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

Twenty-ninth session  
Doha, 13-15 December 2016

Item 3 of the provisional agenda

**Provisional agenda and annotations**

**A. Senior officials segment (13-14 December 2016)**

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  - (d) Programme performance in the biennium 2014-2015;
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6. Management issues:
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7. Revised draft strategic framework for the biennium 2018-2019.
8. Outcomes of the 2016 Arab Forum on Sustainable Development.
9. Justice for the Palestinian people - Fifty years of Israeli occupation:
  - (a) The question of apartheid;
  - (b) Premises and approach for calculating the cumulative cost of the occupation;
  - (c) Communication strategy to support the Palestinian people.
10. Achieving social justice in the Arab region: from concept and vision to policy and practice.
11. Gender mainstreaming in public institutions.

#### **B. Ministerial segment (14-15 December 2016)**

12. Opening of the ministerial segment.
13. Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the Arab States (main theme of the session):
  - (a) Round-table discussion 1: Challenges facing the implementation of the 2030 Agenda at the national level;
  - (b) Round-table discussion 2: The impact of conflict and occupation on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda;
  - (c) Round-table discussion 3: Supporting member States in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals: methods and tools.
14. Date and venue of the thirtieth session of the Commission.
15. Other matters.
16. Adoption of a ministerial declaration on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the Arab States and other resolutions.
17. Adoption of the report of the Commission on its twenty-ninth session.

#### **Annotations**

##### **A. Senior officials segment**

1. Opening of the twenty-ninth session

The twenty-ninth session of the Commission will be held at the Sheraton Grand Doha Resort & Convention Hotel. It will comprise two segments: the senior officials segment, which will begin at 9 a.m. on Tuesday 13 December 2016, and the ministerial segment, which will begin at 2 p.m. on Wednesday 14 December 2016. The representative of Bahrain will give the opening address as Chair of the twenty-eighth session, and a representative of the ESCWA secretariat will make a welcoming statement.

2. Election of officers

Rule 12 of the Rules of Procedure of the Commission provides that member States shall chair the sessions of the Commission on a rotating basis, in the Arabic alphabetical order employed by the United Nations,\* and that the Commission shall, at the beginning of each session, elect from among the representatives of its members two Vice-Chairs and a Rapporteur, who shall remain in office until such time as their successors shall be elected and be eligible for re-election.

3. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters

Rule 8, article 1 of the Rules of Procedure of the Commission provides that the Commission shall, at the beginning of each session, after the election of the Chair according to rule 12, adopt the agenda for that session on the basis of the provisional agenda. The provisional agenda was drawn up by the secretariat in consultation with the Chair of the twenty-eighth session. Pursuant to that rule, the Commission will be presented with the provisional agenda and annotations for the session in this document E/ESCWA/29/L.1 and the organization of work in document E/ESCWA/29/L.2. The Commission may adopt these two documents in the form in which they are submitted or make amendments thereto.

4. Consideration of requests by States Members of the United Nations and/or its specialized agencies that are not members of ESCWA to participate as observers in the twenty-ninth session of the Commission (E/ESCWA/29/3)

The Commission will have before it the requests received from States Members of the United Nations and/or its specialized agencies that are not members of the Commission to participate as observers in its twenty-ninth session, in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1818 (LV), paragraph 4, and rule 63 of the Rules of Procedure of the Commission.

The Commission is invited to consider those requests for approval.

5. Report of the Executive Secretary on the activities of the Commission (E/ESCWA/29/4)

Under this item, the secretariat will present the following reports:

(a) Implementation of the Tunis Declaration and other resolutions adopted by the Commission at its twenty-eighth session (E/ESCWA/29/4(Part I))

The report sets out activities undertaken by ESCWA to implement the Tunis Declaration on Social Justice in the Arab Region and other resolutions adopted by the Commission at its twenty-eighth session (Tunis, 15-18 September 2014) concerning the various areas of its work and issues of interest to member States. It also presents information received from member States on their implementation of those resolutions.

The Commission is invited to take note of what has been implemented since the twenty-eighth session pursuant to those resolutions. States are encouraged to submit their reports on their achievements in implementing these resolutions under this item.

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\* ESCWA member States in the Arabic alphabetical order are as follows: Jordan, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Tunisia, the Syrian Arab Republic, the Sudan, Iraq, Oman, the State of Palestine, Qatar, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Egypt, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Mauritania and Yemen.

(b) Reports of the Executive Committee on its meetings (E/ESCWA/29/4(Part II))

The Commission will be presented with two reports on the first and second Executive Committee meetings, held between the twenty-eighth and twenty-ninth ESCWA sessions (E/ESCWA/2015/EC.1/8/Report and E/ESCWA/2015/EC.2/9/Report). The meetings were held in Amman, on 8 and 9 June 2015 and from 14 to 16 December 2015. Each report contains the meeting recommendations and resolutions, in addition to an overview of the topics discussed, information on the organization of the meeting, related documentation and list of participants.

The Commission is invited to endorse the recommendations and resolutions contained in those reports.

