

**RESOLUTIONS AND OUTCOME DOCUMENT ADOPTED
AT THE THIRTIETH SESSION OF ESCWA
BEIRUT, JUNE 2018**

Beirut Consensus on Technology for Sustainable Development in the Arab Region

Technology and Innovation for Decent Employment and Empowered Youth

1. We, the representatives of member States of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), assembled in Beirut from 25 to 28 June 2018 at the thirtieth session of the Commission, reaffirm our commitment to placing technology and innovation at the heart of the inclusive and sustainable development process in the Arab region.

2. We recall General assembly resolution [72/167](#) of 19 December 2017 on the right to development, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs),¹ the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development,² the Paris Agreement on climate change,³ and the Outcome document of the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the overall review of the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society,⁴ all of which have technology and innovation as key components.

3. We refer to the adoption of the Arab Strategy for Scientific and Technical Research and Innovation,⁵ which emphasizes the importance of concerted efforts on technology and innovation in line with regional development needs. We refer also to the Doha Declaration on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,⁶ which was adopted by ESCWA member States at the twenty-ninth session of the Commission and called for the development of a regional action plan for the achievement of aspects related to science, technology and innovation in the Arab region.

4. We state our firm belief that technology and innovation are key enablers of the 2030 Agenda, and can provide creative solutions to achieve people-centred, sustainable and inclusive development. We are convinced of the need to place technology and innovation as pillars of transformation in national development plans, to maximize benefits and minimize threats from technological disruption, in full consideration of local resources, capacities and constraints.

5. We are encouraged by the potential for technology and innovation to contribute to sustainable development in advancing the structural transformation of our economies, enhancing productivity and creating decent jobs in the Arab region. Current and emerging technologies in areas as diverse as agricultural and industrial productivity, transport, education, medicine, clean energy, energy efficiency, potable water, sanitation, clean air and climate change offer great promise in finding solutions to many of the challenges facing our countries. More of these solutions should be indigenous to our region: we must develop our own capacity to innovate, and adapt and protect technological breakthroughs.

6. We are, however, distressed by the suffering resulting from crises throughout the Arab region, their impact on human development and tragic facts, including the unprecedented numbers of forcibly displaced and aid-dependent populations, which have reached alarming levels and are currently standing at nearly 30

¹ General Assembly resolution [70/1](#) of 25 September 2015.

² General Assembly resolution [69/313](#) of 27 July 2015.

³ Adopted on 12 December 2015 at the twenty-first Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, held in Paris. Available at https://unfccc.int/files/essential_background/convention/application/pdf/english_paris_agreement.pdf.

⁴ General Assembly resolution [70/125](#) of 16 December 2015.

⁵ Adopted on 29 March 2017 by the Arab Summit, held in the Dead Sea, Jordan. Available at <http://www.alecso.org/en/2016-04-06-07-56-24.html>.

⁶ [E/ESCWA/29/12/Report](#), p. 5, para. 14.

million and 60 million people, respectively.⁷ In this regard, we stress the need for the return of the displaced to their countries of origin, which would contribute to reconstruction processes and to alleviating burdens on them and on host countries.

7. We note that the region registers the world's highest youth and female unemployment rates, standing at 27 and 40 per cent respectively,⁸ while the female labour force participation rate remains the world's lowest, at 21 per cent.⁹

8. We also note that least developed countries (LDCs) and some middle-income countries in our region suffer from high rates of multidimensional poverty: 40 per cent of households are multidimensionally poor,¹⁰ with education deprivation as a central challenge. We are deeply concerned by the increasing size of the informal sector and share of vulnerable employment, the mismatch between skills provided by education and those required by the market, the pervasively low level of regional labour productivity, and the low investment in research and development in the region.

9. We note with alarm the increased weather volatility and frequency of extreme weather events in our region, which is suffering from extreme heat spells that lead to natural disasters, flash floods, sand and dust storms and desertification. In addition, over two thirds of Arab countries are facing increased water scarcity and the negative impacts of sea level rise.

