

**214 (XIX). Establishment of a technical committee on liberalization of foreign trade and economic globalization in the countries of the ESCWA region**

*The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia,*

*Conscious* that the steadily growing trend towards the liberalization of foreign trade and economic globalization, the conclusion of a series of multilateral trade agreements within the framework of the World Trade Organization and the emergence of a large number of economic blocs will transform the international trading system in the future,

*Conscious also* of the growing interest of the States members of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia in the World Trade Organization and the desire of many of them to join it, and of the importance of defining the positions of the countries of the region and coordinating those positions with respect to the issues involved,

*Taking into consideration* the appreciation shown by member States for the efforts made by the ESCWA secretariat in this area,<sup>2/</sup> both alone and in cooperation with specialized international organizations,

*Aware* of the importance of defining the issues that represent concerns of the States members of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia within the new areas that will be discussed in future trade negotiations, such as trade and environment, trade and investment and trade and competition, and the impact that those areas will have on the economic development of the countries of the region,

*Inspired* by the efforts made by numerous other regional groups in terms of research and studies conducted in those areas and coordination of their positions at the regional level,

1. *Decides* to establish a technical committee on liberalization of foreign trade and economic globalization in the countries of the ESCWA region, made up of representatives of the member States who are specialized in this field, to undertake the following tasks:

(a) Participation in the identification of the priorities and concerns of the ESCWA member countries in the field of multilateral trade agreements and negotiations;

(b) Monitoring of international developments in world trade negotiations and the creation and development of other economic and trade blocs, and coordination of the positions of the ESCWA member countries with respect thereto;

(c) Cooperation with the ESCWA secretariat in establishing programmes to assist the countries of the region in outlining appropriate national and regional economic development policies to enable those countries to take greater advantage of the trends towards liberalization of foreign trade and economic globalization;

(d) Establishment of joint programmes with the countries of the region and in cooperation with other regional and international organizations for training, exchange of information and studies;

2. *Also decides* that the committee shall hold its 1st meeting in 1998 and subsequent meetings annually;

3. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to follow up the implementation of the present resolution and report thereon to the Commission at its twentieth session.

2nd plenary meeting  
7 May 1997

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<sup>2/</sup> See E/ESCWA/19/6.