



## **Summary Assessment of the Outcome of the 66<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission\***

Incheon, Republic of Korea  
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\* Prepared by the Programme Management Division based on written feedback to a survey questionnaire provided to the government delegations that attended the 66<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission.

# Summary Assessment of the Outcome of the 66<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission

## I. Introduction

The 66<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission was hosted by the Government of the Republic of Korea in Incheon from (13 -16 May 2010).

A questionnaire covering aspects related to the relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of the Commission session was distributed to delegations attending the session. Of the 48 ESCAP member and associate members in attendance, 28 delegations (~58%) responded to the questionnaire. The present assessment has been prepared on the basis of the feed-back received from those delegations.

The purpose of the assessment is (a) to support the secretariat's ongoing efforts to improve its servicing of sessions of the Commission; (b) to assist the Commission in making decisions on the structure and functioning of its conference structure.

Pursuant to Commission resolution 64/1, which requested the Executive Secretary to "undertake systematic monitoring and evaluation of the conference structure and its link to the programme priorities of the Commission", the assessment will feed into a midterm review of the Commission's conference structure, which will focus "in particular on the extent to which the conference structure has served the purpose of improving efficiency and attracting higher and wider representation from members and associate members." The midterm review will be conducted by the Commission at its 67<sup>th</sup> session, to be held in 2011.

## II. Attendance

48 ESCAP members and associate members (~77%) participated at the 66<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission. 23 governments were represented at the ministerial level, of these, 14 were represented by full ministers and 2 by Heads of State.

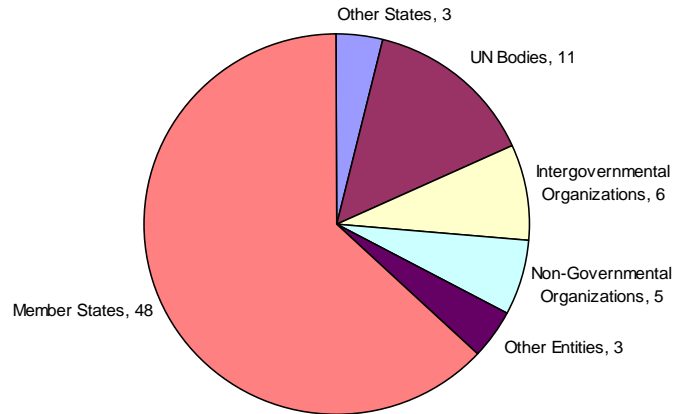
A total number of 313 participants attended the session. Of that total, 281 were from the 48 participating ESCAP members and associate members, and 32 participants were from the 28 other entities present, as described in the chart on page 2 (for further details see Annex I, II and III).

Respondents put forward the following main issues as influencing the composition of their delegations:

- 1) The role and importance of ESCAP as a regional forum for discussions and exchange of experiences on economic and social development issues; and
- 2) The relevance of the agenda items, including the theme topic.

Asked what could have increased the level of their participation, shortening and focusing of Commission sessions, the organization of subregional dialogue or exchange during the sessions, and the timing of sessions not to overlap with other international events were among the suggestions offered.

### Type and number of entities in attendance at the 66th session of the Commission



### III. Ownership and Participation

The responses received regarding the sense of ownership and level of participation at the Commission session were positive. The majority responded that the Commission session was owned and driven by member States to a good extent. A large majority indicated that the benefits of their attendance justified the related costs to a good or great extent.

The majority of respondents agreed that the number of Committees of the Whole (parallel sessions), which had been reduced compared to earlier sessions, allowed all delegations to participate fully.

The majority of respondents indicated that the overall outcome of the deliberations was positive and was a result of a collaborative effort by member States. They also indicated that the draft reports accurately reflected the discussions, decisions and recommendations of the Commission.

1. To what extent do you agree with the following statements?	To a great extent				Not at all (5)
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	
a. The Commission session was owned and driven by member States.	25% (7)	61% (17)	11% (3)	4% (1)	-
b. The benefits of my delegation's attendance at the session justified the costs (travel, time, opportunity cost of absence from the office).	32% (9)	64% (18)	4% (1)	-	-
c. The number of Committees of the Whole [parallel sessions] allowed all delegations to participate fully in the Commission session.	25% (7)	64% (18)	7% (2)	-	-
d. The overall outcome of the deliberations was positive and a result of a collaborative effort by member States.	43% (12)	54% (15)	4% (1)	-	-
e. The draft reports accurately reflected the discussions, decisions and recommendations of the Commission.	43% (12)	43% (12)	14% (4)	-	-
f. The secretariat's in-session interventions contributed to effective conduct and outcome of the session.	39% (11)	46% (13)	11% (3)	-	-

#### IV. Overall relevance and outcomes

The feed-back indicated that participants found the Commission session a relevant mechanism for the consideration of issues related to inclusive and sustainable economic and social development in the region and the 66<sup>th</sup> session to have achieved a satisfactory outcome.