10. We recognize that technology can play a pivotal role in addressing the root causes of poverty, enhancing the accessibility and quality of services to reach the poor, promoting the accumulation of human capital, helping to transform the economy and creating decent job opportunities. We recognize also that frontier technologies, such as artificial intelligence, the Internet of Things, cloud computing and blockchain technology, may both contribute to, and detract from, progress on employment, in particular youth employment. An enabling environment based on effective regulation, including regulation of the Internet as a public good, combined with adequate investment in human capital and research and development, will help to contain threats while reaping maximal benefits.

11. We recognize further that integrated statistics, geospatial information, earth observations and other sources of data, combined with modern data processing and big data analytics, have become essential for countries to efficiently implement, monitor and evaluate sustainable development policies.

12. We stress that gender equality must be mainstreamed in national policies while considering the potential of technology in combatting violence against women and fostering the political and economic empowerment of women. Gender equality is indeed not only a right for women; it is a necessity that brings benefits to the economy and society.

13. We condemn Israeli practices and policies that restrict the access of Palestinians to technology, impeding service delivery and hindering development, including restrictions on technology imports, such as medical and communications equipment, to Gaza. We also condemn discriminatory Israeli policies that impede access to technology in the occupied Syrian Golan.

14. We affirm that unilateral economic measures increase people's suffering. Thus, we call for the accelerated lifting of the unilateral embargo by the United States of America on the Sudan, which prevents the

⁷ ESCWA calculations based on end-2016 data for from the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA).

⁸ Data from the United Nations Development Programme, *Arab Human Development Report 2016: Youth and the Prospects for Human Development in a Changing Reality* (New York, 2016).

⁹ Data from the World Bank, available at <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.TLF.CACT.FE.ZS> (accessed on 1 June 2018).

¹⁰ [E/ESCWA/EDID/2017/2](#).

society from benefiting from human knowledge and the technology required for delivering health services, creating jobs for youth and realizing inclusive development.

15. We stress that the restrictions on access to technology imposed on some Arab countries impede development in those countries. In this regard, we affirm the necessity of ceasing the application of unilateral coercive measures on the Syrian Arab Republic.

Enabling technological ecosystems

16. We will seek to put in place national and regional policies to support the development of technological ecosystems that are adapted to the socioeconomic, environmental and political context of Arab countries and able to attract private sector investment and foster innovation, particularly encouraging the development of local content and entrepreneurship. We will develop legislative and fiscal policy proposals to promote investment in technology and innovation, and encourage entrepreneurs and investors to explore new technologies via targeted incentives.

17. We resolve to closely examine social protection and taxation systems, adopt agile policies to embrace and direct new technologies, and help employees and employers to adapt to new demands while ensuring that gains are broadly shared.

18. We will develop regional strategies that stimulate technology transfer, and leverage synergies between the industry and research institutions to address gaps in industrial productivity and enhance competitiveness while reducing technological dependencies.

Dynamic educational systems for decent employment opportunities

19. We will facilitate the integration of graduates from universities, vocational institutes and schools into the labour market through the adaptation of educational outcomes to future employment requirements. We will maximize the availability, accessibility and affordability of quality education in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), and enhance digital skills at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels. We will improve and expand vocational training to provide youth with skills for today and life-long learning opportunities that fulfil their personal aspirations while meeting the needs of the labour market.

20. We will seek to bridge the persistent gender gap in STEM education throughout the region, increasing women's participation in the digital economy, and applying a gender lens when developing and implementing policies that harness technology and innovation.

Technology-driven social inclusion

21. We will promote assistive technology to guarantee full inclusion of persons with disabilities, in line with agreed international standards. We will ensure that the benefits of technology and innovation reach vulnerable groups, remote communities and those living in cities destroyed by conflict, thus fostering social justice.

