



Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)**INFORMATION NOTE****A. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The Statistical Committee was established pursuant to Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) resolution 179 (XVII) of 2 September 1996, concerning setting up a statistical committee within ESCWA, and United Nations Economic and Social Council resolution 1993/2 of 2 February 1993.

The eighth session of the Statistical Committee will be held at United Nations House in Beirut from 14 to 16 October 2008, in accordance with the recommendations issued at the closing of the seventh session of the Committee, which was held in Beirut from 7 to 9 November 2006, regarding the activation of the work of the Office of the Statistical Committee through regular dialogue and meetings. Those recommendations were adopted by member countries at the meetings of the twenty-fifth ESCWA session, which was held in Sana'a from 26 to 29 May 2008.

B. TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

At its eighth session, the Statistical Committee aims to provide an official framework for achieving a common stance regarding the statistical topics under discussion, in order for them to be brought to the attention of the United Nations Statistical Commission. It also aims to consolidate cooperation with other regional organizations in view of new statistical initiatives in the region, review the programmes and activities that are being undertaken by the Statistics Division, and devise recommendations on developing such programmes, with a view to strengthening the statistical capacities of member countries.

The session will broach topics of importance to the region, including the Millennium Development Goals, capacity-building in statistics for evidence-based policymaking and a report on the activities of the Regional Task Force on Population and Housing Censuses in the ESCWA region. It will also review the progress achieved in the implementation of statistical activities and the proposed programme of work for the biennium 2010-2011 in the field of statistics.

C. PROVISIONAL AGENDA

The provisional agenda of the eighth session of the Statistical Committee is set forth in the annex of this information note in order to inform participants of the topics to be discussed during the session.

D. PARTICIPANTS

The invitation has been extended to Heads of National Statistical Offices in the ESCWA region, national technical focal points and those with expertise and interest in the topics of discussion.

Governments which participate in the session are responsible for the travel and subsistence expenses of their delegates. Similarly, international and regional institutes participating as observers should cover the costs of their representatives.

E. DATE AND VENUE

The eighth session of the Statistical Committee will be held at United Nations House in Beirut from 14 to 16 October 2008.

F. CORRESPONDENCE

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