The vast majority of respondents agreed to a great extent that the Commission session was a key intergovernmental forum and the most representative body for the Asian and Pacific region for considering issues related to inclusive and sustainable economic and social development in the region.

Half the respondents agreed that the session contributed to a great extent to the achievement of the Commission's mandate to serve as the main economic and social development centre of the United Nations system for the Asian and Pacific region. Respondents also agreed that the Commission was achieving synergies and building effective partnerships with other intergovernmental and international organizations at the regional and subregional levels.

The theme topic chosen for the 66<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission was seen by the majority to have reflected the current needs and priorities of the region to a good or great extent.

2. To what extent do you agree with the following statements?	To a great extent				Not at all
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
a. The Commission is a key intergovernmental forum and the most representative body for the Asian and Pacific region to consider issues related to inclusive and sustainable economic and social development.	71% (20)	29% (8)	-	-	-
b. The session contributed to the achievement of the Commission's mandate to serve as the main economic and social development centre of the United Nations system for the Asian and Pacific region.	50% (14)	50% (14)	-	-	-
c. The Commission is achieving synergies and building effective partnerships with other relevant intergovernmental and international (including UN system) organizations at the regional and subregional levels.	43% (12)	54% (15)	4% (1)	-	-
d. The theme for the sixty-sixth Commission session: <b>"Addressing challenges in the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals: Promoting a stable and supportive financial system; and Green Growth or environmentally sustainable economic growth, including through technology and financing"</b> reflects the current needs and priorities of the region in general, and my country/territory in particular.	43% (12)	43% (12)	14% (4)	-	-

#### a. Outcomes of the Senior Officials segment

The responses regarding the outcomes of the Senior Officials segment demonstrated that it is viewed by respondents as an effective mechanism for discussing issues of importance to the region.

The majority responded that the deliberations during the Senior Officials segment were focused and effective to a great or good extent at identifying key emerging issues that merit policy attention in the region and deciding on the recommendations of the subsidiary bodies.

A majority also indicated that the session was successful to a great or good extent in deliberating on progress and gaps in the implementation of Commission resolutions and in providing guidance on the work of the secretariat. The responses however also indicated that there is room for improvement in those areas.

Half the respondents indicated that the Special Body on Pacific Island Developing Countries was successful to a great extent in highlighting priority concerns of these countries and identifying measures to address those concerns through regional cooperation.

3. To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding the <u>Senior Officials segment</u> ?	To a great extent				Not at all (5)	Did not attend
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)		
a. The deliberations were focused and effective at identifying the key emerging issues that merit policy attention in the region.	32% (9)	50% (14)	18% (5)	-	-	-
b. The deliberations were effective at discussing progress achieved and gaps requiring priority attention with regard to the implementation of Commission resolutions and decisions.	32% (9)	54% (15)	11% (3)	4% (1)	-	-
c. The deliberations were effective at deciding on the recommendations of the subsidiary bodies.	32% (9)	50% (14)	18% (5)	-	-	-
d. The deliberations were effective at providing guidance to the work of the secretariat, in particular the draft strategic framework for the biennium 2012-2013.	46% (13)	39% (11)	11% (3)	4% (1)	-	-
e. The Special Body on Pacific Island Developing Countries was successful in highlighting the priority concerns of these countries and identifying measures to address these concerns through regional cooperation.	50% (14)	32% (9)	11% (3)	-	-	7% (2)

#### b. Outcomes of the Ministerial segment

The views on the outcomes of the Ministerial segment were positive.

The majority responded that the deliberations were focused and effective to a good or great extent at generating policy options for addressing key socio-economic issues affecting the region. The responses regarding the deliberations on highlighting areas for regional cooperation to address key socio-economic issues affecting the region were even more positive.

The majority responded that the resolutions and decisions adopted reflected the key outcomes of the sixty-sixth session of the Commission.