22. We will build strong partnerships with civil society in pioneering and promoting technology towards participatory policymaking. We will promote the use of technology to improve the participation of youth in public policymaking, fostering bottom-up innovation for greater inclusiveness.

Supportive governance

23. We will leverage technology to adopt smart government practices, enhance public transparency and accountability, improve access to information and provide open data.

24. We will strive to increase efficiency in the delivery of public services, including e-government, and to adopt new analysis technologies to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of policymaking and implementation, including poverty reduction, social protection and social services, in reaching the most vulnerable.

25. We will increase the accessibility of technological tools and networks to facilitate interaction between stakeholders and stimulate the conversation around the SDGs, support implementation, monitor progress and improve accountability. We will use new technologies such as geographic information systems, earth observations, big data and statistics in support of regional and national development strategies. Efforts will be made to harness these sources of information in a high-quality and consistent manner and use them to complement official statistics in informing policy formulation, implementation and follow up.

Environmental sustainability

26. We will identify, anchor and assist technological advancement in emerging sectors where research and commercialization are making important strides, and ensure the sustainability, affordability and suitability of technological solutions that address natural resources limitations.

27. We will facilitate the use and transfer of technology associated with natural resources management where a potential exists for efficiency improvement, in particular water and energy efficiency leading to food security and environmental sustainability, adopting a nexus approach. We will also seek to share, disseminate and transfer appropriate, reliable and affordable technologies.

28. We will strive to ensure that all member States fully benefit from financing solutions available for climate-related activities, submitting proposals for financing by global climate funds, seeking technical assistance from global and regional networks for the implementation of our nationally determined contributions and translating them into visions and action plans.

Conflict mitigation and disaster risk reduction

29. We will leverage technology in accessing, assessing, analysing and disseminating information in the context of climate change action, disaster risk reduction, conflict prevention and response, including tools for humanitarian assistance, early warning systems, in order to strengthen recovery, reconciliation and rehabilitation. We will enhance the use of new technologies to mitigate the impact of natural and man-made crises.

30. We will develop or update national cybersecurity strategies, cyberlegislation frameworks and data protection regulations, to cope with the escalating risks of cyberwar, cyberterrorism and cybercrime while defending fundamental rights and freedoms.

31. We will ensure that documentation, analysis and dissemination technologies are fully utilized in raising awareness about Israeli violations of international law in occupied territories and the repercussions of occupation on development.

Financing technology for sustainable development

32. We will mobilize and scale up national and regional financing and investment for technology and innovation, especially in LDCs, in support of the SDGs, and utilize all financial facilities available for Arab LDCs.

33. We will aim to increase public investment in research and development while incentivizing the private sector to finance technology and innovation, particularly in areas with strong social, environmental and economic development impact.

34. We call upon industrialized countries to honour their commitments in terms of financing and transferring appropriate technologies for sustainable development on favourable terms, including on concessional and preferential terms, and in particular commitments made in the context of the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, to support the implementation of the SDGs.

We commend the ESCWA secretariat's steadfast promotion of cooperation and regional integration, and request that it further its activities in this regard, with an emphasis on technology and innovation. We also ask that the secretariat continue to provide high quality advice on technology and innovation for sustainable development, with focus on the following activities:

(a) Foster coherent regional responses to rapidly evolving technological advancements, supporting norms and standard-setting and fostering an enabling ecosystem, anchored in the 2030 Agenda, with a focus on the most vulnerable segments of society;

(b) Provide evidence-based policy advice to promote structural transformation through technology to enhance productivity and sustainability, thereby addressing the root causes of multidimensional poverty, promoting economic and social integration, creating decent employment, and research the impact of technology and innovation on sectoral employment generation;

(c) Raise awareness on technologies for the inclusion of youth, older persons and persons with disabilities in areas including education, employment and access to public services, and develop informative material on the role of technology in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in the Arab region;

