

**Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)**

Committee on Social Development  
Twelfth session  
Beirut, 8-9 October 2019

**Information for participants****1. Background**

The Committee on Social Development was established pursuant to Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) resolution [198 \(XVII\)](#) of 31 May 1994, which was endorsed by the United Nations Economic and Social Council in its resolution [1994/27](#) of 26 July 1994. The mandate of the Committee includes participating in defining priorities for social programmes and activities and in formulating and developing the programme of work of ESCWA in the area of social development; monitoring progress in social programmes and activities in ESCWA member States; adopting recommendations to strengthen regional social development processes; and following up on international and regional conferences and coordinating regional efforts to implement resulting resolutions and recommendations.

The Committee on Social Development holds its sessions biennially. Its eleventh session was held in Khartoum, on 17 and 18 October 2017.

**2. Date and venue**

The twelfth session of the Committee on Social Development will be held at the United Nations House in Beirut, on 8 and 9 October 2019. Registration will commence at 9 a.m. on Tuesday, 8 October 2019 and the session will open at 10 a.m. on the same day. It will conclude at 5 p.m. on Wednesday, 9 October 2019.

**3. Participants**

Representatives of ESCWA member States have been invited to participate in the session. Relevant regional and international organizations have also been invited to attend the session as observers. In accordance with United Nations regulations, participating Governments and regional and international organizations attending the session as observers shall be responsible for the travel and accommodation expenses of their representatives.

**4. Entry visas**

Participants may obtain entry visas to Lebanon through the Lebanese Embassy in their respective countries. It is recommended to attach the invitation letter sent by ESCWA to the visa application. Participants who need assistance in this matter should send a scanned colour copy of their passport containing all the required information to the secretariat as early as possible.

Information on Lebanese visa and entry requirements is available at: <http://www.general-security.gov.lb/en/posts/159>.

### 5. Accommodation and transportation

ESCWA suggests that participants book their accommodation at a Beirut hotel near the United Nations House. The secretariat has prepared a list of hotels offering preferential rates and will send it to participants by email. To benefit from the preferential rate, participants may wish to inform the hotel that they are participating in the twelfth session of the Committee on Social Development. Participants are also kindly invited to organize transport to and from the airport with their respective hotel.

### 6. Languages of the session

Session proceedings will be in Arabic and English. Simultaneous interpretation from and into Arabic and English will be provided.

### 7. Library

A large library occupies most of the second floor of the United Nations House and is open Monday to Friday, from 10.30 a.m. to 2.30 p.m. Participants are granted access to publications, journals and newspapers, the Internet and online databases on the premises. The library also provides research services on any topic of interest to participants.

### 8. Medical services

Medical facilities in cases of emergency will be provided at ESCWA during official working hours Monday through Friday, from 7.30 a.m. to 3 p.m. The ESCWA clinic is on the first floor of the United Nations House (rooms F-145 to F-147, ext. 1145 or 1146). For serious emergencies, the clinic will ensure immediate transport by ambulance and admission to a hospital with first-class facilities.

In the event of a medical emergency, the following ESCWA staff can be contacted for assistance and guidance:

Name	Position	Telephone
Dr. Josette Sfeir	Doctor	+961-1-978144
Ms. Lina Soubra	Nurse	+961-1-978145
Ms. Maya Louka	Nurse	+961-1-978146
Ms. Lamia el-Hage	Administrative Officer	+961-1-978139

There are many hospitals in Beirut with efficient medical equipment, including the following four major university hospitals within a short drive from the United Nations House:

Hospital	Telephone
American University of Beirut Medical Centre	+961-1-350000/374374
Hôtel-Dieu de France Hospital	+961-1-615400/615300
Saint-George Hospital University Medical Centre	+961-1-441000 +961-1-575700/1287
Rafic Hariri University Hospital	+961-1-830000

### 9. Security and safety

The ESCWA Security and Safety Section (ground floor, ext. 1025) operates on a 24-hour basis and maintains contact with all local emergency services and relevant authorities. Security officers assist in all matters relating to security and safety and may provide information on how to contact ESCWA staff members, if necessary.

## 10. Internet access

Wireless Internet is available on all floors, including MZ and B1 conference areas. Access to Internet requires a passkey, which is posted in public areas on each floor. A computer room is also available at the B1 level to facilitate access to email and the Internet.

## 11. Telecommunication services

The country code for Lebanon is (+961). The area code is (01) for Beirut and (03), (70), (71), (76), (80) or (81) for mobile phones. If you are dialing Lebanon from outside the country, you must omit the (0) in the area code and for mobile phones starting with (03). For example, to reach the ESCWA secretariat from outside Lebanon, you must dial the country code +961 followed by the mobile or area code then by the six-digit phone number (+961-1-xxxxxx for calls to Beirut, or +961-3-xxxxxx or +961-70-xxxxxx for calls to mobile phone numbers).

The main listed telephone number of ESCWA is +961-1-981301. Direct calls can be made to staff members from inside Lebanon by dialing 01-978 followed by the last three digits of the four-digit extension of the party sought. For example, if the extension sought is 1900 then the number to dial from inside Lebanon would be 01-978900. Direct internal calls from within the United Nations House can be made by dialing the four-digit extension.

Information on telephone calls may be obtained from the ESCWA Communications Unit (room F-229, ext. 1229). The operator can be reached from within the building by dialing "9". Personal telephone calls, fax, mail and courier services are provided against cash payment.

## 12. Tourism

Lebanon is home to several historical sites and tourist attractions. For more information, visit the following website: <http://www.lebanon.com/tourism>. Many tourism agencies in Beirut provide modern buses for sightseeing trips across Lebanon.

## 13. Transport

There are numerous car rental and taxi offices in Beirut. Popular online taxi apps are widely used in Lebanon.

The following are telephone numbers for popular taxi companies:

Company name	Telephone
Charlie Taxi	1514
Allo Taxi	1213
Trust Taxi	+961-1-427777
Lebanon Taxi	+961-1-353153
Geryes Taxi	+961-1-333666
Alliance Taxi	+961-1-245555 +961-3-010555
White Taxi	+961-1-513593 +961-71-722199

**14. Time zone**

Local time is GMT+2 hours.

**15. Weather**

During the meeting, the temperature in Beirut is expected to range between 20°C and 25°C.

**16. Currency and exchange rates**

The unit of currency is the Lebanese pound. The current exchange rate is LBP 1,510.25 for \$1.00.

**17. Electrical current**

The electrical current is 220 volts AC. Plug sockets in Lebanon have two pins.

**18. Useful numbers in Lebanon**

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Internal security forces (police)	112
Civil defense	125
Fire brigade	175
Red Cross	140
Telephone directory (Ogero)	1515
Beirut International Airport inquiries	150

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**19. Correspondence**

All session-related correspondence should be sent to:

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