4. To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding the <u>Ministerial segment</u> ?	To a great extent				Not at all (5)	Did not attend
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)		
a. The deliberations were focused and effective at generating policy options for addressing key socio-economic issues affecting the region.	46% (13)	36% (10)	11% (3)	4% (1)	-	4% (1)
b. The deliberations were effective in highlighting areas for regional cooperation to address key socio-economic issues affecting the region.	50% (14)	39% (11)	11% (3)	-	-	-
c. The resolutions and decisions adopted reflected the key outcomes of the sixty-sixth session of the Commission.	50% (14)	39% (11)	11% (3)	-	-	-

## V. Organizational aspects

The responses on the organizational aspects of the Commission session demonstrated overall that the secretariat effectively and efficiently serviced the 66<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission; they however also indicated some areas with room for improvement.

### a. Organization and servicing by the secretariat

A majority of respondents agreed that sufficient time was allocated to agenda items during the session, and that the servicing by the secretariat facilitated effective outcomes.

While a majority was also positive in their feed-back on the organization of work in-between sessions, the responses indicated that more attention could be paid to communication between member States and the secretariat in-between Commission sessions, and the linkages between Commission sessions and the work of its subsidiary Committees, the ACPR and the Informal Working Group on Draft Resolutions.

5. To what extent do you agree with the following statements?	To a great extent (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	Not at all (5)	No answer
a. Sufficient time was allocated to agenda items during the session.	29% (8)	46% (13)	21% (6)	-	-	4% (1)
b. The servicing by the secretariat facilitated effective outcomes.	43% (12)	50% (14)	7% (2)	-	-	-
c. The organization of work between Commission sessions contributed to the effective functioning of the Commission session (ACPR, Committees, Informal Working Group on Draft Resolutions (IWGDR), communication with the secretariat, etc.).	32% (9)	50% (14)	11% (3)	7% (2)	-	-
d. The communication between the secretariat and member States between Commission sessions contributed to the effective functioning of the Commission session.	39% (11)	43% (12)	14% (4)	4% (1)	-	-

### b. Working Group on Draft Resolutions

A majority of respondents agreed that the conduct of the meetings of the Working Group on Draft Resolutions was effective to a good or great extent for enabling interactive discussions and reaching consensus.

The responses indicated that the submission of draft resolutions in some cases did not allow for sufficient time for review prior to the commencement of the Commission session.

The views were positive regarding the pre-session servicing by the secretariat of the informal ACPR Working Group on Draft Resolutions (IWGDR), indicating that the IWGDR provided a useful basis for decision-making during the Commission session.

6. To what extent do you agree with the following statements?	To a great extent	(2)	(3)	(4)	Not at all (5)	No answer
	(1)					
a. The conduct of the meetings of the Working Group on Draft Resolutions was effective for enabling <b>interactive discussions</b> .	50% (14)	29% (8)	18% (5)	4% (1)	-	-
b. The conduct of the meetings of the Working Group on Draft Resolutions was effective for <b>reaching consensus</b> .	46% (13)	29% (8)	25% (7)	-	-	-
c. The submission of draft resolutions by member States before the commencement of the Commission session allowed sufficient time for review by members and associate members of the Commission.	7% (2)	46% (13)	21% (6)	18% (5)	4% (1)	4% (1)
d. Pre-session servicing by the secretariat through the Informal Working Group on Draft Resolutions related to preparation and review of the draft resolutions for tabling provided a useful basis for decision-making during the Commission session.	39% (11)	43% (12)	18% (5)	-	-	-

### c. Documents

The views on documentation for the Commission session were positive. The majority responded that the pre-session documents conveyed clear messages concerning the issues placed on the agenda, and that the posting of documents through the ESCAP website facilitated review by delegations to a good or great extent.

While there was general satisfaction with regard to the timing of the issuance of pre-session documents, the responses indicated that there was room for improvement.

7. To what extent do you agree with the following statements?	To a great extent	(2)	(3)	(4)	Not at all (5)
	(1)				
a. The pre-session documents conveyed clear messages concerning the issues placed on the agenda.	39% (11)	57% (16)	4% (1)	-	-
b. The pre-session documents were issued in a timely manner.	32% (9)	43% (12)	18% (5)	4% (1)	4% (1)
c. The posting of documents through the ESCAP website facilitated my delegations review.	50% (14)	39% (11)	11% (3)	-	-



## **VI. Most and least successful feature**

The questionnaire provided space for respondents to comment on the most and least successful features of the Commission session.