(d) Share experiences and best practices in technology transfer and adaptation through North-South and South-South cooperation, building member States' capacity to access financial resources;

(e) Coordinate national and regional policymaking on Internet governance, promote the Arab regional perspective in the international arena and provide support in researching and defining negotiation positions on contentious Internet governance issues;

(f) Support in filling the legislative and regulation vacuum around unregulated frontier technology issues through policy-oriented research;

(g) Reinforce multi-stakeholder partnerships on technology and innovation, including convening the Arab High-level Forum on the World Summit on the Information Society and the Arab Internet Governance Forum;

(h) Support member States in adopting emerging green technologies to address the main regional socioeconomic and environmental challenges;

(i) Support networking and create a participatory platform for cooperation among Arab States on frontier technology issues.

From Beirut, we reaffirm our commitment to work together on harnessing the power of technology and innovation to build a more peaceful, prosperous and just future for all in the Arab region.

Seventh plenary meeting
Beirut, 28 June 2018

329 (XXX) Establishment of the Arab centre for climate change policies in the Arab region

The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia,

Recalling the Paris Agreement on Climate Change,¹ the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,² and the considerable related commitments to be met by Arab States in implementation and follow-up processes, with climate change raising further challenges to sustainable development,

Recalling also its resolution [305 \(XXVII\)](#) of 10 May 2012 on sustainable development in the region and follow-up and implementation of the decisions of the Rio+20 Conference, in which it requested the secretariat to continue to coordinate and cooperate with Arab Governments, United Nations organizations, and the League of Arab States and its specialized committees to take measures to achieve sustainable development, and in particular to provide support to the energy, water and environmental sectors on climate change issues,

Recalling further its resolution [281 \(XXV\)](#) of 29 May 2008 on addressing climate change issues in the Arab region, in which it requested the secretariat to prepare an assessment of the vulnerability to climate change of economic and social development in the region, and to take the necessary measures to increase awareness of climate change in respect of adjusting to and alleviating its impact,

Commending the successful implementation of the first phase of the Regional Initiative for the Assessment of Climate Change Impacts on Water Resources and Socio-Economic Vulnerability in the Arab Region (RICCAR), funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, and the issuance of the first Arab Climate Change Assessment Report in September 2017,³ which highlights that the Arab region will experience serious temperature rises during this century, which will in turn increase the vulnerability of water-reliant sectors, especially in the Arab least developed countries,

Welcoming the training activities implemented by the secretariat to build the capacity of Arab States in benefitting from the Regional Knowledge Hub⁴ to develop climate change policies, plans and projects, including the ten regional training workshops on capacity development for Arab climate change negotiators,

Taking note of the appreciation expressed by the Arab Ministerial Water Council, the Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for the Environment and the Arab Council of Ministers Responsible for Meteorology and Climate with regard to RICCAR and the workshops supporting Arab climate change negotiators,

Considering the need of Arab States for the provision of relevant scientific information, means of implementation, appropriate technology and sufficient funding to be prepared for climate change negotiations and to report on their nationally determined contributions in the context of climate change adaptation and mitigation,

Aware that institutional mechanisms should be developed in the Arab region, similar to those developed in other regions, to help in building the capacity of Arab States and their institutions to integrate climate-related issues into national and regional development policies and programmes,

¹ Adopted on 12 December 2015 at the twenty-first Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Available at <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-paris-agreement/the-paris-agreement>.

² General Assembly resolution [70/1](#) of 25 September 2015.

³ [E/ESCWA/SDPD/2017/RICCAR/Report](#).

⁴ www.riccar.org.