(c) Reports of the ESCWA subsidiary bodies on their sessions (E/ESCWA/29/4(Part III))

The Commission will be presented with the reports of three subsidiary bodies on their sessions held between the twenty-eighth and twenty-ninth ESCWA sessions, which were not presented to the Executive Committee:

- (1) Report of the Committee on Women on its seventh session, Muscat, 20-21 January 2016 (E/ESCWA/ECW/2015/IG.1/7/Report);
- (2) Report of the Committee on Liberalization of Foreign Trade, Economic Globalization and Financing for Development on its tenth session, Cairo, 22-23 November 2015 (E/ESCWA/EDID/2015/IG.2/9/Report);
- (3) Report of the Committee on Transport on its sixteenth session, Cairo, 23-24 November 2015 (E/ESCWA/EDID/2015/IG.3/6/Report).

The Commission is invited to adopt those reports.

(d) Programme performance in the biennium 2014-2015 (E/ESCWA/29/4(Part IV))

The report presents an overall evaluation of the performance of ESCWA under its programme of work for the biennium 2014-2015. It highlights achievements and lessons learned for each of the seven subprogrammes. It also presents the assessment of the performance of the executive direction, including the work of the Office of the Executive Secretary, the Programme Planning and Technical Cooperation Section, the Strategy, Evaluation and Partnerships Section, the Administrative Services Division, and the United Nations Information Services/Centre.

The Commission is invited to review the report and provide comments and guidance on overall ESCWA performance and performance under the seven individual subprogrammes.

(e) Technical cooperation and regional advisory services (E/ESCWA/29/4(Part V))

The report contains a review of the technical cooperation activities undertaken by ESCWA during the biennium 2014-2015 and funded through the Regular Programme for Technical Cooperation (RPTC), the United Nations Development Account, and extrabudgetary resources. The activities funded within the RPTC aim to enhance capacity-building in member States through training, advisory services and technical assistance in formulating policies, strategies and plans of action in various specializations. The activities funded from the United Nations Development Account and extrabudgetary resources consist of intraregional and interregional projects.

The Commission is invited to take note of those activities and provide comments and guidance thereon.

(f) Financial status of the Commission (E/ESCWA/29/4(Part VI))

The report provides an overview of the various financial aspects of the programmes implemented by the Commission. This includes allocations and expenditure under the regular budget, the United Nations Development account, extrabudgetary resources and the ESCWA Trust Fund for Regional Activities.

The Commission is invited to take note of the financial status of the Commission and provide guidance and comments thereon.

6. Management issues (E/ESCWA/29/5)

Under this item, the Secretariat will present the following reports to the Commission:

(a) Evaluation of the work of the Commission (E/ESCWA/29/5(Part I))

The report provides an overview of the activities carried out by the secretariat under the evaluation plan for the biennium 2014-2015. It highlights the lessons learned from the evaluation process, with a focus on accountability and credibility. It presents the outcomes of the evaluations of subprogrammes and projects financed from the Development Account and extrabudgetary resources. It also presents the recommendations made by the evaluation team to be taken into consideration in the ESCWA evaluation plan for 2016-2017.

The Commission is invited to review the report and provide comments thereon.

(b) Proposed amendments to the programme of work for the biennium 2016-2017  
(E/ESCWA/29/5(Part II))

The report presents the proposed amendments to the programme of work for the biennium 2016-2017 in the light of issues that have emerged since member States adopted the programme at the first meeting of the ESCWA Executive Committee (Amman, 8-9 June 2015), which entailed revisiting some activities.

The Commission is invited to consider the proposed amendments with a view to endorsing them for incorporation into the programme of work.

7. Revised draft strategic framework for the biennium 2018-2019 (E/ESCWA/29/6)

The secretariat will present the ESCWA strategic framework for the biennium 2018-2019 as revised in accordance with the remarks provided by member States on the first version, which was submitted to the Executive Committee at its second meeting (Amman, 14-16 December 2015), and guidance provided by the United Nations Secretariat. The strategic framework contains the overall orientation of the work to be undertaken by ESCWA, as well as the strategy, objectives, expected accomplishments and indicators of achievement for each of the seven subprogrammes.

The Commission is invited to adopt the revised strategic framework for the biennium 2018-2019.

8. Outcomes of the 2016 Arab Forum on Sustainable Development (E/ESCWA/29/7)

The secretariat will present the outcomes of the 2016 Arab Forum on Sustainable Development (Third session, Amman, 29-30 May 2016), organized by ESCWA in cooperation with the League of Arab States, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), and the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation of Jordan. The secretariat will summarize key messages that the Arab Forum participants agreed to address to the High-level Political

Forum on Sustainable Development (New York, 11-20 July 2016). Those messages illustrate the Arab region's perspective on global frameworks and avenues; cooperation and integration among States and partners; and implementation, follow-up and review mechanisms.

The Commission is invited to take note of the Forum outcomes and provide comments on the way forward.