The Ministerial Roundtable, the High-level Panel and the Working Group on Draft Resolutions received the highest number of comments as the most successful features of the Commission session. Also, the Special Body on Pacific Island Developing Countries met for the first time as part of the senior officials segment of the Commission session, and several delegations expressed their satisfaction with its new status.

A number of delegations cited overall time management as the least favorite feature of the 66<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission. The deliberations on the theme topic for the 67<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission were also mentioned as a less successful feature.

## **VII. Conclusion and additional comments**

This assessment demonstrates that the 66<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission successfully attracted high and wide representation and was conducted efficiently, enabling participants to discuss and negotiate issues of importance for the region. Member States expressed general satisfaction with the preparations for, and servicing and outcome of the 66<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission, and continue to consider the Commission an important regional body for discussion on issues of regional and global importance.

Additional comments by respondents indicate a number of issues that could be improved or addressed in order to make deliberations of the Commission even more effective in the future:

- 1) Timely distribution of documents and other information to enable consideration by governments prior to the session;
- 2) In view of its importance for effective and focused deliberations and outcome of Commission sessions, review of the process for deciding on the theme topic.
- 3) Earlier initiation of preparations, in particular pertaining to the theme topic and draft resolutions;
- 4) Guidelines for country statements to ensure focus on agenda items, the theme topic and the topics of proposed resolutions;
- 5) More substantive deliberations and interactive discussions, in addition to presentation of prepared positions;
- 6) More opportunities for discussions among governments along the sides of the meeting;

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## Annex I

### ESCAP members and associate members attendance at the 66<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission

	Country	No. of participants		Country	No. of participants
1	Afghanistan	3	33	Palau	1
2	Armenia	1	34	Papua New Guinea	3
3	Australia	2	35	Philippines	3
4	Azerbaijan	3	36	Rep. of Korea	28
5	Bangladesh	10	37	Russian Federation	8
6	Bhutan	3	38	Samoa	2
7	Brunei Darussalam	3	39	Singapore	2
8	Cambodia	5	40	Solomon Islands	4
9	China	12	41	Sri Lanka	3
10	DPRK*	-	42	Tajikistan*	-
11	Fiji	6	43	Thailand	25
12	France	3	44	Timor-Leste	2
13	Georgia*	-	45	Tonga	1
14	India	4	46	Turkey	2
15	Indonesia	33	47	Turkmenistan	1
16	Islamic Rep. of Iran	9	48	Tuvalu	2
17	Japan	12	49	United Kingdom*	-
18	Kazakhstan	9	50	United States of America	2
19	Kiribati	5	51	Uzbekistan	1
20	Kyrgyzstan	2	52	Vanuatu	8
21	Lao PDR	5	53	Viet Nam	8
22	Malaysia	5			
23	Maldives	3		<b>Associate members</b>	
24	Marshall Islands*	-	54	American Samoa*	-
25	Micronesia*	-	55	Cook Islands*	-
26	Mongolia	3	56	French Polynesia*	-
27	Myanmar	7	57	Guam*	-
28	Nauru	2	58	Hong Kong, China	7
29	Nepal	5	59	Macao, China	7
30	Netherlands	1	60	New Caledonia*	-
31	New Zealand*	-	61	Niue*	-
32	Pakistan	5	62	Northern Mariana Islands*	-
<b>Total no. of member and associate member participants</b>			<b>281</b>		