Recalling the recommendation made by the Executive Committee of ESCWA at its fourth meeting, held on 13 and 14 December 2017, to approve the proposal to establish an Arab centre for climate change policies focused on building Arab capacity and preparing studies, especially in the field of climate change negotiations,⁵

1. *Welcomes* the establishment, through extrabudgetary funds, of the Arab Centre for Climate Change Policies, to support member States through the following:

- (a) Providing technical assistance and advisory services to Arab States;
- (b) Building the capacity of Arab States and regional stakeholders to strengthen institutional frameworks and develop programmes and policies;
- (c) Supporting regional platforms to harmonize positions and build regional consensus;
- (d) Promoting comprehensive responses to climate-related challenges affecting water, energy and food security;
- (e) Providing access to knowledge products and to regional data and information using the Regional Knowledge Hub;

2. *Recommends* the expansion of capacity-building efforts at various technical levels through holding regional and national workshops on models, means and financial instruments to support climate change negotiations, assessment processes, and access to financing and technology transfer, and providing regular updates on climate change developments to negotiators and other actors in the field of climate change adaptation and mitigation, while emphasizing the principle of coordination in implementation with the concerned organizations;

3. *Requests* the secretariat to take the necessary measures, in coordination with the League of Arab States, to ensure effective implementation of the activities pertaining to the second RICCAR phase, in cooperation with the relevant international, regional and national institutions; to ensure that the multidimensional aspects of climate change are taken into account in work on water, energy, food security and sustainable development; to support the Arab Climate Outlook Forum; and to strengthen partnerships with the concerned organizations;

4. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to submit a progress report on the implementation of this resolution to the Commission at its thirty-first session.

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⁵ [E/ESCWA/2017/EC.4/9/Report](#).

330 (XXX) Support for the Palestinian people

The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia,

Referring to General Assembly resolutions 67/19 of 29 November 2012 on the status of Palestine in the United Nations, 70/141 of 17 December 2015 on the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, ES-10/19 of 21 December 2017 on the status of Jerusalem, and ES-10/20 of 13 June 2018 on the protection of Palestinian civilians,

Referring also to Security Council resolution 2334 of 23 December 2016, which condemned all measures aimed at altering the demographic composition, character and status of the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967, including East Jerusalem, and reiterated the Council's demand that Israel immediately and completely cease all settlement activities in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, and that it fully respect all of its legal obligations in that regard,

Referring further to Economic and Social Council resolution 2017/30 of 25 July 2017 on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan,

Recalling its resolutions 307 (XXVII) of 10 May 2012, 316 (XXVIII) of 18 September 2014 and 326 (XXIX) of 15 December 2016, in which it reaffirmed the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and the need to support their efforts and those of their institutions towards attaining those rights in accordance with United Nations resolutions, and called for intensifying efforts to raise awareness on the rights of the Palestinian people and the violations of those rights, to calculate the cumulative impact of the Israeli occupation and its practices on the Palestinian people, and to establish a specialized unit within the ESCWA secretariat on issues concerning Palestine and its people,

Noting the report presented by the secretariat to the thirtieth ESCWA session under the agenda item on "Support for the Palestinian people: impact of the Israeli occupation and practices",¹

Referring to the notes by the United Nations Secretary-General prepared by ESCWA in 2017 and 2018 on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan,² which highlighted the continuing deterioration in their economic and social conditions resulting from the persistence of Israeli policies and practices that violate international law,

1. *Asserts* the unity of the Palestinian people, wherever they may be, and their common plight under Israeli policies and practices that seek to fragment them;

2. *Condemns in the strongest terms* continued Israeli violations of the United Nations Charter, international humanitarian law and international human rights law, and of United Nations Security Council and General Assembly resolutions, in particular forced displacement, illegal decisions to annex occupied East Jerusalem, de facto annexation of settlements in the West Bank, the continued illegal and inhuman blockade of the Gaza Strip; the use of excessive force against unarmed civilians; the destruction of homes and facilities; and continued arbitrary arrests, settlement construction and land confiscation, and reaffirms the need to hold Israel accountable for those violations;

3. *Condemns also* the recognition by the Government of the United States of America, and by other States, of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and the relocation of their embassies thereto, as this is contrary to

¹ E/ESCWA/30/5.