9. Justice for the Palestinian people - Fifty years of Israeli occupation (E/ESCWA/29/8)

The Secretariat included this item upon the recommendation of member States at the second meeting of the Executive Committee (Amman, 14-16 December 2015), which provides as follows: "To support the ESCWA secretariat as it strives to aid the Palestinian people and their institutions to obtain their full rights, and to alleviate the effects of occupation, including by helping to procure extrabudgetary funding for its efforts to analyse and measure the comprehensive and cumulative cost of the Israeli occupation since 1967, on which it is working with the Palestinian Government and other regional and international bodies". Under this item, the ESCWA secretariat will present the following three reports:

(a) The question of apartheid (E/ESCWA/29/8(Part I))

The report presents the approach and premises adopted by the secretariat in preparing a study aimed at examining whether the policies and practices of Israel with regard to the Palestinian people amount to apartheid. It provides an overview on the history of the prohibition of apartheid in international law, the nature of apartheid in South Africa, and apartheid in contemporary human rights discourse. It examines whether the policies and practices of Israel are synchronized to constitute a comprehensive regime of apartheid. The report also suggests additional fields of inquiry and reviews the main counterarguments that have been made to the apartheid hypothesis.

The Commission is invited to review the report and express its opinion thereon.

(b) Premises and approach for calculating the cumulative cost of the occupation (E/ESCWA/29/8(Part II))

The report presents the methodology, premises and approach suggested by the secretariat to calculate the comprehensive and cumulative cost to the Palestinian people of the Israeli occupation and its policies. It also provides an overview of activities to be organized by ESCWA to develop that methodology, and introduces similar past experiences from other regions of the world.

The Commission is invited to review the report and provide guidance thereon to the secretariat.

(c) Communication strategy to support the Palestinian people (E/ESCWA/29/8(Part III))

In this report, the secretariat proposes a communication strategy to support the Palestinian people and their institutions in their struggle to achieve their legitimate rights, justice and peace. The report presents the general context, ultimate objectives, key messages, and implementation avenues of the communication strategy, as envisaged by the secretariat.

The Committee is invited to review the proposed strategy and provide comments thereon.

10. Achieving social justice in the Arab region: from concept and vision to policy and practice (E/ESCWA/29/9)

Under this item, the secretariat will present a summary of the guide, which bears the aforementioned title and addresses ways to incorporate social justice principles into development plans. The secretariat is preparing the guide pursuant to the Tunis Declaration on Social Justice in the Arab Region, which was adopted by ESCWA at its twenty-eighth session (Tunis, 15 -18 September 2014), to assist member States in formulating development policies and plans. The guide clarifies the social justice dimension in

the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and of relevant international conventions. It focuses on practical steps and tools used in this area, taking into account inter-Arab disparities in capacities, needs and institutional, economic, social and political structure.

The Commission is invited to take note of the guide summary and provide comments thereon.

11. Gender mainstreaming in public institutions (E/ESCWA/29/10)

The secretariat will present the project on gender mainstreaming in public institutions, which builds on achievements made by ESCWA in the implementation of the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-SWAP). The presentation highlights the experience of ESCWA in this area and proposes ways to transfer its expertise to member States by adapting the Action Plan to the Arab context, in view of designing the first Arab framework for measuring progress towards achieving gender equality in public institutions.

The Commission is invited to review this project and express its opinion on ways of adapting the UN-SWAP to the Arab context as a guiding tool for decision makers in the region.

### **B. Ministerial segment**

12. Opening of the ministerial segment

The opening session of the ministerial segment will start at 2 p.m. on Wednesday, 14 December 2016. It will comprise opening remarks by the representative of Bahrain as Chair of the twenty-eighth session of the Commission; a statement by Ms. Rima Khalaf, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Secretary of ESCWA; and an address by a representative of Qatar, the host country.

13. Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the Arab States (E/ESCWA/29/11)

Three round-table discussions will be held on the session theme, "Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the Arab States", with the aim of drafting a ministerial declaration on the subject. The declaration is due to be adopted by member States at the closing of the session. Discussions will take place as follows:

- (a) Round-table discussion 1: Challenges facing the implementation of the 2030 Agenda at the national level (such as developing statistical infrastructure, securing resources for implementation, adopting an integrated approach to sectoral policies, etc.) (E/ESCWA/29/11/WP.1);
- (b) Round-table discussion 2: The impact of conflict and occupation on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda (E/ESCWA/29/11/WP.2);
- (c) Round-table discussion 3: Supporting member States in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals: methods and tools (E/ESCWA/29/11/WP.3).

14. Date and venue of the thirtieth session of the Commission

Rule 1, paragraph (a) of the Rules of Procedure of the Commission provides that the regular sessions of the Commission shall be held in April every two years, at a time to be determined by the members of the Commission. It is expected that the Commission will decide to hold its thirtieth session in Beirut in April 2018, unless it receives an invitation from a member State to host the session.

15. Other matters

This item covers any other issue that members of the Commission may wish to discuss.

16. Adoption of a ministerial declaration on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the Arab States and of other resolutions

The Commission will consider a draft ministerial declaration on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the Arab States for adoption.

17. Adoption of the report of the Commission on its twenty-ninth session

The Commission will consider the draft report on its twenty-ninth session, which contains the recommendations and resolutions, for adoption.

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