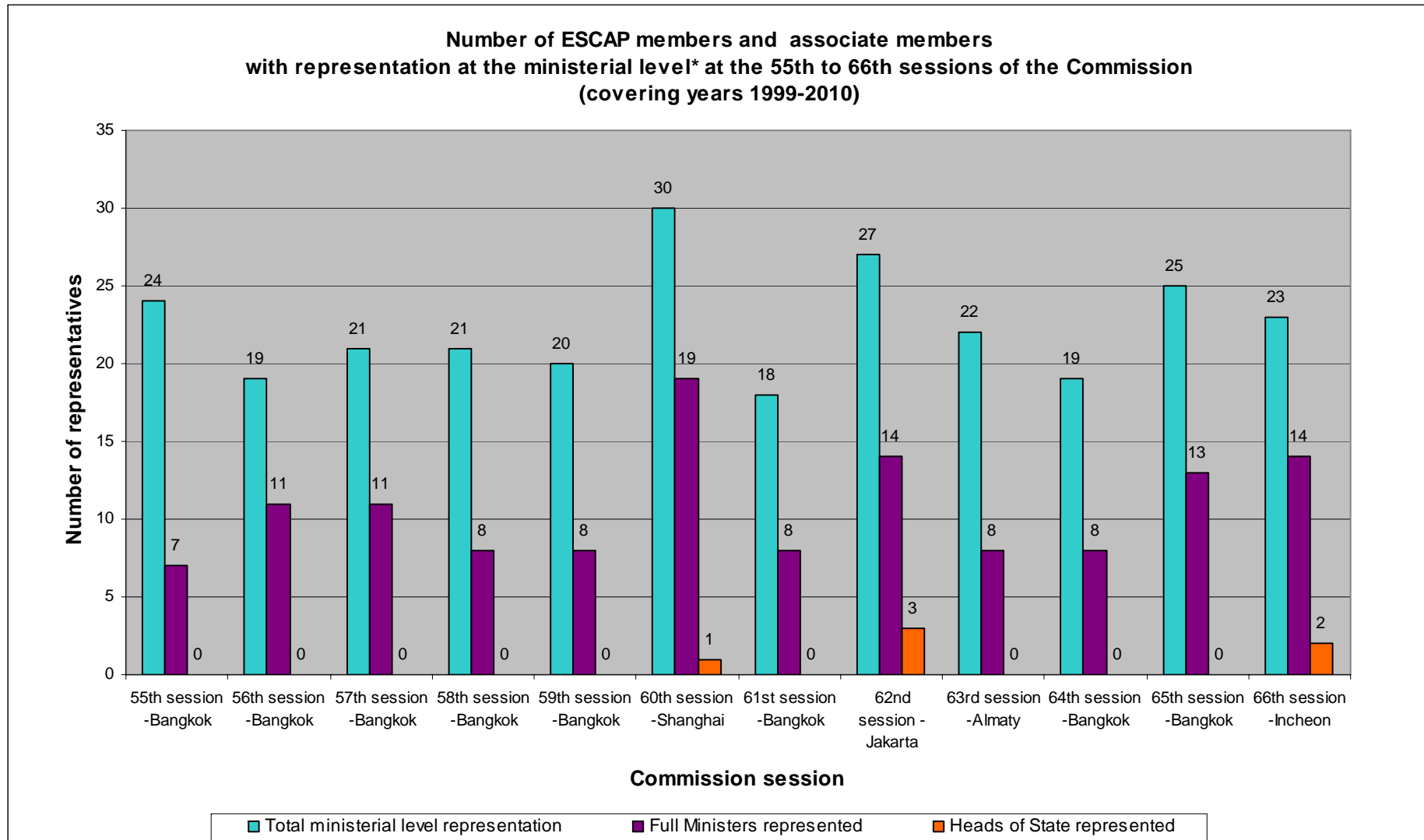
\* Members/associate members which did not attend

## Annex II

### Other participants attendance at the 66<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission

		No. of participants			No. of participants
	<b>Other States</b>			<b>Intergovernmental Organizations</b>	
1	Czech Republic	1	15	APCC	1
2	Holy See	2	16	ADB	1
3	South Africa	1	17	CIRDAP	1
	<i>subtotal</i>	<u>4</u>	18	CICA	2
			19	IOM	1
	<b>United Nations Secretariat</b>		20	ESCAP/WRO Typhoon Committee	1
4	OHRLLS	2		<i>subtotal</i>	<u>7</u>
5	RCNYO	1			
	<i>subtotal</i>	<u>3</u>		<b>Non-Governmental Organizations</b>	
			21	ATDFW	1
	<b>United Nations Bodies</b>		22	IPPF	1
6	RSTAP	1	23	MWL	1
7	UNCCD	1	24	IUCN	1
8	UNEP	1	25	LDC Watch	1
9	UNITAR	1		<i>subtotal</i>	<u>5</u>
10	UNFPA	1			
11	UNPOG	1		<b>Other Entities</b>	
	<i>subtotal</i>	<u>6</u>	26	AECF	1
			27	AIT	1
	<b>Specialized Agencies</b>		28	NEAR	2
12	IAEA	1		<i>subtotal</i>	<u>4</u>
13	IMO	1			
14	WMO	1			
	<i>subtotal</i>	<u>3</u>			
<b>Total no. of non-member State participants</b>			<b>32</b>		

### Annex III



\*Includes Ministers, Vice-Ministers, Deputy-Ministers, Assistant-Ministers or their equivalents.