² A/72/90-E/2017/71 and A/73/87-E/2018/69.

Security Council resolutions and diminishes prospects for attaining just and comprehensive peace, and affirms that Jerusalem will remain the capital of the State of Palestine;

4. *Warns* of the implications of politicizing humanitarian and development assistance extended to Palestinian institutions and financial support to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), which compromises the ability of those institutions to provide services to the Palestinian people, including refugees;

5. *Commends* the efforts of the ESCWA secretariat in support of the Palestinian people and their quest to attain their rights and advance development in the occupied Palestinian territory in spite of the occupation;

6. *Welcomes* the establishment of the Palestine Unit under the Emerging and Conflict-related Issues Division of the ESCWA secretariat, whose functions include supporting Palestinian institutions in their development efforts, monitoring and documenting the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation and the violations by the occupying Power of the rights of the Palestinian people and of international law, and assessing the long-term cumulative impact of the occupation and its practices, using a comprehensive scientific approach;

7. *Invites* member States to undertake the following:

(a) Intensify communication with the general secretariat of the League of Arab States, ESCWA and other concerned United Nations agencies on issues relating to supporting the Palestinian people in their quest for the full attainment of their rights, and their efforts to mitigate the impact of the Israeli occupation on development and to stop Israeli violations of international law, in particular of the United Nations Charter, relevant resolutions emanating from United Nations bodies and relevant international treaties;

(b) Provide support to the ESCWA secretariat in its efforts to assess the cumulative, multilayered and long-term impact of the Israeli occupation and practices on the Palestinian people;

(c) Increase their support to UNRWA, in order to enable it to continue delivering assistance and basic services to refugees until their right to return is realized;

8. *Requests* the ESCWA secretariat to continue supporting the Palestinian people and their institutions through the following:

(a) Provide normative and technical needs-based support to Palestinian institutions, including research and studies, for the implementation of the National Policy Agenda 2017-2022³ and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;⁴

(b) Support Palestinian institutions in collecting and analysing data to develop policies and programmes aimed at mitigating the impact of the occupation and related practices;

(c) Develop its work on assessing the cumulative long-term impact and cost of the Israeli occupation and practices based on a scientific methodology, secure the necessary resources and mobilize partners to complete that process in coordination and consultation with concerned entities;

³ State of Palestine, *National Policy Agenda 2017-2022: Putting Citizens First* (December 2016). Available at <http://www.palestinecabinet.gov.ps/WebSite/Upload/Documents/GOVPLAN/NPA%20English.pdf>.

⁴ General Assembly resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015.

(d) Produce detailed economic and social studies, based on quantitative and qualitative research, which help the Palestinian people to overcome the economic and social repercussions of Israeli policies and practices;

(e) Monitor, analyse and document the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation and Israeli violations of the rights of the Palestinian people and of international law, and present periodic reports to the Commission on that subject;

9. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to follow up on the implementation of this resolution and to present a progress report in that regard to the thirty-first session of the Commission.

Seventh plenary meeting
Beirut, 28 June 2018

331 (XXX). Comprehensive approaches to technical cooperation in response to member States' emerging needs

The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia,

Recalling resolution [328 \(XXIX\)](#) of 15 December 2016 on technical cooperation to meet the needs and priorities of member States, which recognized the importance of technical cooperation programmes and called for the revitalization of the Technical Cooperation Network as an essential coordination body for such programmes,

Recalling also General Assembly resolutions [67/226](#) of 21 December 2012, [71/243](#) of 21 December 2016 and [72/279](#) of 31 May 2018, adopted in the context of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system, in which it encouraged resident coordinators and United Nations country teams to draw more upon the normative support work and policy expertise that exists within the regional commissions, recognized the contribution of the regional commissions and of subregional, regional and interregional cooperation in addressing development challenges, and reaffirmed the role and functions of the United Nations development system at the regional level, including the regional economic commissions and the regional teams of the United Nations development system, and underlined the need to continue to make them fit for purpose in supporting the implementation of the 2030 Agenda,

