youth policies within the frame of the World Programme of Action for Youth
E/ESCWA/26/4(Part II)	5 (b)	Human and institutional capacity-building
E/ESCWA/26/5	6	Report of the Executive Secretary on the activities of the Commission
E/ESCWA/26/5(Part I)	6 (a)	Programme performance report for the biennium 2008-2009
E/ESCWA/26/5(Part II)	6 (b)	Follow-up to the implementation of the resolutions adopted by the Commission at its twenty-fifth session
E/ESCWA/26/5(Part III)	6 (c)	Technical Cooperation Programme and Regional Advisory Services
E/ESCWA/26/5(Part III)/A	6 (c-i)	Activities under the Regular Programme of Technical Cooperation
E/ESCWA/26/5(Part III)/B	6 (c-ii)	Activities funded by the United Nations Development Account
E/ESCWA/26/5(Part IV)	6 (d)	Financial Status of the Commission
E/ESCWA/26/5(Part V)	6 (e)	Reports of the Commission subsidiary bodies on their sessions
E/ESCWA/26/6	7	Management issues
E/ESCWA/26/6(Part I)	7 (a)	Streamlining the work of the Commission
E/ESCWA/26/6(Part I)/A	7 (a-i)	Lessons learned from the evaluation of the sessions of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies
E/ESCWA/26/6(Part I)/B	7 (a-ii)	Upgrade the Centre for Women in ESCWA to a division
E/ESCWA/26/6(Part I)/B/Add.1	7 (a-ii)	Addendum: Programme budget implications of the proposed upgrade of the ESCWA Centre for Women into a division

Symbol	Item	Title
E/ESCWA/26/6(Part I)/C	7 (a-iii)	Upgrade the Section for Emerging and Conflict-Related Issues to a division and establish an intergovernmental committee concerned with emerging issues and development in times of crises
E/ESCWA/26/6(Part I)/C/Add.1	7 (a-iii)	Addendum: Programme budget implications of the proposed upgrade of the Section for Emerging and Conflict-Related Issues (ECRI) into a division
E/ESCWA/26/6(Part II)	7 (b)	Proposed amendments to the work programme for the biennium 2010-2011
E/ESCWA/26/7	8	Revised draft strategic framework for the biennium 2012-2013
E/ESCWA/26/8	9	Progress made in the establishment of the ESCWA Technology Centre
E/ESCWA/26/9/Report	10	Report of the Commission on its twenty-sixth session
E/ESCWA/OES/2009/WG.1/3		Report Expert Group Meeting on moving the development agenda forward: opportunities and potential gains
E/ESCWA/SDD/2010/Booklet.1		Youth Development in the ESCWA Region: Statistical Profiles, National Strategies and Success Stories
E/ESCWA/26/CRP.1		Policy Options on Key Macroeconomic Issues: Draft Report
E/ESCWA/26/CRP.2		Report on the Impact of Conflict and Political Tension on the Socio-Economic Development of the ESCWA Region: Current and Future Challenges
E/ESCWA/26/INF.1		Information for participants
E/ESCWA/26/INF.2		List of documents