Aware of the emerging challenges in the Arab region, particularly the difficulties associated with the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,¹

Underlining that there is scope for better long-term planning of ESCWA technical cooperation activities to ensure optimal deployment of resources and accountability for implementation, while maintaining flexibility in the delivery of demand-driven activities,

1. *Commends* the efforts of the secretariat in building on its comparative advantages and linking its technical cooperation work with its other core functions of research, analysis and consensus-building to support policy formulation, and notes with appreciation its additional efforts in catering to the increasing needs of member States;

2. *Expresses its appreciation* for the ongoing collaboration with United Nations country teams on the development of technical cooperation activities by the secretariat and member States according to their priorities, and for the efforts exerted by the secretariat to provide support to United Nations development entities operating in the Arab region by virtue of its thought leadership position;

3. *Requests* the secretariat to leverage its coordination role among United Nations regional development entities in the establishment of mechanisms to provide guidance for technical cooperation activities along with member States and to enhance their impact.

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¹ General Assembly resolution [70/1](#) of 25 September 2015.

332 (XXX) Developing the work of the Technical Committee on Liberalization of Foreign Trade, Economic Globalization and Financing for Development

The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia,

Referring to its resolutions [313 \(XXVII\)](#) of 10 May 2012 on the frequency of sessions of the Technical Committee on Liberalization of Foreign Trade, Economic Globalization and Financing for Development in the Countries of the ESCWA region, and [214 \(XIX\)](#) of 7 May 1997 on the establishment of that Committee,

Recalling the Doha Declaration on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by member States at their twenty-ninth session,¹ in which they requested that focus be placed on financing for development and that a forum for discussing the issue be created,

Taking into consideration the recommendations of the twelfth² and thirteenth³ sessions of the Technical Committee on Liberalization of Foreign Trade, Economic Globalization and Financing for Development on splitting the Committee into two committees, which would each hold biennial sessions,

Realizing the importance of increased participation of member States in prioritizing, planning and developing ESCWA programmes on financing for development,

Aware of the need to enhance coordination and complementarity between ESCWA and Arab regional organizations in their work on financing for development policies, in order to respond to member States' needs and build their capacity to finance national development plans,

Recognizing the importance of the role of ESCWA in tackling trade policy issues to support Arab States on the path towards regional integration and sustainable development,

Guided by action taken by other United Nations regional commissions to develop the work of their subsidiary bodies to better respond to the priorities of their member States,

1. *Approves* the splitting of the Technical Committee on Liberalization of Foreign Trade, Economic Globalization and Financing for Development into two committees denominated "Committee on Financing for Development in ESCWA member States" and "Committee on Trade Policies in ESCWA member States", which would each hold biennial sessions, without any additional financial implications;

2. *Decides that* the Committee on Financing for Development shall undertake the following:

(a) Discussing priorities under the programme of work and mid-term action plans of ESCWA in the field of financing for development;

(b) Following up on progress in financing for development policies in member States and making recommendations in that regard;

(c) Monitoring developments in regional and international forums, conferences and processes with regard to financing for development, and coordinating regional efforts towards the implementation of related resolutions and recommendations emanating from such platforms;

¹ [E/ESCWA/29/12/Report](#).

² [E/ESCWA/EDID/2017/IG.2/9/Report](#).

³ [E/ESCWA/EDID/2017/IG.3/11/Report](#).

(d) Supporting cooperation between the ESCWA secretariat and specialized ministerial councils of the League of Arab States, and organizations and unions formed under its umbrella, and with other specialized regional organizations, to build capacity and harmonize policies and strategies aimed at leveraging funds to finance development; and supporting communication efforts, partnerships and the harmonization of positions in the international arena;

3. *Decides that* the Committee on Trade Policies shall undertake the following:

(a) Discussing priorities under the programme of work and mid-term action plans of ESCWA in the field of trade policies;

(b) Following up on progress in trade policies in member States and making recommendations in that regard;

(c) Monitoring developments in regional and international forums, conferences and processes with regard to trade policies, and coordinating regional efforts towards the implementation of related resolutions and recommendations emanating from such platforms;

(d) Supporting cooperation between the ESCWA secretariat and specialized ministerial councils of the League of Arab States, and organizations and unions formed under its umbrella, and with other specialized regional organizations, to build capacity and harmonize policies and strategies to develop trade policies; and supporting communication efforts, partnerships and the harmonization of positions in the international arena;

4. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to present a report to the Commission on its thirty-first session on the implementation of this resolution.

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Beirut, 28 June 2018

333 (XXX) Adoption of the proposed amendments to the strategic framework and programme of work for the biennium 2018-2019

The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia,

Recalling its resolution [322 \(EC.2\)](#) of 16 December 2015 on the adoption of the strategy and plan of action on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,¹

Recalling also the recommendation made by the ESCWA Executive Committee at its third meeting,² held in Rabat on 6 and 7 May 2017, on ensuring that ESCWA programmes and activities in the region cover youth issues and empowerment,

Recalling further the results achieved in the implementation of the programme of work for the biennium 2016-2017,³

Convinced by the justifications presented by the secretariat in support of the amendments to the strategic framework and programme of work for the biennium 2018-2019,⁴ including giving the secretariat sufficient flexibility to respond to the requests of member States to integrate the 2030 Agenda fully into its programme of work and increase focus on youth,

1. *Welcomes* the efforts of the secretariat to align its activities with the 2030 Agenda in response to emerging regional needs and challenges;

2. *Adopts* the proposed amendments to the strategic framework and programme of work for the biennium 2018-2019, taking comments made by member States into account;

3. *Requests* the secretariat to follow up on the implementation of the programme of work and include therein the activities required to address challenges that may emerge in the Arab region.

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¹ General Assembly resolution [70/1](#) of 25 September 2015.

² [E/ESCWA/2017/EC.3/8/Report](#).

³ [E/ESCWA/30/13](#).

⁴ See [E/ESCWA/30/16](#).

334 (XXX) Adoption of the reports of the subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia,

Affirming the important role of its subsidiary bodies in developing, coordinating and following up on its programme of work in their respective competences, so as to secure optimum benefits for member States,

Recognizing the importance of implementing the recommendations of the subsidiary bodies to enable it to undertake its duties in the competences falling within their remit,

Having considered the recommendations set out in the reports of the subsidiary bodies on their sessions held in the period between the fourth meeting of the Executive Committee (13-14 December 2017) and its thirtieth session (25-28 June 2018), namely the report on the eighth session of the Committee on Women,¹ the report on the eleventh session of the Committee on Social Development,² the report of the eighteenth session of the Committee on Transport and Logistics,³ the report on the eleventh session of the Committee on Liberalization of Foreign Trade, Economic Globalization and Financing for Development (liberalization of foreign trade);⁴ and the report on the twelfth session of the Committee on Liberalization of Foreign Trade, Economic Globalization and Financing for Development (focus on finance),⁵

1. *Adopts* the recommendations set out in the above-mentioned reports of the subsidiary bodies and requests the secretariat to follow up on their implementation;
2. *Invites* member States to put in place the necessary measures to ensure the implementation of the recommendations set out in those reports.

Seventh plenary meeting
Beirut, 28 June 2018

¹ [E/ESCWA/ECW/2017/IG.1/7/Report](#).

² [E/ESCWA/SDD/2017/IG.1/6/Report](#).

³ [E/ESCWA/EDID/2017/IG.1/9/Report](#).

⁴ [E/ESCWA/EDID/2017/IG.3/11/Report](#).

⁵ [E/ESCWA/EDID/2017/IG.2/9/Report](#).